

# The Black Country Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment

## FINAL REPORT



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# Executive Summary

## Introduction

1. This report details the findings from the Black Country Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTANA). The report was commissioned in response to the Housing Act 2004 which requires local authorities to consider Gypsies and Travellers' accommodation needs in their local housing strategies.
2. Such an initiative was required due to Gypsies and Travellers being among the most disadvantaged sectors of society in terms of their accommodation. The traditional source of accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers, in the form of communal land, was rapidly closed off after legislation in 1960, thus the modern problem of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation is of a relatively recent date.
3. This study considers a range of Gypsy and Traveller groups found in The Black Country, including English Gypsies, Irish Travellers, New Travellers and Travelling Showpeople across different tenure types. It draws on a range of data sources, including;
  - **Secondary information**, including a literature review and secondary data analysis
  - **Stakeholder consultation** with local organisations involved with Gypsies and Travellers
  - **Face-to-face surveys** of Gypsies and Travellers

The report therefore includes a mixture of quantitative and qualitative data based on views and experiences of accommodation provision and wider service issues.

4. The aim of the study is to quantify the accommodation and housing related support needs of Gypsies and Travellers. This is in terms of residential sites, transit sites and bricks and mortar accommodation. The results will be used to inform the allocation of resources as an evidence base for policy development in housing and planning, in particular the Regional Spatial Strategy Phase Three Revision.

## Literature review

5. Existing research into Gypsies and Travellers suggests that the legislation implemented since the 1960s has negatively impacted on Gypsies and Traveller communities, with the Housing Act 2004 and subsequent guidance designed to address this imbalance. The Race Relation Amendment Act 2000 has afforded Gypsies and Irish Travellers legal protection against discrimination, including that from housing authorities.

6. However, it is apparent from the research that the most pressing issue remains that of inadequate permanent and transit site provision. With around one quarter of Gypsy and Travellers residing in unauthorised developments or encampments, the Government has responded with increased funding for site provision. Despite increased powers for local authorities to deal with anti-social behaviour and to evict where necessary, the Government has acknowledged that increased site provision is the most effective means of dealing with unauthorised developments and encampments. Lastly, the need for detailed information regarding the current and future accommodation needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community further reinforces the need for Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments (GTAAs).

### **Population trends**

7. There is only one main source of data on Gypsy and Traveller numbers in the Black Country: the national Communities and Local Government (CLG) Caravan Count. It has significant difficulties with accuracy and reliability, especially on a local level or when enumerating unauthorised encampments, tending to be underestimated in many cases. It also does not take into account Travelling Showpeople, for whom no known secondary data is available.
8. The CLG Caravan Count indicates that the Black Country has a relatively low concentration of Gypsy and Traveller caravans, well below both national and regional averages. However, it still contains 9.5% of all the authorised and tolerated caravans in the region.
9. The district containing the largest proportion of authorised and tolerated caravans in the Black Country is Walsall. Wolverhampton has a similar level of provision, and Dudley slightly lower. Sandwell has a much smaller number of pitches. Provision in Walsall is mostly privately owned: the largest concentration of public provision of pitches is in Wolverhampton. The majority of Dudley's caravans and all of those found in Sandwell are on publicly owned sites.
10. The level of authorised provision, adjusted for population, varies significantly across the Black Country from 5.2 caravans per 100,000 settled population in Sandwell, to 16.9 per 100,000 in Walsall. Eight caravans on unauthorised but tolerated sites are found in the Black Country.
11. The Black Country has a much lower level of developments and encampments not tolerated by local authorities than the national and regional averages.
12. The number of caravans on authorised sites in the Black Country has increased by 37% since 2005, while across England as a whole there has been a slight increase (11%).

13. While there has been a general decrease in the numbers of caravans not tolerated by local authorities across England as a whole, which might be explained either by increased toleration of such encampments or a general move by Gypsies and Travellers into bricks and mortar accommodation, the West Midlands' most recent figures appear to go against this trend. The reasons for this are as yet unclear. Nationally, there has been a simultaneous increase in the number of unauthorised caravans which are tolerated by local authorities. This has also occurred in the Black Country, although the trend is less clear for the West Midlands region as a whole.

### **Stakeholder consultation**

14. Current sites were reported as overcrowded and often in poor conditions. However, a number were currently undergoing refurbishment and extension or were in the process of applying for financial aid to accomplish this. Concern was expressed that the work that was being done often did not take into consideration future need and the needs of those in bricks and mortar accommodation but were regarded as a quick fix to the current problems.
15. It was reported that there were a number of households in bricks and mortar accommodation; some there due to the lack of residential site provision. Tenancies were often successful with the aid of housing officers and where there was an established community network which led to concentrations of Gypsies and Travellers in bricks and mortar. It was, however, reported that many would prefer to be on a residential site, especially the children of those in housing.
16. Stakeholders agreed that there was a need for a network of transit sites that should be jointly managed. Services and facilities on these sites should be more basic than those on residential sites, and the location should ideally be distant from residential sites in the area.
17. Discrimination often led to poor access to services for Gypsies and Travellers. It was reported that Gypsies and Travellers were often cautious of visiting GP surgeries and therefore requested outreach workers. Access to primary education was good and the levels achieved similar to those of the settled community. However for reasons of cultural differences and discrimination many opted to take children out of secondary education.
18. Stakeholders believed that there was tension between the settled community and Gypsies and Travellers. Tensions were expressed through unrelenting low level discrimination which Gypsies and Travellers found hard to escape.
19. The relationship between the Council and Gypsies and Travellers was relatively poor. An example of good practice was Walsall's Gypsy and Traveller Forum which met monthly to discuss the needs of the community and how best to express these to the Council.

## Survey methodology

20. Based on data collected from a variety of sources, a sample was constructed reflecting the distribution of Gypsies and Travellers in the Black Country. A total of 125 interviews were completed, representing 83% of the target number. A questionnaire was designed with input from stakeholders. Access to participants living on sites and in bricks and mortar housing was assisted by front line workers from health and education who acted as 'gatekeepers'.

## Key findings from the survey

### *Gypsies and Travellers on authorised sites*

21. A total number of 27 interviews were carried out with participants from authorised sites, comprising 22% of the sample. Each Borough has a local authority site and Dudley has a privately owned site: interviews were carried out on each one.
22. The majority of participants (82%) had been on the site for longer than five years and did not expect to move. Satisfaction with the site was generally low: sites with the lowest levels of general satisfaction also displayed low levels of satisfaction with amenity blocks.
23. The accessibility of services from the sites was lower for participants from Oak Lane and Smithy Lane; both sites reported problems accessing local services due mainly to poor access roads and lighting to the sites. Participants, particularly from the Tipton site requested that traffic calming devices were used both for the surrounding and internal roads of the site.
24. Participants felt that there was a definite need for both permanent and transit pitches in the Black Country. The drivers for this need was thought to be newly forming families and those on unauthorised sites looking for permanent accommodation in the Black Country.
25. More than half of the participants living on sites had not travelled during the past 12 months. Those that travelled did so to visit family and to attend cultural fairs. Reasons for ceasing to travel included harassment, the threat of eviction and the lack of transit pitches.

### ***Gypsies and Travellers on unauthorised sites***

26. 13 interviews were carried out with Gypsies and Travellers on three unauthorised developments and one unauthorised encampment. The unauthorised development had been there for a number of years, and as expected the unauthorised encampment had been there for less than one month. Those on the unauthorised encampment noted that they were actively looking for somewhere to settle in the Black Country area but did not specify where.
27. Satisfaction with their site was low for both those on developments and encampments, with only one participant satisfied with their accommodation. Positives of living on their site were based on the closeness of family. Negatives included security, the environment and access to facilities and services.

### ***Gypsies and Travellers in housing***

28. Two fifths of the interviews took place with those in housing (50). The majority had previously lived on sites (72%) and nearly a half lived in socially rented housing (49%). The main reason given for living in a house was due to a lack of alternative accommodation. This was due to different reasons including eviction, family feuds, overcrowding on sites, harassment, issues with site management and health and old age.
29. Satisfaction with housing was low, with only 47% reporting that they were satisfied. Those who had previously lived on an authorised site or in housing had the highest satisfaction levels. Positives included better access to services and facilities than was available from a site, conversely participants often felt isolated from their community and felt that their identity was threatened.
30. The majority of participants in housing thought there was a need for more pitches in the Black Country. All of those who expressed a desire to move in the next five years (37%) stated that their preference would be for a site rather than housing. This was also true of newly forming households.
31. When asked if they had travelled within the last 12 months, 34% had done so. This is slightly higher than the percentage of Gypsies and Travellers living on sites and may reflect the need for housed Gypsies and Travellers to travel in order to assert their identity.

### ***Access to services***

32. Registration with GP surgeries was high with all participants having permanent (96%) or temporary (4%) registration. Site participants, however, did note that they had to use housed relatives' addresses, as registration was not possible or difficult with a site address. Asthma and long-term illnesses were the most prevalent health issues.

33. For those on the unauthorised encampment treatment had been disrupted due to being moved on or evicted.
34. The majority of school aged children were registered with a local school (97%). However, respondents noted that reasons for the children not attending at all times included bullying, evictions and being moved on, lack of transport and the lack of a permanent address to be able to register with.
35. A third of participants felt they had been denied work because of who they were. Participants reported feeling trapped between the need to earn a living and the indignity of hiding their identity in order to be able to do so.
36. Participants on sites felt it was harder for them to hide their identity due to their address; this was also a problem with other services and facility providers. Literacy skills were also low and many expressed a desire for reading and writing courses for travellers, as well as vocational training.

### ***Travelling Showpeople***

37. 35 interviews were carried out with Travelling Showpeople in the Black Country; 12 of which were with households who lived on unauthorised developments. A significant majority (80%) reported that one or more family members lived on the yard all year.
38. Over half (54%) of participants felt they needed more space and reported that during winter, when all members of the family and equipment were on the site, there was a lack of space. Nevertheless, satisfaction with yards was high (80%).
39. When asked what was required in the Black Country, the majority of participants agreed that assistance with planning permission was needed. As business people they did not believe that affordability was too much of an issue. However, for those who were on unauthorised developments competition with national developers was changing this situation.
40. Of those who expressed a desire to move within the next five years, all but two wished to remain within the Black Country and to own their own land with planning permission. None reported wanting to move into housing.

### **Accommodation need**

41. Accommodation need was assessed using a model in line with the Practice Guidance issued by the CLG. Separate assessments were carried out for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. It contains seven basic components; five assessing need and two assessing supply, which are applied to each sub-group of Gypsies and Travellers, based on the survey data. The total requirement over ten years is as follows:

- 99 residential pitches
- 10-12 transit pitches
- 56 Travelling Showpeople plots

42. The following table shows the results for each council and housing sub-region over ten years.

<b>Table S1 District breakdown, 2008-2018</b>				
Area	Housing	Residential pitches	Transit pitches	Travelling Showpeople plots
Dudley	51	22		6
Sandwell	21	2		12
Walsall	133	39		35
Wolverhampton	41	36		3
<b>Black Country</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>10-12</b>	<b>56</b>

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

\* In addition to newly built pitches in 2008

### Conclusions and recommendations

43. The overall finding of the accommodation assessment is that there is a lack of authorised residential and transit sites in the Black Country. Unauthorised sites, overcrowding and the needs of newly forming families mean that there is a need for an additional 99 Gypsy and Traveller pitches, 10-12 transit site pitches and 56 Travelling Showpeople plots.
44. The need for local authorities to provide these numbers can be reduced by granting current unauthorised developments planning permission. Further reductions can be made by identifying suitable land in future Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and proactively encouraging Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople to buy their own land.
45. In addition to accommodation needs figures, the research also compiled further recommendations for the Black Country authorities to enable Gypsies and Travellers to have greater access to local services including health and education.



# 1. Introduction

## Study context

- 1.1 In May 2007 the four Black Country Local Authorities of Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton commissioned Fordham Research to conduct an assessment of the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers in the area. The purpose of the assessment is to quantify the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers (including Travelling Showpeople) in terms of residential and transit sites, and bricks and mortar accommodation. The results will be used to inform the allocation of resources at borough and sub-regional levels and will be used as an evidence base for policy development in housing and planning.
- 1.2 Data collection and analysis will follow Practice Guidance set out by the Communities and Local Government (CLG) in 'Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments' (October 2007) and 'Local Housing Assessment: A Practice Guide' (March 2005), obliging local authorities to assess the level of need for Gypsy and Traveller sites.
- 1.3 This report sets out the findings of the research. It contains the results from desk-based research, including a literature review and secondary data collection, and primary research including stakeholder consultation and a survey of Gypsies and Travellers residing in the Black Country.

## Policy background

- 1.4 There is a shortage of sites for Gypsies and Travellers across the country. A study for the DCLG by Pat Niner<sup>1</sup> stated that, between 2003 and 2007, 1,000 – 2,000 additional residential pitches would be needed, as would 2,000 – 2,500 additional transit pitches. In 2003 and 2004, only 130 pitches were provided per year – equivalent to only 15% to 25% of the need identified by Niner and, if continued at this rate, will take over thirty years to reach the target.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Pat Niner, *Local Authority Gypsy and Traveller Sites in England*, Centre for Urban and Regional Studies, University of Birmingham, 2003.

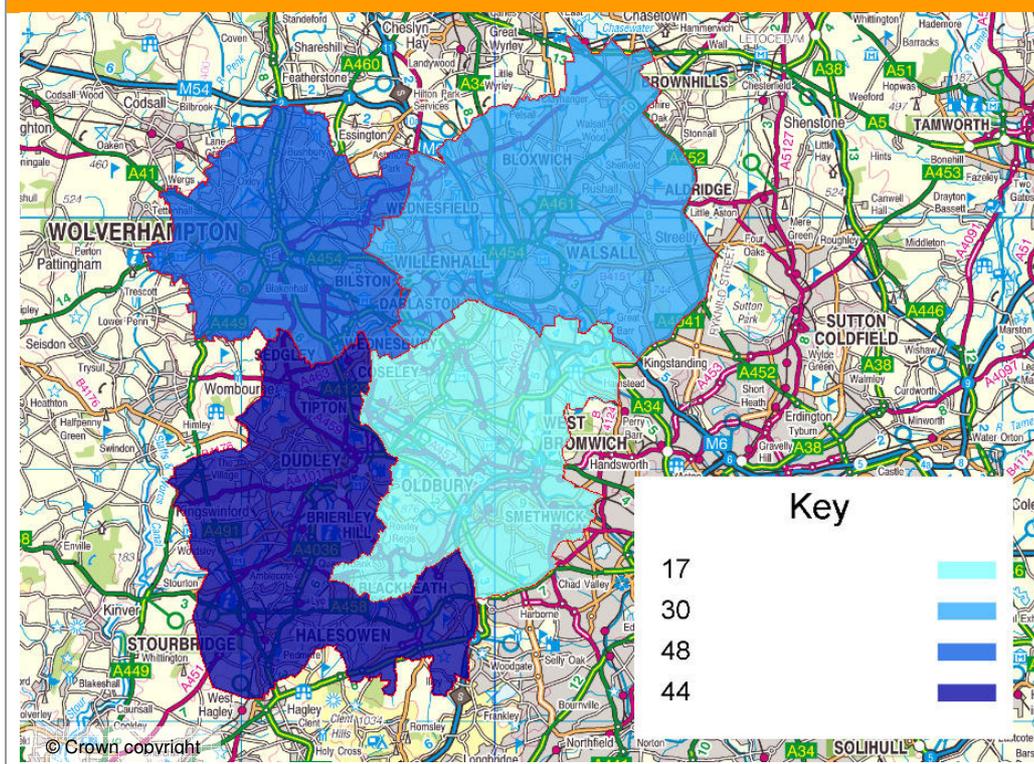
<sup>2</sup> Robert Home and Margaret Greenfields, *Cambridge Sub-Region Traveller Needs Assessment*, Anglia Ruskin University and Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College, 2006.

- 1.5 The Government is committed to ensuring that members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities should have the same access to decent and appropriate accommodation as every other citizen and that there are sufficient resources available to meet their needs. To meet this aim, the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers have been mainstreamed within the wider housing and planning systems. The Housing Act 2004 requires local authorities to assess the needs of Gypsies and Travellers in the area and develop strategies to meet the needs. It also states that, where the shortage of sites is a particular problem, local authorities are expected to make this a priority, with the Secretary of State able to direct them if necessary.
- 1.6 Following the Housing Act, a new Planning Circular 01/2006 was produced. It contains a new definition of Gypsies and Travellers for planning purposes based on “nomadic habit” and includes those who are too ill or old to still travel, but specifically excludes Travelling Showpeople. Its intention is to significantly increase the number of authorised Gypsy and Traveller sites (in recognition of the failure of the previous Circular 1/94 to deliver adequate sites) and reduce the number of unauthorised encampments and developments. It details how data collected during Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments (GTAAAs) should inform overall pitch levels in the Regional Spatial Strategies and Development Plan Documents outlining specific site locations.
- 1.7 In conjunction with Circular 01/2006, the CLG also released in October 2007 guidance on conducting GTAAAs. The Guide stresses the importance of consulting with Gypsies and Travellers and their representative bodies and support groups in how the assessment is conducted. It recommends that steering groups should be formed to include members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities, and that questionnaires should be drawn up with input from Gypsies and Travellers. The Guidance contains a slightly wider definition of Gypsies and Travellers than the Planning Circular and includes Travelling Showpeople.
- 1.8 New funding arrangements have also been introduced. From April 2006 funding for sites can be accessed from the Regional Housing Boards’ budgets and part of the Gypsy Site Refurbishment Grant can be used to develop new permanent residential sites.
- 1.9 Local authorities will also need to have regard to their statutory duties, including those in respect of homelessness under Part VI of the Housing Act 1996 and to their obligations under the Race Relations (Amendments) Act 2000 which prohibits racial discrimination by planning authorities in carrying out their planning functions.

## **Gypsies and Travellers in the Black Country**

- 1.10 Figure 1.1 below illustrates the distribution of Gypsies and Travellers in the Black Country as an average number of caravans from the last five Caravan Counts. Chapter 3 will discuss in more detail the Gypsy and Traveller population of the Black Country.

**Figure 1.1 Average number of caravans in the Black Country, 2005 - 2007**



Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

## Who does the Black Country Assessment cover?

1.11 The Research will use the definition of 'Gypsies and Travellers' contained in *Statutory Instrument 2006 No. 3190*, issued in January 2007. This defines Gypsies and Travellers as:

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

## **Report format**

1.12 Chapters 2 and 3 will look at current strategies and policies that refer to Gypsies and Travellers at a regional and local level, whilst Chapter 4 will look at the population characteristic of the Gypsy and Traveller community that can be gained from secondary data. Chapter 5 will then summarise the findings of the Stakeholder events held in June 2007 whilst Chapters 6 – 11 will look at the survey methodology and results. In Section C the needs assessments will be calculated and conclusions and summaries reported in Chapter 11.

## SECTION A: CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

The first section of the report contains results from analysis of secondary data. The chapters draw on secondary data from:

- Current plans and strategies relating to Gypsies and Travellers
- Caravan Count

These are considered in turn. Section A starts by describing the national policy context in which Gypsies' and Travellers' accommodation needs should be addressed.



## 2. Literature review

2.1 This section examines previous literature and research relating to Gypsies and Travellers. It examines a number of key themes including:

- the impact of legislation on the Gypsy and Traveller community
- legal definitions relating to the Gypsy and Traveller community
- issues relating to current site provision
- health and educational issues and problems within the Gypsy and Traveller community

2.2 The aim is to provide the reader with a background on Gypsy and Traveller issues and the policy context in which the GTANA is situated.

### Legislation and legal definitions

#### *Legislation*

2.3 Since the 1960s three Acts of Parliament have had a major impact upon the Gypsy and Traveller way of life. The *Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act* of 1960 made it difficult for Gypsies to buy and winter on small plots of land, unless they had a licence that could only be gained through planning permission. This law led to the closure of many sites traditionally used by Gypsies and Travellers. Even those Gypsies staying on the private land of farmers they were working for, could no longer do so. The effect of this was to push even more Gypsies on to the roadside. In 1965 a national survey of Gypsies took place. The following report published two years later, was called 'Gypsies and Other Travellers'. The findings showed that 60% of the families had travelled in the previous year, mainly as a result of harassment from police and council officials. Few children received regular schooling. Only 33% of the families had access to a water supply. There were too few local authority sites<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Friends, Family & Travellers located at: <http://www.gypsy-traveller.org/law/historical/>

2.4 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. By 1994 a third of local authorities had achieved designation, and thus became exempt from making further provision and given additional powers against unauthorised encampment. The 1994 *Criminal Justice and Public Order Act* repealed most of the 1968 Act, abolished any statutory obligation to provide accommodation, discontinued government grants for such sites, and made it a criminal offence to camp on land without the owner's consent. Since the 1994 Act the only places where Gypsies and Travellers can legally park their trailers and vehicles are as follows:

- a) Council Gypsy caravan sites. By 2000 nearly half of Gypsy caravans were accommodated on council sites, although new council site provision stopped with the end of the statutory duty.
- b) Privately owned land (usually by a Gypsy and Traveller) with appropriate planning permission, now accommodating a third of Gypsy caravans in England.
- c) Some land with established use rights, other caravan sites or mobile home parks by agreement or licence, and land required for a seasonal farm worker (under site licensing exemptions).<sup>4</sup>

2.5 However, by the late 1990s, pressure was being exerted upon Government over the damaging effects of the 1994 Act. A Home Office study found that groups of Travellers were being '*chased...from one bit of land to another bit of land, to another bit of land to another bit of land...you just chase them around*' (in the words of a police officer). Travellers were tending to group together into larger bands on fewer sites, leading in turn to higher public anxiety over their presence, and further rounds of evictions.

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<sup>4</sup> Home, Robert and Greenfields, Margaret Anglia, *Cambridge Sub-Region Traveller Needs Assessment*, Cambridgeshire County Council, page 9, May 2006.

- 2.6 A major review of policy resulted in the replacement of *Circular 1/94* by *Circular 1/2006* (discussed below), and guidance on accommodation assessments. Part 6 of the Housing Act 2004 contains several provisions designed to mainstream the provision of accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers alongside that of the settled community, and to ensure that local authorities take a strategic approach to assessing and meeting the needs of Gypsies and Travellers as they do for the rest of the community. Importantly, the Housing Act 2004 requires local authorities to include Gypsies and Travellers in their local housing needs assessments. As well as this Act, local authorities also need to have regard to their other statutory duties, including those in respect of homelessness under the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) and to their obligations under the Race Relations (Amendments) Act 2000.
- 2.7 More recently, *Planning Circular 01/2006 Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites*, set out guidance stating that local planning authorities need to identify appropriate land for Gypsy and Traveller sites through the planning system in line with need in their area, to deal with the growing shortage of sites and prevent unauthorised sites in problem locations. The Gypsy and Traveller Sites Grant made up to £56 million available nationally over the years 2006/7 and 2007/8 to fund new provision and refurbish existing sites. The grant is distributed through the Regional Housing Boards. The extension of the permissible purposes of Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), has enabled RSLs to provide and manage Gypsy and Traveller sites and access funding from the Gypsy and Traveller Sites Grant to do so.

### **Legal definitions**

- 2.8 It is essential to clarify legal definitions relating to the Gypsy and Traveller population, not merely for semantic reasons, but to ensure that their legal rights are recognised and that discrimination does not take place. According to the (then) Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM), there is no comprehensive source of information about the number or characteristics of Gypsies and Travellers in England. As such, definitions are an obvious obstacle to collecting comprehensive information about Gypsies and Travellers. Ethnic, lifestyle and self-ascription approaches would produce different figures. Some Gypsies and Travellers, in some contexts, might be unwilling to acknowledge their origins. A consequence of all this is the frequent 'invisibility' of Gypsies and Travellers in service planning, delivery and monitoring.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Morris (2000) cited in ODPM, *Counting Gypsies & Travellers: A Review of the Gypsy Caravan Count System*, February 2004 Pat Niner, University of Birmingham. Office of the Deputy Prime Minister: London, page 7.

- 2.9 According to Niner<sup>6</sup>, there are three broad groupings of Gypsies and Travellers in England: traditional English (Romany) Gypsies, traditional Irish Travellers, and New Travellers. There are smaller numbers of Welsh Gypsies and Scottish Travellers. Romany Gypsies were first recorded in Britain around the year 1500, having migrated across Europe from an initial point of origin in Northern India. Irish Travellers, generally thought to have developed indigenously, came to England in the 19th century (around the potato famine) and in greater numbers from 1960 onwards. New Travellers are extremely varied and are on the road for a wide variety of economic, environmental, social and personal reasons. Some have built up a tradition of travelling, with a generation of children born on the road.<sup>7</sup>
- 2.10 ‘Gypsies’ were first defined in legislation in Part II of the 1968 *Caravan Sites Act*. After the repeal of Part II of the 1968 Act by the *Criminal Justice and Public Order Act* (CJPOA) in 1994, the definition of ‘gypsies’ and the power for local authorities to provide facilities for them was inserted into the *Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act* (CSCDA) 1960. Under the CSCDA as amended by the CJPOA, local authorities had the power to provide caravan sites for anyone, but can provide additional working space and facilities for those people that fall under the definition of ‘gypsy’<sup>8</sup>. This definition specifies that ‘gypsies’ are persons of nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin, although did not include travelling showmen or circus people. This definition was further modified by case law (*R v South Hams District Council, ex p. Gibb* [1994]) to specify that nomadism must be for the purposes of work. This definition has traditionally been referred to as the ‘planning definition’ to reflect its common use in planning cases to determine whether an individual can claim ‘gipsy’ status and have this status taken into account as a material consideration in the case.<sup>9</sup>
- 2.11 However, one key issue relates to whether it is possible for one definition to be agreed for both planning and housing purposes. According to sections 225 and 226 of the Housing Act 2004, the definition of ‘gypsies and travellers’ is:

*Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, and all other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism and/or caravan dwelling.*<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Niner, Pat, Accommodating Nomadism? An Examination of Accommodation Options for Gypsies and Travellers in England, *Housing Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 2, 141–159, March 2004.

<sup>7</sup> Niner, Pat, 2004, op cit. page 143.

<sup>8</sup> ODPM, *Definition of the term 'gypsies and travellers' for the purposes of the Housing Act 2004*, February 2006.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, page 6.

- 2.12 According to ODPM, whilst careful consideration was given to whether it is possible to create a single definition, it argued that the function of the planning definition is very different from the function of the housing definition, and it is not possible to align the two completely,<sup>11</sup> Further, they state that:

*“...a broad definition is necessary to achieve a full understanding of the accommodation needs of the community, and to put appropriate strategies in place to meet it. For example, gypsies and travellers in bricks and mortar housing may form part of the source of future site need and it will be essential to understand this. Assessing the needs of housed gypsies and travellers will also help in understanding any particular issues faced by this group. The process will help to identify how any problems can be overcome and the ways in which housing may be made to work better for them. This could reduce the numbers wishing to leave housing for sites, and encourage some of those currently on unauthorised sites to move into housing where that is a suitable option for them.”<sup>12</sup>*

- 2.13 Despite the advantages of applying a ‘broad brush’ approach to legal definitions, a lack of clarity can have serious consequences for both local authorities and the Gypsy and Traveller community. For example, the *Thirteenth Report of the Select Committee on Housing, Planning, Local Government and the Regions* (2003/04) highlighted difficulties in agreeing legal definitions including: the need for definitions to incorporate all travelling people irrespective of race, the desire for ‘traditional’ Gypsy communities to be recognised as culturally distinct from ‘new’ travellers, and the need for legislation to acknowledge that broad social and economic factors may lead Gypsy and Traveller communities to adopt a more sedentary and settled lifestyle.

- 2.14 Importantly, Gypsies and Irish Travellers have been recognised by the courts to be two distinct ethnic groups, so have the full protection of the Race Relations Act. The courts made clear that travelling is not a defining characteristic of these groups, but only one among others. This is significant, because the majority of Britain’s estimated 300,000 Gypsies and Travellers are thought to live in conventional housing, some by choice, some because of the severe shortage of Gypsy sites<sup>13</sup>. However, unlike Gypsies and Travellers, Travelling Showpeople are not considered to be an ethnic minority. Although some Gypsies and Travellers may earn a living as ‘travelling showpeople’, Travelling Showpeople as a group do not consider themselves to belong to an ethnic minority<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid, page 8.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, page 10.

<sup>13</sup> Commission for Racial Equality, Common Ground Equality, good race relations and sites for Gypsies and Irish Travellers - Report of a CRE inquiry in England and Wales (Summary), May 2006, pages 3-4.

<sup>14</sup> CLG, *Consultation on revised planning guidance in relation to Travelling Showpeople*, January 2007 Department for Communities and Local Government: London. Page 8.

- 2.15 Finally, in relation to Travelling Showpeople, a circular issued by the department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) in January 2007 defined them as members of an organised group of Travelling Showpeople or circus people (whether or not travelling together as such). They include such persons who on the grounds of their own, their family's or dependants' more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding Gypsies and Travellers<sup>15</sup>. Also, for the purposes of Gypsy and Travellers Accommodation Assessments (GTAAs), Travelling Showpeople are included under the definition of 'gypsies and travellers' in accordance with The Housing (Assessment of Accommodation Needs) (Meaning of Gypsies and Travellers) (England) Regulations 2006. It recommends that Travelling Showpeople's own needs and requirements should be separately identified in the GTAA.<sup>16</sup>
- 2.16 Most recently, *Statutory Instrument 2006 No. 3190*, issued in January 2007, offers a similar definition as used in housing legislation. It defines Gypsies and Travellers as:
- a. persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or of living in a caravan; and
  - b. all other persons of a nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin, including –
    - i. such persons who, on the grounds only of their own or their families or dependent's educational, or health needs or olds age, have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently: and
    - ii. members of an organised group of travelling show people or circus people (whether or not travelling together as such)
- 2.17 It is this definition that is used in the Black Country GTANA.

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid. Page 8.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. Page 8.

## **Summary**

2.18 It is evident that much past legislation negatively impacted on Gypsies and Travellers. However, more recent legislation has more positively attempted to respond to the needs of Gypsies and Travellers by placing duties on local authorities to assess, and provide, accommodation needs. Perhaps reflecting Government desire for increased social inclusion and community cohesion, legislation has also placed greater emphasis on encouraging Gypsy and Traveller community participation in local decision-making processes. However, despite these improvements, there remain calls for further legislative changes. The Traveller Law Reform Project, a consortium of five Gypsy and Traveller organisations, argues the need for greater local authority responsibilities to provide accommodation (especially smaller sites of up to 15 pitches), and greater security of tenure. In relation to definitions, it is evident from the above discussion that it is extremely difficult to satisfactorily define complex ethnic and social groupings such as Gypsies and Travellers. However, such definitions have important implications such as whether or not particular groups are afforded legal protection under the Race Relations Act. Also, this issue may have important implications for GTAAs which seek to accurately assess the current provision and future needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community.

## **Current provision of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation**

### ***Introduction***

2.19 As noted above, the 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act removed the obligation for local authorities to provide sites for Gypsy and Travellers. This has led, along with a change in the use of land and more land being identified for housing, to too few sites for Gypsies and Travellers.

### ***Types of sites***

2.20 There are six different types of site accommodation in use by Gypsies and Travellers including: local authority sites, privately owned commercial sites, family owned sites, Gypsy-owned land without planning permission, unauthorised encampments and transit accommodation<sup>17</sup>:

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<sup>17</sup> This section draws extensively on research undertaken by Pat Niner in 2003 on behalf of the then Department for Transport, Regions and the Environment (DETR) on the provision of Gypsy and Traveller sites in England and later incorporated into her paper on *Accommodating Nomadism? An Examination of Accommodation Options for Gypsies and Travellers in England* (2004).

### ***i. Local Authority sites***

2.21 According to Niner<sup>18</sup>, the great majority of local authority sites are designed for permanent residential use. In 2003 only 271 pitches were intended for transit or short-stay use (and not all of these are actually used for transit purposes). Most sites were built during the period 1970 to 1994 when local authorities (latterly county councils, metropolitan boroughs and London boroughs) had a duty to provide site accommodation for Gypsies 'residing in and resorting to' their areas<sup>19</sup>. The latest caravan count undertaken in January 2007 suggests that at that time there were 6,564 caravans occupying local authority sites in England.

### ***ii. Privately owned commercial sites***

2.22 The majority of privately owned commercial sites are Gypsy and Traveller owned and managed. Most are probably used for long-term residence, but there is also an element (extent unknown) of transit use. The site owner/manager determines site rules and allocation policies. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the latter can be highly selective, meaning that pitches are only available for people whose face fits. There is no comprehensive information on rules on private sites<sup>20</sup>. The January 2007 caravan count suggests that there are 6,509 caravans occupying private caravan sites in England.

### ***iii. A family owner-occupied gypsy site***

2.23 As Niner states, family sites are seen as the ideal by many Gypsies and Travellers in England. They are also often seen as unattainable. There are two major obstacles: money/affordability and getting the necessary planning permission and site licence. While the former is clearly a real barrier to many less well-off Gypsies and Travellers, getting planning permission for use of land as a Gypsy caravan site (and a 'site' in this context could be a single caravan) is currently a major constraint on realising aspirations among those who could afford to buy and develop a family site. Indeed, getting planning permission is arguably the constraint on the further development of all types of Gypsy site.<sup>21</sup> Unfortunately, the caravan count does not distinguish between family owned caravan sites and other forms of privately owned sites.

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<sup>18</sup> Op. cit.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. Page 145.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. Page 146.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. Page 146-7.

#### ***iv. Gypsy-owned land without planning permission***

2.24 In January 2007, 2,252 caravans were recorded as being on unauthorised sites on Gypsy-owned land consisting of 997 'tolerated' and 1255 'not tolerated' by local authorities in England. Again, according to Niner, while evidence is lacking, there is a strong impression from local authority officers and parliamentary questions that the number of Gypsies/ Travellers moving onto their own land without planning consent is increasing. This has contributed to dissatisfaction with planning enforcement powers on the part of the settled community<sup>22</sup>.

#### ***v. An unauthorised encampment***

2.25 In May 2006 the CLG published local authority guidelines for dealing with unauthorised encampments. Whilst much of the discourse of this document refers to legislative powers local authorities hold in order to remove unauthorised campers, it nonetheless recognises that such unauthorised camping is at least partly the consequence of too few permanent sites. This is again acknowledged by the CLG<sup>23</sup> who underline the view that enforcement against unauthorised sites can only be used successfully if there is sufficient provision of authorised sites. They argue that the scale of the problem is small (when compared to the general housing shortage) and a sustained programme supported by a grant system which will need to continue for some years, should enable most areas to provide permanent sites with a network of transit sites, sufficient to meet the present requirement of pitches for 4,000 caravans and future growth<sup>24</sup>. The January 2007 caravan count suggests that there are 1,286 on unauthorised encampments.

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid. Page 147.

<sup>23</sup> CLG, Gypsy and Traveller Task Group on Site Provision and Enforcement: Interim Report to Ministers, March 2007.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. Page 7.

## **vi. 'Transit' accommodation**

2.26 It is the options for accommodation for full-time Travellers and for seasonal and occasional Travellers while away from 'home' or base that are most inadequate. There are estimated to be only about 500 transit pitches (not all used for transit purposes) in England<sup>25</sup>. At present unauthorised encampments 'accommodate' the great majority of 'transit' mobility in an almost totally unplanned manner. No national record is kept of the number of actual 'sites' affected, but extrapolation from local records in different areas suggests that it must be thousands each year. As noted above, conditions for Gypsies and Travellers on unauthorised encampments are very poor and such 'accommodation' cannot be considered satisfactory by any measure. Both the frequency and geography of movement are affected by variable responses of local authorities, landowners and police to unauthorised encampments. Rapid evictions increase the apparent rate of movement: very strict policies may deter some Gypsies and Travellers from an area so long as there are economic opportunities in other areas where it is easier to stop<sup>26</sup>.

2.27 To summarise the figures noted above:

- The latest figures (January 2007) from CLG for the number of caravans show that there are 16,611 in the UK.
- 13,073 or around 78% of these are on authorised sites (6,564 on local authority sites and 6,509 on authorised private sites).
- 3,538 or 22% are on unauthorised developments or encampments – 14% or 2,252 on unauthorised developments (where Gypsies and Travellers own the land but do not have planning permission) and 8% or 1,286 on unauthorised encampments (where Gypsies and Travellers do not own the land and planning consent has not been given for use as a site).
- Between January 2005 and January 2007 the total number of caravans recorded increased from 15,369 to 16,611, although whilst the number of caravans on authorised council and private sites has increased, the number of caravans on unauthorised developments has decreased

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<sup>25</sup> Niner (2003) op cit. Page 190.

<sup>26</sup> ODPM (2004) op cit. Page 151.

- 2.28 From the above it is clear that, despite powers given to local authorities under the 2004 Housing Act, there remains a lack of suitable permanent and transit site provision. Indeed, the Government acknowledges that whilst around three-quarters of Gypsy and Traveller caravans are on authorised sites, most of which are well run and an established part of the community, the remainder do not have an authorised place to stop, and that the continuing increase in unauthorised sites is likely to contribute to increasing community tensions between gypsies and travellers and the settled community. Research undertaken by the Commission for Racial Equality shows that over two-thirds (67%) of local authorities say they have had to deal with tensions between Gypsies and Travellers and other members of the public. They gave three explanations for this: 94 per cent of these authorities stated that unauthorised encampments were one of the chief problems, 46 per cent pointed to planning applications and enforcement, and 51 per cent spoke of general public hostility. The community tensions mainly took the form of complaints by local residents to the council (61%), and hostile media coverage (43%). The most significant overall consequence of these tensions was public resistance to providing any more public or private sites<sup>27</sup>.
- 2.29 In response, the Government is providing £56m for site provision in 2006 to 2008. However, according to the CLG, this amount constitutes both a very small percentage of the overall social housing budget, and that a similar level of funding is required over the next few years in order to maintain the baseline. Additionally, they acknowledge that more consideration needs to be given to refurbishment and new sites and whether the level of grant available for this work should be changed<sup>28</sup>. Interestingly, they also acknowledge that the costs of enforcements against unauthorised developments and encampments demonstrates that providing sites may be more cost effective in the medium term as well as being more socially and economically satisfactory for both travellers and the settled community (e.g. Bristol spent around £200,000 per annum on enforcement before building a transit site which cost £425,000, after which their enforcement costs fell to around £5000 per annum)<sup>29</sup>. Finally, CLG underline the importance of undertaking GTAAs, and emphasising the contribution that these make towards estimating site provision need.

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<sup>27</sup> CRE 2006. Page 7.

<sup>28</sup> CLG 2007. Page 4.

<sup>29</sup> CLG 2007 Op Cit. Page 5.

## Caravan Counts

- 2.30 Although the biannual caravan counts are useful in enabling local authorities to estimate total numbers twice yearly, they are not immune from criticism. The Count of Gypsy Caravans (GS1) return is sent to all English local authorities (district councils in two-tier areas). It requires a count of Gypsy caravans, families, adults and children aged 0-16 on: unauthorised sites on Gypsies' own land (without planning permission) distinguishing between those which are tolerated and not tolerated, unauthorised sites (without planning permission) on land not owned by Gypsies, again distinguishing between those which are tolerated and not tolerated, and authorised sites (with planning permission), distinguishing between council and private sites<sup>30</sup>. Thus there are 24 cells to be completed on each return. It is to be carried out on a specified date in January and July each year, giving a snapshot of the number and location of caravans/families on those days. January and July were selected to give an idea of winter and summer patterns, given the known seasonality of travelling.
- 2.31 Although used extensively by local authorities, according to research undertaken by Niner on behalf of the ODPM<sup>31</sup>, it is likely that the biannual caravan count seriously underestimates the Gypsy and Traveller population for a number of reasons, including a lack of commitment on behalf of local authorities and attempts to minimise apparent need by undercounting, and the lack of involvement of Gypsies and Travellers.

## Summary

- 2.32 It is apparent from the evidence described above that increased provision of permanent and transit sites is not only to ensure that Gypsies and Travellers are accommodated, but also to ensure good relations between the traveller community and settled communities. To some extent, the provisions of the 2004 Housing Act go some way to ensure that the site provision gap left by its predecessor is adequately addressed. Also, whilst it is apparent that the CLG acknowledge that improved provision, rather than legal enforcement, is the more cost-effective response to unauthorised encampments, it is not yet clear how far the £56m additional funding will go in resolving the site provision gap.

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<sup>30</sup> ODPM 2004 Op Cit. Page 4.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

## Conclusion

- 2.33 It is not possible for a brief discussion as that contained in this section, to adequately encapsulate all research relating to such a complex and diverse social group as Gypsy and Travellers. Nonetheless, it is possible to identify a number of key themes. Although much legislation implemented since the 1960s has negatively impacted on the Gypsy and Traveller community, it is arguable that the 2004 Housing Act and subsequent legislation has sought to address this imbalance. Also, whilst there is still some debate as to what constitutes an adequate definition of 'Gypsies and Travellers', the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 has gone some way to ensuring that some members of the Gypsy and Traveller community (Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers) are afforded legal protection against discrimination.
- 2.34 However, it is apparent from the research discussed above the most pressing issue remains that of inadequate permanent and transit site provision. With around one quarter of Gypsies and Travellers residing in unauthorised developments or encampments, the Government has responded with increased funding for site provision. Despite increased powers of local authorities to deal with anti-social behaviour and to evict where necessary, the Government has acknowledged that increased site provision is the most effective means of dealing with unauthorised developments and encampments. However, until site provision is increased, it is likely that the Gypsy and Traveller community's health and educational life-chances will remain low. Lastly, the need for detailed information regarding the current and future accommodation needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community further reinforces the need for GTAAs.



## 3. Current Regional Strategies

### Introduction

- 3.1 As explained in Chapter 1, the new statutory arrangements propose that the local housing assessment process will be the key source of information enabling local authorities to assess the level of provision that is required for Gypsies and Travellers. To facilitate this, strategies are required which outline how any identified need will be met as part of their wider housing strategies.
- 3.2 The Black Country Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTANA) will be the evidence base used to establish the required level of provision. However to assess the current state of play, existing documents at the regional and sub-regional level have been examined to see what reference is made to Gypsy and Traveller issues. The intention is to highlight areas of effective practice in the Black Country and its sub-regions, and examine the extent to which authorities are currently addressing the issue. Furthermore, understanding the current position will be important in the development of future strategies intended to meet accommodation need among Gypsies and Travellers.

### Regional strategies

#### *The West Midlands Housing Strategy; Putting Our House Together*

- 3.3 Published in June 2005, the West Midlands Housing Strategy aims to create a mixed, balanced and inclusive community whilst assisting the delivery of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy.
- 3.4 The document recognises its requirement under new legislation to assess the accommodation needs of Gypsy and Traveller communities. It also states that the execution of these requirements will mainly be made through local planning systems, although the Housing Corporation will ultimately be responsible for the acquisition of plots.
- 3.5 Chapter 4 of the document relates to the housing needs of Gypsies and Travellers: there is a detailed picture of the policy context, the role of the Regional Housing Strategy, analysis of the caravan count data by sub-regional Housing Market Areas, and the assessment of Gypsy and Traveller needs based on secondary data sources.

- 3.6 With regards to future assessments of need, the strategy states that information '*will feed up from local authorities' local housing assessments [with] a regional role in ensuring consistency and robustness*'. Some policies regarding the needs of Gypsies and Travellers (including those in housing) include:

*Policy 4.47 The RHB requires local authorities' to integrate their strategies to take account of Gypsies and Travellers and especially pitch provision.*

*Policy 4.48 The RHB expects local authorities to ensure there is good coordination, liaison and consistency of housing advice, on accommodation matters to Gypsies and Travellers.*

### **West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy 2004**

- 3.7 Published in 2004, this document set to provide a Spatial Strategy for local authority development plans. Chapter 6, which discusses the deliverance of affordable housing and mixed communities, incorporates the following policy that includes the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers.

*Policy CF5*

*Development plans should ensure that adequate provision is made for suitable sites to accommodate gypsies and other travellers. Such provision should reflect the order of demand in the area as indicated by trends shown by the ODPM annual count and any additional local information.*

### **West Midlands: Interim Regional Statement on Gypsy and Traveller Policy 2004**

- 3.8 In response to the above mentioned RSS the Secretary of State suggested that policy CF5 would need developing. It is therefore planned that a full review will be undertaken, taking into account the result of local GTAAs and strategic views of need across the region. This Interim Statement is therefore to be used to guide local authorities until these GTAAs have been carried out.
- 3.9 Using methods from the below mentioned Shared Evidence Base updated by January 2006 Gypsy Caravan Count data, the Interim Statement estimates the requirement in the Black Country area to be 40 pitches to 2011.
- 3.10 The Interim Statement also makes suggestions as to the actions local authorities can make before the publication of their GTAAs. It encourages LPAs to bring forward DPDs containing site allocations in advance of their GTAAs and also welcomes the involvement of RSLs in meeting the needs of Gypsies and Travellers.

- 3.11 It also points out that local authorities should consider developing specific communication strategies as part of their Community Cohesion plans, and also refers to the availability of a 100% funded Government grant for new site provision.

***West Midlands Regional Housing Strategy / West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy shared evidence base – Gypsies and Travellers***

- 3.12 This report by Pat Niner was commissioned to create a Shared Evidence Base for developing the Regional Housing Strategy and the Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands in March 2005. The report comprises analysis of the bi-annual Caravan Count and a survey of all West Midlands local authorities regarding basic information on sites and encampments, policies and strategies and estimates possible need for pitches to 2010.
- 3.13 The Black Country authorities are included in the Central region referred to in the report, which has a preliminary estimated need of between 290 and 310 pitches. Proportionally worked out, this represents a need for 47 pitches in the Black Country up to 2010.
- 3.14 The report also refers to estimated numbers from local authority returns on the number of Gypsies and Travellers in bricks and mortar accommodation. Sandwell reported one of the highest figures in the Region with an estimate of over 500 households in bricks and mortar, whilst Dudley reported between 10 and 100. There were no estimates reported from Walsall or Wolverhampton, although Wolverhampton believed that many were in social housing.

***The West Midlands Regional Homelessness Strategy 2005***

- 3.15 The West Midlands Regional Homelessness Strategy 2005 was commissioned in order to inform the Regional Housing Strategy. The Strategy recognises that Travellers are a client group within the Homelessness sector that may have different experience of homelessness that it is important to explore.

***Race Equality West Midlands – Statement of regional strategy***

- 3.16 Race Equality West Midlands was created in order to assist local racial equality councils and partnerships with strategic development, service improvement, acquisition of funding, training, policy and programmes, research, communication, performance monitoring and collaborative ventures and partnership formation.
- 3.17 Amongst the work with which the organisation wishes to assist with is work relating to the issues of rural racism in relation to Gypsies and Travellers.

## **Black Country strategies**

- 3.18 The *Black Country Study*, produced by the Black Country Consortium, began three years ago and works towards a thirty year vision agreed by partners in order to counter the process of decline in the area. The Study will support a sub-regional strategy which will prioritise the physical, environmental, social and economic aspects of the Black Country. The Regional Planning Body have accepted the Study as a support document for the Draft RSS Phase One Revision.
- 3.19 The Study does not however make reference to Gypsies and Travellers in its housing or communities documents.

## **Local strategies**

### ***Dudley***

- 3.20 The Housing Strategy, February 2004 for Dudley does not mention the separate accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers in the area. The Dudley Homelessness Strategy 2006 – 2011 does not make reference to homelessness issues faced by Gypsies and Travellers in the borough.
- 3.21 Dudley's Supporting People Five Year Strategy 2005-2010 recognises that there are support needs amongst Gypsy and Traveller groups. The document recognises these to include adult literacy, drug abuse and dealing, domestic violence, employment and opportunities for self-employment, and access to housing for older members of the community. The Strategy aims to fund 18 units to support 80 clients with floating support, aiming to encourage access to regular health and social care, and education. In addition, Supporting People fund a post to meet the needs identified in the Strategy.
- 3.22 The Dudley Community Plan was published in 2000 and does not include plans specifically aimed at Gypsies and Travellers. The Race Equality Scheme 2007 – 2010 was published in April 2007 and recognises that the Borough has a Gypsy and Traveller community, but does not specifically target them in the document.

### ***Sandwell***

- 3.23 Neither the Sandwell Housing Strategy 2005 – 2008, nor the Homelessness Strategy 2003, include information regarding the Boroughs' Gypsy and Traveller community.

- 3.24 In Figure 8 of the Sandwell Five Year Supporting People Strategy 2004 – 2009 it is reported that there is limited information on the support needs of Travellers as a client group, and as there are no recognised support needs there will be no additional support for this community. In 2004, Sandwell Supporting People recorded not supporting anyone from the Traveller client group and therefore supplying no funding for this group. It did recognise that information should be made available to Gypsies and Travellers and reported that funding would be made to enhance services, such as making publicly available material appropriate to the Gypsy and Traveller community.
- 3.25 The Sandwell Plan 2006 and the Race Equality Scheme do not recognise the Gypsy and Traveller community in Sandwell.

### **Walsall**

- 3.26 The Walsall Housing Strategy 2005 – 2008 makes reference to the available housing options for Gypsies and Travellers in the area. The Strategy states that investment will be made into the refurbishment of the site, and a further bid to be made to the ODPM<sup>32</sup> site refurbishment grant in order to make improvements identified through resident consultation.
- 3.27 The Council also states that it will develop a Travellers Strategy to explore issues highlighted in the Homelessness Strategy such as the perceived need for transit sites in Walsall.
- 3.28 The Walsall Homelessness Strategy 2007-2010 makes extensive reference to the known needs of Gypsies and Travellers, the need to identify unknown needs and how the Council plans to meet and identify these needs. The Strategy refers to a specific floating support service for Gypsies and Travellers that aims to *'provide generic floating support services to Gypsies and Travellers across the borough to help minimize levels of homelessness and repeat homelessness'*.
- 3.29 The Five Year Supporting People Strategy 2005-2010 recognises that Gypsy and Traveller communities have support needs, and this is evident in their current (04/05) funding pattern. However what their needs are is unknown and the service is to be monitored for further development. As with Sandwell, the Strategy notes that the Borough does not have a large enough Gypsy and Traveller population to warrant specific services, but recognises that information should be made available in suitable format to enable easy access for this client group.
- 3.30 The 2005-2010 Walsall Community Plan: *Working Together for a Stronger Future* does not specify the Gypsy and Traveller Community. However, Walsall developed a stand alone Gypsy and Traveller Community Strategy in May 2006 which states:

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<sup>32</sup> Now CLG

The strategy aims to raise awareness of the needs, aspirations and culture of Gypsies and Travellers, promote equality, and develop a consistent multi agency partnership based and borough wide to ensure the effective delivery of services.

3.31 The Walsall Race Equality Scheme 2005–08 makes specific mention of Gypsy and Traveller issues in its Chapter entitled ‘Our Arrangement for Access to Information Services’. The document refers to a team of staff in Supported Housing who assist Gypsies and Travellers with accessing a range of council services such as finding accommodation, registering with a GP and finding places at local schools for children.

### **Wolverhampton**

3.32 There was no specific mention of Gypsy and Traveller issues within Wolverhampton’s Housing Strategy 2004/05 – 2006/7, Homelessness 2007 – 2010, Community Plan 2002 – 2012, Race Equality Scheme 2005 – 2008 or Wolverhampton Supporting People Strategy 2005 – 2010. However Wolverhampton did acknowledge these issues by commissioning an Interim Traveller Accommodation Assessment.

3.33 The Wolverhampton Interim Traveller Accommodation Need Assessment was carried out in 2006 and aimed to assess the background to the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and also to clarify the scope and approach used in the full GTAA to be commissioned in 2007.

3.34 The Interim Assessment estimated the number of households in the area to be 125 to 205, 80 to 165 of which were thought to be in bricks and mortar accommodation. It was estimated that 27 to 39 households were in need of additional pitches.

3.35 The suggestions made regarding the approach of a full GTAA include the inclusion of Travelling Showpeople as a distinct group, joint-working with neighbouring authorities, and the inclusion of all accommodation types in the assessment. This approach has been adapted for the Black Country GTAA. Low Hill was identified as an area in Wolverhampton with a high number of unauthorised encampments and where policies would have particular impact.

## Summary

- 3.36 Current strategies display awareness of Gypsy and Traveller issues in a discussion of both the accommodation needs of this community and of the wider social exclusion issues faced by this group. However only one borough (Walsall) mentioned Gypsies and Travellers' accommodation needs in its Housing Strategy, although three others discuss their needs in Supporting People documents. Strategies are hindered by the current lack of evidence regarding the accommodation needs of Gypsy and Traveller Groups and are awaiting results from the GTAA in order to create more focused policies and strategies.



## 4. Trends in the population levels of Gypsies and Travellers

### Introduction

- 4.1 This chapter examines Gypsy and Traveller numbers in the Black Country and population trends using secondary data. The primary source of information for Gypsies and Travellers in the UK as a whole is the CLG Caravan Count. This was introduced in 1979 and places a duty on local authorities in England to undertake a twice yearly count for the CLG on the number of Gypsy and Traveller caravans in their area. The CLG Caravan Count was intended to estimate the size of the Gypsy and Traveller population for whom provision was to be made and to monitor progress in meeting need.
- 4.2 Although the duty to provide sites was removed in 1994, the need for local authorities to conduct the count has remained. There are, however, several weaknesses with the reliability of the data. For example, across the country counting practices vary between local authorities, and the practice of carrying out the count on a single day ignores the rapidly fluctuating number and distribution of unauthorised encampments. Concerns have also been raised over a lack of commitment on the part of some local authorities to detect Gypsies and Travellers (particularly on unauthorised sites), since this minimises the apparent need for new sites and services.<sup>33</sup>
- 4.3 Travelling Showpeople are excluded from the CLG Caravan Count, as are New Travellers by some local authorities. Significantly the CLG Caravan Count is only of caravans and so Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar accommodation are excluded. It should also be noted that pitches often contain more than one caravan, typically two or three.
- 4.4 However, despite fears about accuracy, the CLG Caravan Count is valuable because it provides the only national source of information on numbers and distribution of Gypsy and Traveller caravans. It is therefore useful for identifying trends in the Gypsy and Traveller population, if not determining absolute numbers.
- 4.5 In some regions, additional data on unauthorised encampments has been gathered by local authorities, for the purpose of both assessing need and monitoring the effectiveness of enforcement approaches. This has been particularly valuable in some areas in documenting patterns of illegal encampments, which are poorly covered by the CLG Caravan Count. Unfortunately no such data is available in the Black Country area.

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<sup>33</sup> Pat Niner, *Local Authority Gypsy and Traveller Sites in England*, ODPM, 2003.

- 4.6 The CLG Caravan Count distinguishes between socially rented authorised sites, private authorised sites, and unauthorised sites. Since January 2006 unauthorised sites have been broken down between unauthorised developments (where the site is on Gypsy or Traveller owned land) and unauthorised encampments (on land not owned by the inhabitants), and specifies whether the sites are tolerated by the council or are subject to enforcement action. The analysis in this chapter includes data from July 2003 to January 2007, so some data predates the more detailed figures provided since 2006. The analysis in this chapter distinguishes between socially rented and private authorised sites, and unauthorised sites.

## Total population

- 4.7 The total Gypsy and Traveller population living in the UK is unknown, although it is estimated that 90,000 to 120,000 live in England<sup>34</sup>. There are uncertainties partly because of the number of different definitions that exist, but mainly because of an almost total lack of information about the numbers of Gypsies and Travellers now living in houses or flats. Estimates produced for the CLG suggest that at least 50% of the overall Gypsy and Traveller population are now living in permanent housing.
- 4.8 The January 2007 Count (the most recent figures available) indicated a total of 16,313 caravans. Applying an assumed three person per caravan multiplier would give a population of just under 49,000<sup>35</sup>. Again applying an assumed multiplier and doubling this to allow for the numbers of Gypsies and Travellers in housing,<sup>36</sup> this gives a total population of around 98,000 for England. However, given the limitations of the data this figure can only be very approximate and is likely to be significantly underestimated.

## Regional perspective

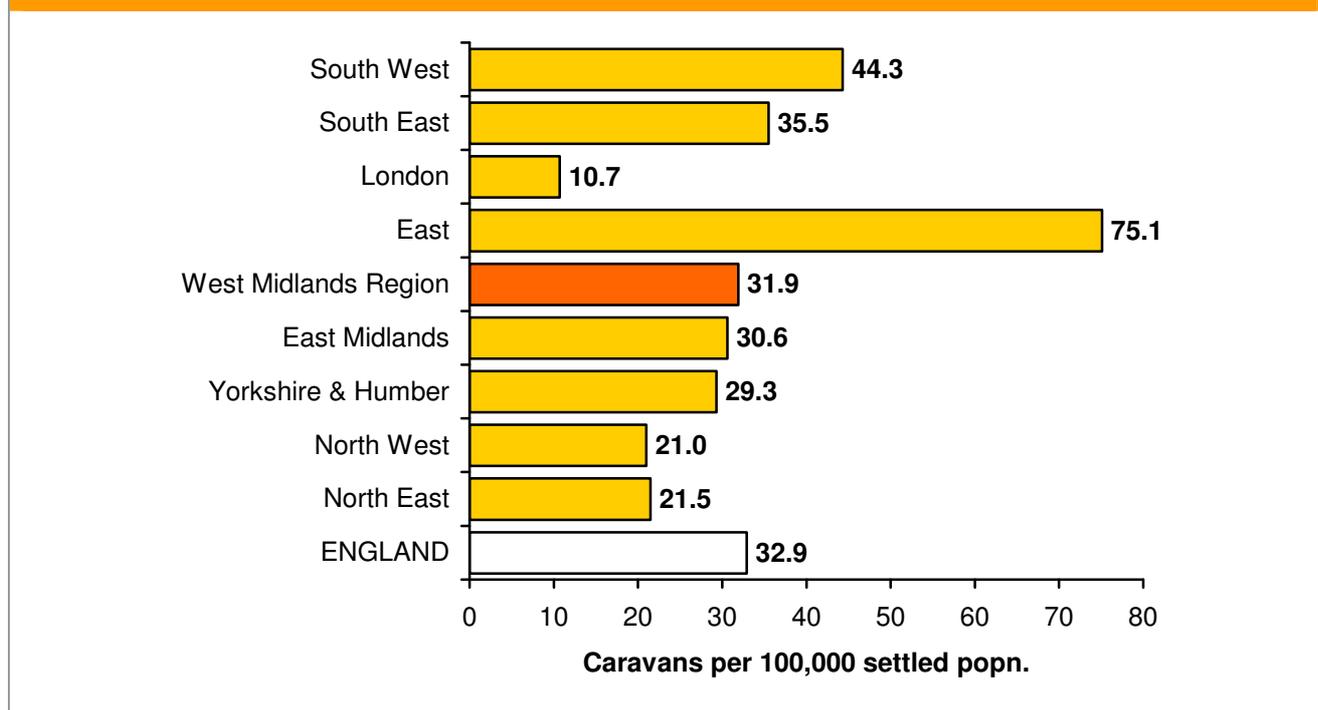
- 4.9 Having looked at some of the basic characteristics of the Gypsy and Traveller population, we now examine these features in slightly more detail. Given that one of the distinctive characteristics of the population is its mobility, it is first of all necessary to consider the national situation as this will help put the situation in the Black Country into context.
- 4.10 The chart below shows the results from the Caravan Count in January 2007 for each region of England. Due to the differing sizes of the English regions, the values have been adjusted for population to create useful comparative figures. The table below shows the absolute number of caravans.

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<sup>34</sup> J. P. Liegeois, (1994) *Romas, Gypsies and Travellers* Strasbourg: Council of Europe. This is equivalent to 0.15% to 0.21% of the total population.

<sup>35</sup> Pat Niner (2003), op. cit.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

**Figure 4.1 Caravans in regions of England (per population) January 2007**

Source: CLG Caravan Count (January 2007) / National Statistics (mid-2005 population estimates)

**Table 4.1 Caravans in regions of England, January 2007**

South West 2,247 (13.5%)	South East 2,895 (17.4%)	London 803 (4.8%)	East 4,163 (25.1%)	<b>West Midlands Region 1,714 (10.3%)</b>
East Midlands 1,317 (7.9%)	Yorkshire & Humber 1,482 (8.9%)	North West 1,441 (8.7%)	North East 549 (3.3%)	ENGLAND 16,611

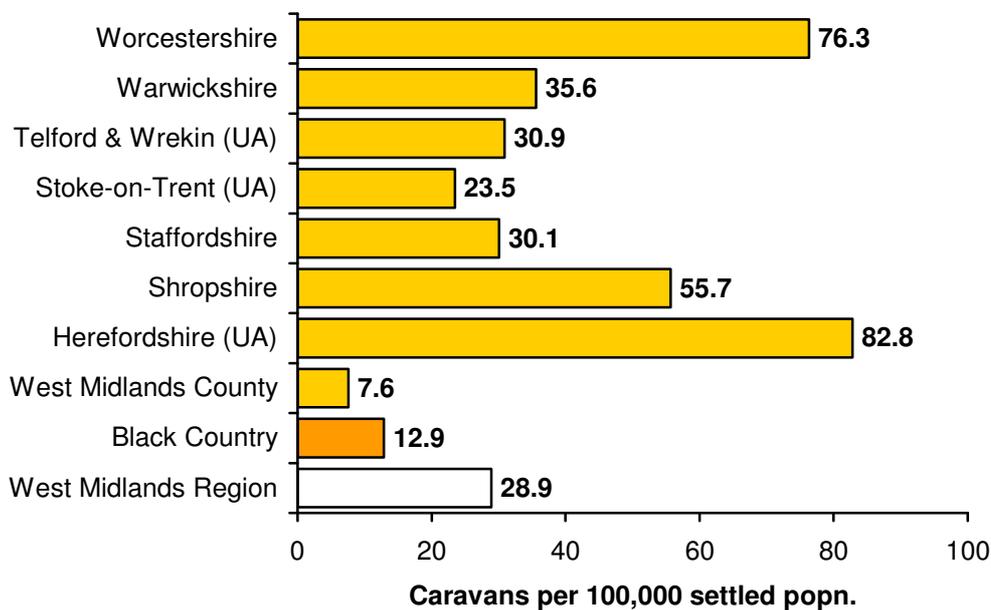
Source: CLG Caravan Count (January 2007)

- 4.11 It can be seen that the density of caravans in the West Midlands (the region rather than the metropolitan county<sup>37</sup>) is very close to the UK average, at 31.9 per 100,000 settled population. The total number of caravans counted in the region in January 2007 was 1,714.
- 4.12 Any caravans which are not tolerated by the local authority are excluded from the district or county based tables and charts, except where stated otherwise. This is because such sites generally exist only for a short time and therefore their numbers in small areas will fluctuate significantly from day to day. Since the Caravan Count provides a snapshot of a single day, this information is unlikely to provide a representative picture of the number of such non-tolerated caravans over a whole six month period. The regional figure provided in such charts has also had non-tolerated encampments removed so that it is directly comparable with the district and borough figures.

<sup>37</sup> The West Midlands is an administrative region, however the distinct West Midlands metropolitan county still exists as a legal entity, and comprises the four Black Country boroughs plus Birmingham, Solihull and Coventry.

- 4.13 As an example, in Dudley there were 35 unauthorised caravans present on the day of the CLG Caravan Count in January 2007: in the previous three counts there had been none. If included, this single encampment would significantly and misleadingly inflate the number of caravans found both in Dudley and in the Black Country as a whole.
- 4.14 West Midlands County has far fewer caravans than the West Midlands region as a whole, according to the CLG Caravan Count. The County registered 7.6 caravans per 100,000 population in January 2007, compared to 76.3 per 100,000 in the nearby county of Worcestershire. However, due to the large population of the West Midlands County, 13.4% of the caravans in the region are still found in the area.
- 4.15 A total figure for the Black Country was also calculated. There were 140 authorised or tolerated caravans counted in the Black Country in January 2007, making up 9.5% of the regional total, and over two thirds (70.7%) of the County total. Adjusted for population, this showed a figure of 12.9 per 100,000. In summary, the study area contains significantly more caravans than average when compared to the rest of the West Midlands County, but still less than half the overall West Midlands regional average of 28.9.

**Figure 4.2 Caravans in counties of the West Midlands region (per population) January 2007**



Source: CLG Caravan Count (January 2007) / National Statistics (mid-2005 population estimates)

**Table 4.2 Caravans in counties of the West Midlands region, January 2007**

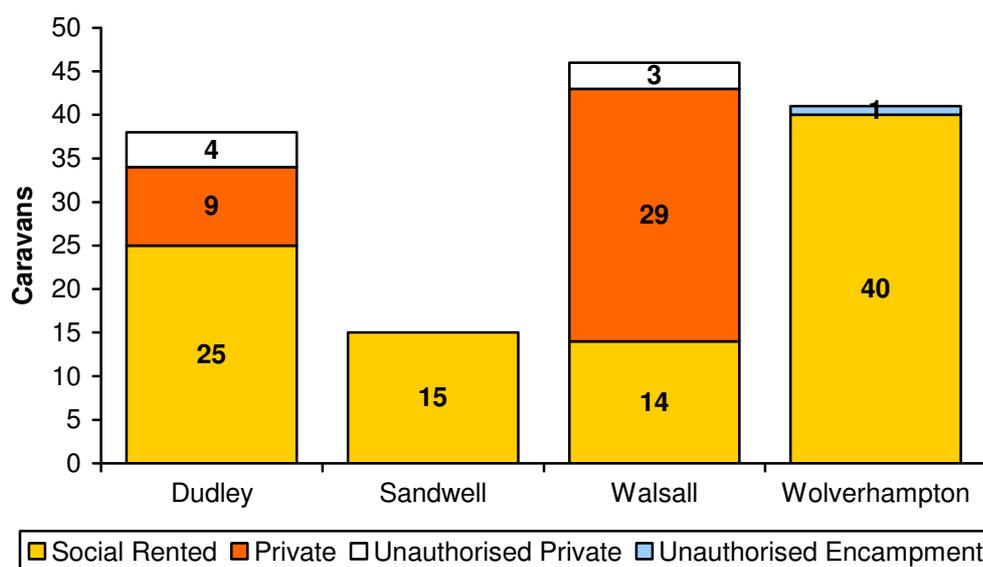
Herefordshire 148 (10.0%)	Shropshire 161 (10.9%)	Staffordshire 246 (16.7%)	Stoke-on-Trent 56 (3.8%)	Telford & Wrekin 50 (3.4%)
Warwickshire 190 (12.9%)	Worcestershire 424 (28.8%)	W. Mids. County 198 (13.4%)	<b>Black Country</b> <b>140 (9.5%)</b>	W. Mids. Region 1473 (100.0%)

Source: CLG Caravan Count (January 2007)

### Districts within the study area

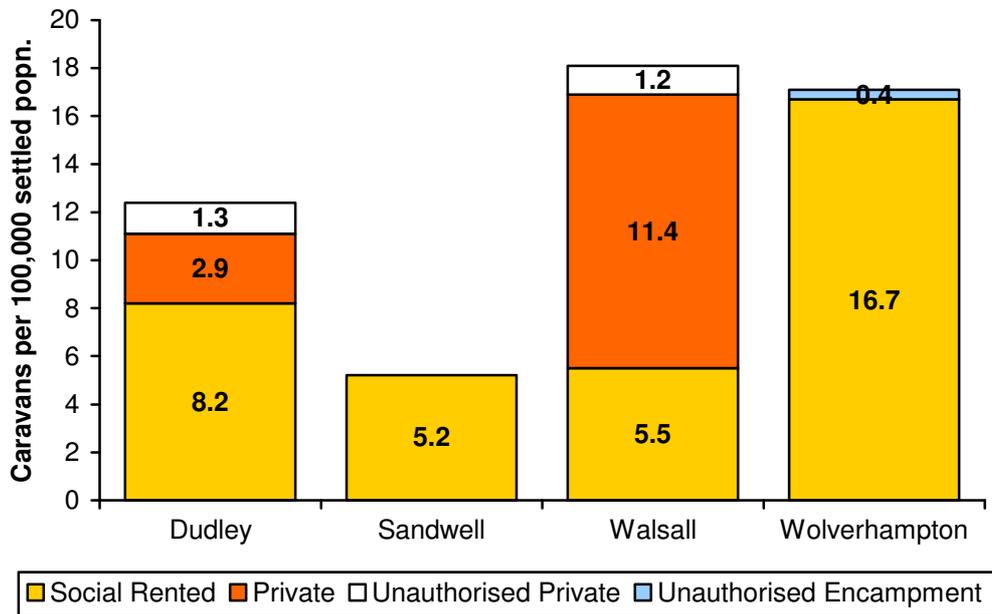
- 4.16 The tables below show the location of caravans, according to the CLG Caravan Count, in the individual local authority areas in the Black Country. The columns are also broken down by tenure in order to show different types of provision.
- 4.17 As can be seen, Walsall has the largest number of caravans in the study area, at 46 caravans (or 18.1 per 100,000 population), while Sandwell has the least both in absolute numbers (15 caravans) and per population (5.2 per 100,000).
- 4.18 Tenures vary across the area: Wolverhampton and Sandwell's provision is 100% local authority owned, while private sites are available in Walsall and Dudley, in the case of Walsall making up two thirds of the total provision. A small number of caravans, spread across three out of four districts, are on unauthorised but tolerated sites, seven on land owned by the inhabitants but without planning permission, and one on other land.

**Figure 4.3 Caravans in districts of the Black Country (authorised or tolerated): January 2007**



Source: CLG Caravan Count (January 2007)

**Figure 4.4 Caravans in districts (authorised or tolerated), adjusted for population: January 2007**



Source: CLG Caravan Count (January 2007) / National Statistics (mid-2005 population estimates)

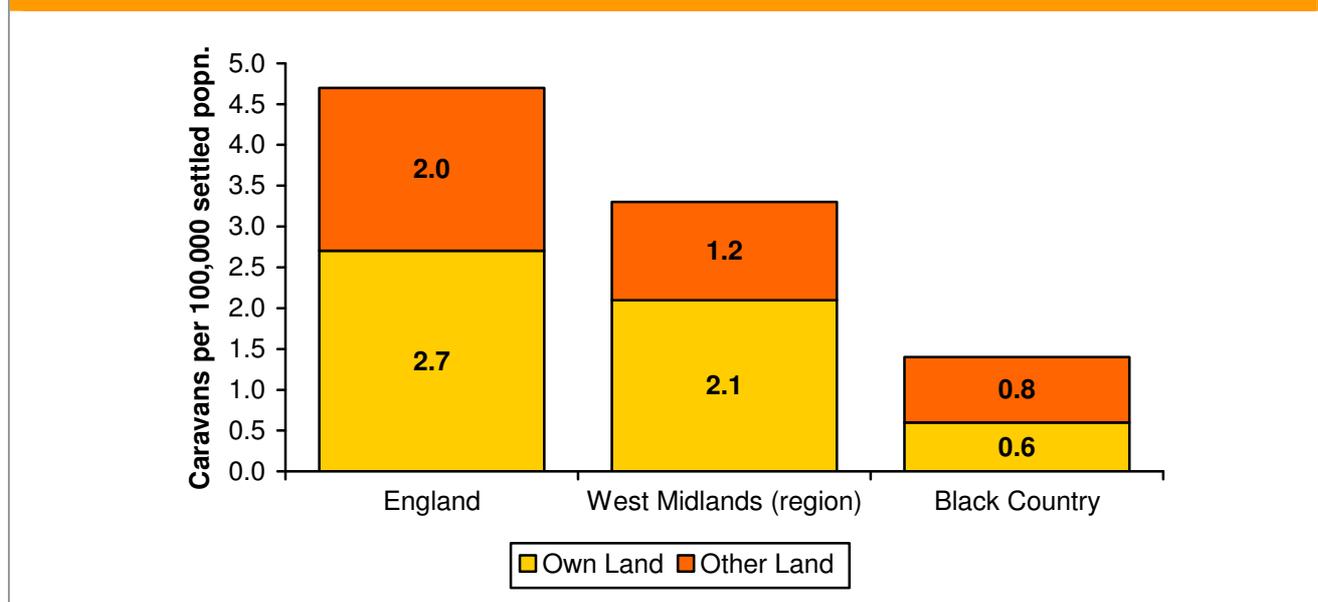
4.19 Assuming that the authorised provision in the area is fully occupied, this would indicate the highest level of authorised provision, adjusted for (settled) population, in Walsall, at 16.9 caravans per 100,000 settled population. The comparable figures for Wolverhampton, Dudley and Sandwell are 16.7, 11.1 and 5.2 respectively.

**Unauthorised encampments**

4.20 As has previously been noted, the CLG data for individual districts in relation to caravans which are not tolerated by the local authority tends to fluctuate dramatically since it is based on a single day. However, by averaging the data across all five six month periods, a general comparison can be made between levels of unauthorised encampments and developments in the Black Country and other areas.

4.21 The Black Country appears to have a lower level of unauthorised encampments per 100,000 settled population (1.4) than the regional (3.3) or national (4.7) averages, although experience in other areas of the country suggests this could potentially be subject to distortion due to local reporting practices or by a limited level of monitoring.

4.22 The absolute average number of non-tolerated caravans reported in the Black Country was sixteen. However, this figure merely reflects the average number present on the day of the count, not across a whole six month period, and therefore is only useful when used as part of a comparison with other areas as shown in the chart below.

**Figure 4.5 Caravans in districts (not tolerated), adjusted for population: Jan 2005 – Jan 2007**

Source: CLG Caravan Count (January 2007) / National Statistics (mid-2005 population estimates)

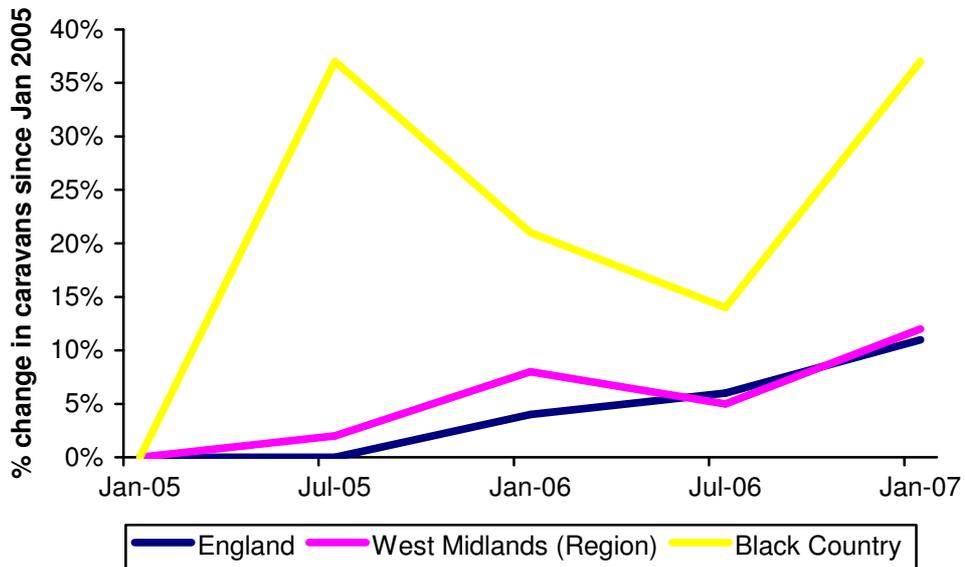
### Travelling Showpeople

- 4.23 The cultural practice of Travelling Showpeople is to live on a plot in a site yard in static caravans or mobile homes, along with smaller caravans used for travelling or inhabited by other family members (for example, adolescent children). Their equipment (including rides, kiosks and stalls) is kept on the same plot. This makes determining how many dwellings are found on a particular site difficult. Counting caravans or vehicles in general may give a misleading picture.
- 4.24 No secondary data is available specifically for Travelling Showpeople in the study area: this is because the CLG do not collect ethnicity information, and therefore their caravans may be included in the statistics above. However, this depends on the practices of individual local authorities in counting: some exclude such caravans from the statistics entirely.

### Recent population trends

- 4.25 It is also useful to know how the population of Gypsies and Travellers and distribution of sites and encampments has changed over time in recent years. As can be seen in the chart below, the number of caravans in the Black Country has increased since January 2005 by 37% (from 102 to 140 caravans), although it has fluctuated during that time, while it has held more or less steady in the rest of the UK. Since authorised sites are almost always filled to capacity, this is likely to reflect an increase in levels of provision over the two year period.

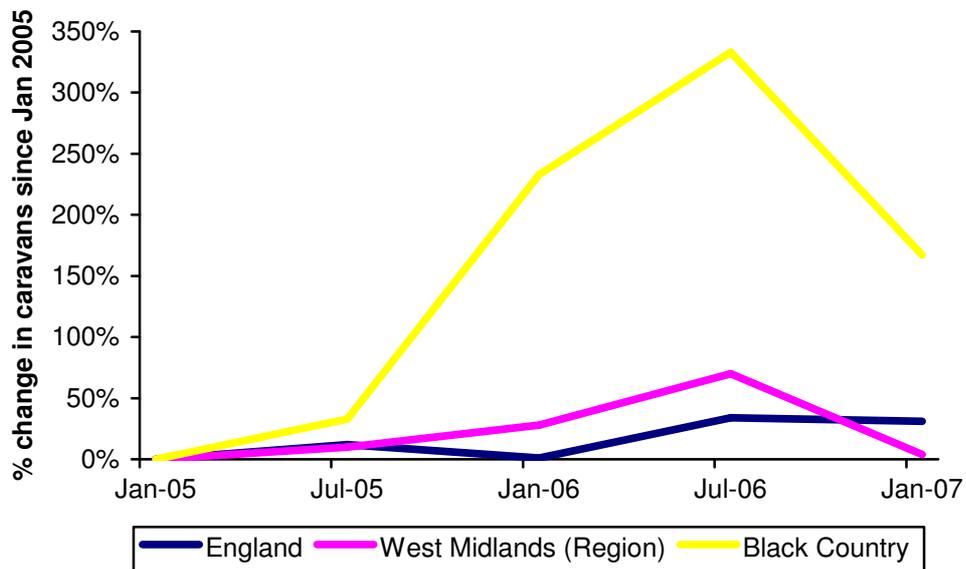
**Figure 4.6 Percentage change in number of authorised and tolerated caravans since January 2005**



Source: CLG Caravan Count January 2007

4.26 An interesting trend at a national level has been the rapid increase in unauthorised but tolerated caravans since 2005, by around 30% nationwide. Although not shown here graphically, a large proportion of this increase has been from unauthorised developments, which are situated on land owned by the occupier but without planning permission. This category has increased by 60% across England since January 2005. The trend toward increasing toleration of illegally located caravans can also be seen in the Black Country, although from a very low base. There are currently eight such caravans in the study area.

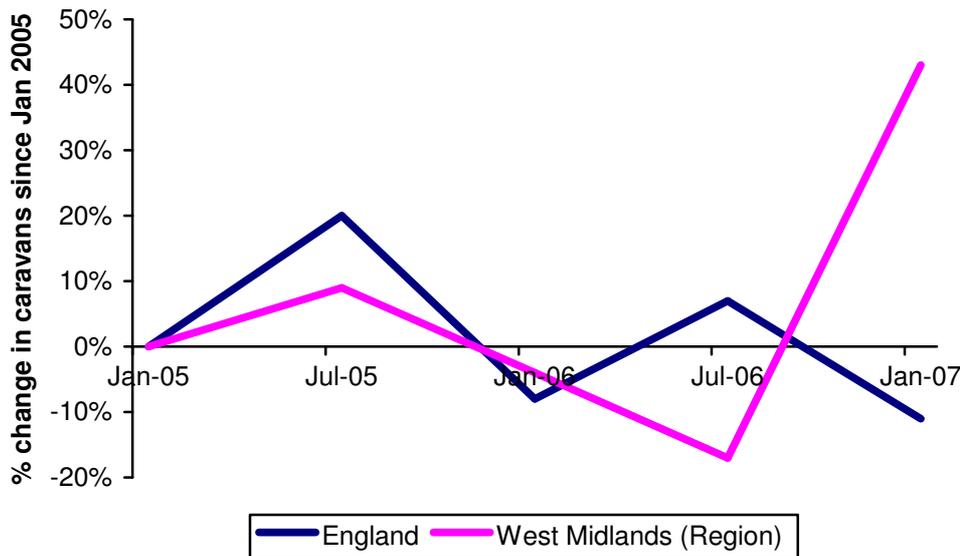
**Figure 4.7 Percentage change in number of unauthorised but tolerated caravans since January 2005**



Source: CLG Caravan Count January 2007

- 4.27 For those unauthorised caravans which are not tolerated by local authorities, there is a slight downward trend nationwide: this may be partly attributable to the growth in unauthorised but tolerated developments, or perhaps to a move into housing in response to enforcement practices. The West Midlands regional data, however, appears to show a dramatic increase for January 2007, which cannot be readily explained from the secondary data. The forthcoming primary research may shed more light upon the processes at work here.
- 4.28 As has previously been noted, the CLG data cannot be relied upon to provide an accurate representation of levels of unauthorised encampments at the level of the study area or its sub-districts for an individual six month period, and therefore the chart below shows only national and regional data.

**Figure 4.8 Percentage change in number of ‘not tolerated’ caravans since January 2005**



Source: CLG Caravan Count January 2007

4.29 It is also notable that nationally the trends appear to be seasonal: there are far more unauthorised caravans counted in the summer months, reflecting the increased travelling activity at this time of the year.

## Summary

4.30 There is only one main source of data on Gypsy and Traveller numbers in the Black Country, that being the national CLG Caravan Count. It has significant difficulties with accuracy and reliability, especially on a local level or when enumerating unauthorised encampments, tending to underestimate in many cases. The count does not take into account Travelling Showpeople, for whom no known secondary data is available.

4.31 The CLG Caravan Count indicates that the Black Country has a relatively low concentration of Gypsy and Traveller caravans, well below both national and regional averages. However, it still contains 9.5% of all the authorised and tolerated caravans in the region.

4.32 The district containing the largest proportion of authorised and tolerated caravans in the Black Country is Walsall. Wolverhampton has a similar level of provision, and Dudley slightly lower. Sandwell has a much smaller number of pitches available. Provision in Walsall is mostly privately owned; the largest concentration of public provision of pitches is in Wolverhampton. The majority of Dudley’s caravans and all of those found in Sandwell are on publicly owned sites.

- 4.33 The level of authorised provision, adjusted for population, varies significantly across the Black Country, from 5.2 caravans per 100,000 settled population in Sandwell, to 16.9 per 100,000 in Walsall. Eight caravans on unauthorised but tolerated sites are found in the Black Country.
- 4.34 The Black Country has a much lower level of developments and encampments not tolerated by local authorities than the national and regional averages.
- 4.35 The number of caravans on authorised sites in the Black Country has increased by 37% since 2005, while across England as a whole there has been a slight increase (11%).
- 4.36 While there has been a general decrease in the numbers of caravans not tolerated by local authorities across England as a whole, which might be explained either by increased toleration of such encampments or a general move by Gypsies and Travellers into bricks and mortar accommodation, the West Midlands' most recent figures appear to go against this trend. The reasons for this are as yet unclear. Nationally, there has been a simultaneous increase in the number of unauthorised caravans which are tolerated by local authorities: this has also occurred in the Black Country, although the trend is less clear for the West Midlands region as a whole.



## SECTION B: PRIMARY DATA

Section B describes the primary research elements of the study. These include stakeholder consultation work and a survey of Gypsies and Travellers living on sites and in housing. The data is therefore qualitative; it is based on participants' views and experiences of accommodation provision and wider service issues.

Chapter 5 outlines the results from the main findings from the stakeholder consultation. After a discussion of the survey methodology in Chapter 6, we look at participants living on authorised sites (Chapter 7), unauthorised sites (Chapter 8) and in housing (Chapter 9). Access to services is considered in Chapter 10. The experiences of Travelling Showpeople are discussed in Chapter 11.



## 5. Stakeholder Consultation

### Introduction

- 5.1 Consultation with a range of stakeholders was conducted to provide in-depth information about the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers. The aim was to obtain both an overall perspective of issues facing Gypsies and Travellers, and an understanding of local issues that are specific to the Black Country.
- 5.2 Two focus group meetings were held and covered a range of stakeholders. The first included policy makers and strategists, including representatives from each Black Country authority and incorporating stakeholders from planning, housing and education. The second focus group was held for frontline workers and community representative groups and included representation from Traveller Education Services, West Midlands Consortium – Education Services for Travelling Children (WMCESTC), Sandwell Race Equality, Supporting People, CONNEXIONS, site managers and community members. Further interviews were also carried out with the Sandwell Irish Association and with key stakeholders who were unable to make the dates.
- 5.3 Themes covered in the focus groups included: the need for additional provisions and facilities, travelling patterns, availability of land, access to services, and current work taking place to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers in the Black Country. This chapter highlights the main points that were raised.

### Site provision

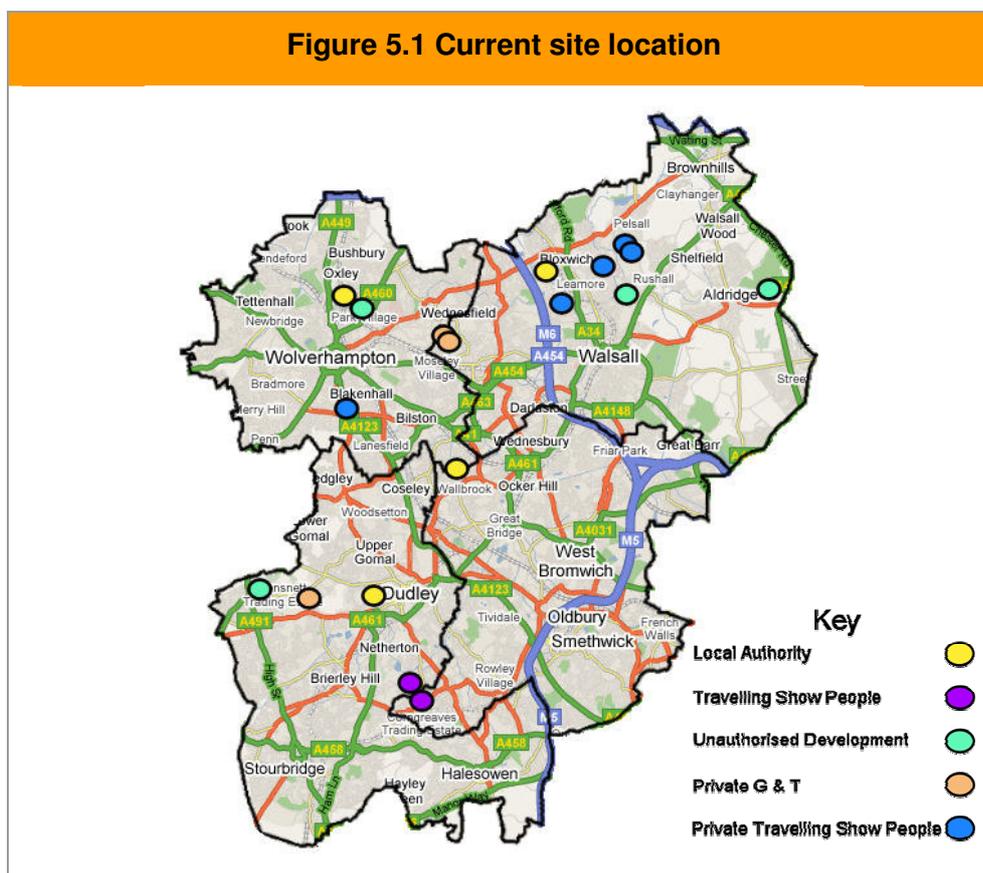
- 5.4 Stakeholders agreed that there was a need for more residential sites in the Black Country and that transit provision was also required. The current accommodation circumstances reported in the Black Country differed for each authority, but stakeholders agreed that all had been in need of refurbishment (the Walsall site's refurbishment is nearing completion).
- 5.5 The location of current sites was reported as an issue for many of the site residents. It was reported that sites were often in built up, industrial areas and did not have good access to transport links. The example was given of the Dudley site that had originally been in open areas, but was now surrounded by industrial and waste units.
- 5.6 The standard of current sites was also raised as a matter of concern and although it was accepted that bids were being made for refurbishment, some of which had already gone through, stakeholders believed that lessons should be learnt from current problems.

- 5.7 One design concern was the size of site pitches: it was felt that pitches should be large enough to facilitate three caravans for young girls and boys to have separate sleeping quarters as advised by social services. It was also reported that there was no room for parking on some sites.
- 5.8 The age of current sites also presented problems. The Dudley local authority site is referred to as being 35 years old and still has the same utility services as when it was built which are by now unsuitable. It is important to note however that the utility blocks will be rebuilt in 2008 to be completed by March 2009.
- 5.9 Stakeholders were uncertain of the best approach to site management and were concerned that when allocation policies were created, these could be overturned by the preference of residents only to have certain families sharing the site. In Wolverhampton the high number of site residents who expressed interest in social housing was thought to be a result of the management style provided by the Gypsy Council, which runs the site on behalf of the Council<sup>38</sup>.
- 5.10 The current sites were reported as overcrowded, and it was felt that the future need of children and those in bricks and mortar accommodation was sometimes not taken into account when bids were made for refurbishment and site extensions.
- 5.11 Accommodation for Travelling Showpeople in the Black Country was seen as increasingly becoming permanently occupied in recent years (rather than just used for 'winter quarters') due to the changing nature and seasons of the work carried out by Travelling Showpeople. The current level of accommodation in the area was deemed as satisfactory. However, it was believed that within the next five years there would be a significant need due to family formation.
- 5.12 All stakeholders agreed that there was an urgent need for transit sites in the area. However, although it was recognised that the transit sites were urgent, it was also felt that residential need should firstly be addressed in order to prevent transit sites from becoming permanent residential sites.
- 5.13 Unauthorised encampments, however, were not always the result of a lack of residential sites, but from Gypsies and Travellers who used the area as part of their travelling route. It was reported that problems were occurring with large unauthorised encampments in the area and transit sites may be able to lessen the financial and community impact that these incurred.

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<sup>38</sup>This is in contrast to the satisfaction that residents expressed in the survey. It is however noted that those who take part in surveys are often those who are happy with the management style of the site.

- 5.14 The management and service for transit sites was seen as very different to residential sites, and it was felt that they should ideally be jointly managed as a network. It was also felt that the location of these sites should also reflect the different needs and preferably be located at a distance from residential sites. One area which frontline stakeholders agreed would be well suited was in Bilston. It was felt that transit sites should offer a certain standard of utility services and be designed with the health and safety of children in mind.
- 5.15 It was reported that the majority of Gypsies and Travellers would prefer to own their land, but planning policies and local opposition were considered barriers to this aim. Stakeholders reported current situations in the region whereby gaining planning permission was difficult, and also once this had been achieved it was often not possible for the owner to sell the land to another Gypsy and Traveller family.
- 5.16 Using information gathered from stakeholders and previous chapters, the following image was produced to illustrate the location of current sites in the Black Country<sup>39</sup>.



<sup>39</sup> This does not include all unauthorised developments discovered over the period of the research. Some participants specifically asked that their location and identity not be made public.

## **Bricks and mortar accommodation**

- 5.17 Stakeholders pointed to confusion over the number of Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar accommodation, partly due to different reporting practices between agencies. For example, health authorities in the area used the narrower Census 2001 definitions, while education services tended to use more accurate classifications. The issue was further complicated as Gypsies and Travellers often do not self-identify to authorities that are not fully trusted.
- 5.18 Reasons as to why Gypsies and Travellers moved into bricks and mortar accommodation were mixed, with some believing that this was an active choice whilst others reporting that it was due to a lack of residential sites in the area. Overall stakeholders believed that experiences within housing could be positive, providing tenancy support was available and they were housed in areas where other Gypsies and Travellers lived. However if the option was there it was felt that some Gypsies and Travellers, and in particular their children, would move to residential sites.
- 5.19 Stakeholders also pointed out that some Gypsies and Travellers were in bricks and mortar accommodation due to experiences of homelessness and/or domestic violence. Since there was only a limited number of residential pitches in the area the Council often had to move these individuals into bricks and mortar accommodation.
- 5.20 It was felt that successful tenancies depended on the support that was available for dealing with the bureaucracy of social housing, and also on the presence of other Gypsy and Traveller families within the area. Isolated members of the community often faced persecution from neighbours, whilst those who moved to an existing network often found the transition less problematic. For this reason Gypsies and Travellers could often be found in certain areas, notably in Pensnett, Coseley, Tipton and Bilston, which are often regarded as deprived areas.
- 5.21 For those who did not take to living in bricks and mortar accommodation it was reported that moving back to a residential site was difficult. Reasons for this included Gypsies and Travellers selling their caravans when they moved due to regulations preventing them from keeping them on driveways in social housing. The lack of available residential pitches was another obvious barrier.
- 5.22 Stakeholders also reported that living in bricks and mortar accommodation could have serious mental health implications for both adult Gypsies and Travellers and their children.

## Access to services

- 5.23 Access to health and education services amongst the Travelling Showpeople community was not seen as problematic: however, this was not always true with regards to the Romany Gypsy and Irish Traveller community.
- 5.24 It was reported that discrimination within the health services was widespread and often prevented Gypsies and Travellers from accessing services, with some site residents requesting outreach health workers to visit instead. The level of knowledge amongst health workers regarding the barriers to health amongst Gypsy and Travellers was limited, but it was reported that health workers were using the site surgeries to broaden their knowledge base.
- 5.25 While there was no hard evidence as to the particular health needs of Gypsies and Travellers, frontline workers noted that child mortality rates were high within the community. Stakeholders agreed that Gypsies and Travellers also had difficulty in obtaining support and adaptations for individuals with specific needs.
- 5.26 The level of mental health problems was thought to be high amongst the Gypsy and Traveller community for both men and women, with a high level of suicide amongst young men. Low literacy and health education levels also meant that those on medication often used it incorrectly therefore limiting the effects of the treatment.
- 5.27 Stakeholders reported that Gypsies and Travellers valued education more highly than in the past due to the changing nature of their work and lifestyles: however, there were still barriers to accessing education, particularly secondary education, within the Black Country.
- 5.28 It was felt by the community representatives that Gypsy and Traveller children were sometimes too young to make the transition into secondary education at the age of eleven. This was often made more difficult if there were a small number of Gypsy and Traveller children in the school as there were often cases of bullying.
- 5.29 Education services reported that primary schooling had a high level of attendance and the level achieved by pupils was of the same level as children from the settled community. However, attendance at secondary level was lower, with many children being home schooled.
- 5.30 Interest in vocational training programmes was increasing, but present education levels often meant that they were unable to win places on courses.

## Community relations

- 5.31 Relations within the Gypsy and Traveller community and with the settled community were mixed.
- 5.32 Some of the sites, such as that in Walsall contained Gypsies of different backgrounds who lived peacefully together. However, it was reported that there was tension between certain families, especially within the Irish Traveller community.
- 5.33 Stakeholders reported that there was a high density of young Gypsies and Travellers in the Black Country and therefore problems arising from this, as there would be within the settled community with a similarly high density. It was felt that the problem was highlighted due to the known ethnicity of the young people, as people knew their identities and therefore knew who to complain about.
- 5.34 The level of discrimination across the area was low, but sufficiently constant so as not to offer the Gypsy and Traveller community respite from discrimination. It was reported that there were areas where community relations were good, and these were generally in areas that had experience of the communities rather than information gathered from stereotyping.
- 5.35 Stakeholders agreed that community relations rather than planning policy and financial limits were often responsible for the inability of councils to find land for new sites and to refurbish existing ones.

## Local issues

- 5.36 The relationship between the Council and the Gypsy and Traveller community was reported as fragile. Frontline workers and community representatives agreed that councillors were often more concerned about votes rather than the rights of Gypsies and Travellers and were hesitant to aggravate the local settled community and therefore lose votes. It was felt that planning for Gypsies and Travellers should come from central Government to remove this obstacle.
- 5.37 From the Council perspective it was felt that the needs of Gypsies and Travellers were not clearly defined in a bureaucratic manner that could be easily adopted by the Council. It was reported that the Gypsy and Traveller Forum which was set up in Walsall with financial contribution from the New Deal initiative worked well for both the community and the councils and should be viewed as an example of good practice. The Forum enabled Gypsies and Travellers to effectively be consulted on the design of the new site and also helped them understand the planning progress.

- 5.38 Stakeholders agreed that local media reporting was extremely negative and incited racial hatred. The matter had been taken to the police, who advised that articles should be submitted to the station along with complaints in order for the police to carry out investigations if the number of complaints was significant.
- 5.39 It was reported that a number of Roma families were being introduced to the area, either through connections made with local travelling families, or via dispersal from other cities in the UK. Although they were gaining the services of traveller education officers they had not at the time of writing expressed interest in taking up a nomadic lifestyle or living on a residential site.
- 5.40 Frontline workers and community representatives revealed that future need in the area could be affected by closures of London sites due to the Olympic Games such as the Cray's Lane site. Many families on the site have connections in the West Midlands and may relocate to the area as sites close, as might families living at the large unauthorised site in Basildon, Essex.
- 5.41 Stakeholders also agreed that knowledge was hindered by the lack of consistency in the area with regards to policies towards Gypsies and Travellers across the Black Country, and also in the ethnic monitoring of services. It was felt that if there was more consistency, inter-agency working and co-ordination between authorities this would benefit both Gypsies and Travellers and those working with them.

## **Research design**

- 5.42 A discussion was had as to the perceived effectiveness of using community interviewers in the area. There was a broad consensus that the local Gypsy and Traveller community would be apprehensive to speak to an interviewer of the same background, especially if they were from the local area. It was felt that a better approach would be to use professional, independent interviewers who were sensitive to the issues faced by Gypsies and Travellers.

## **Summary**

- 5.43 Current sites were reported as overcrowded and often in poor conditions. However, a number were currently undergoing refurbishment and extension or were in the process of applying for financial aid to accomplish this. Concern was expressed that the work that was being done often did not take into consideration future need and the needs of those in bricks and mortar accommodation but were regarded as a quick fix to the current problems.

- 5.44 There are a number of households in bricks and mortar accommodation, some there due to the lack of residential site provision. Tenancies were often successful with the aid of housing officers and where there was an established community network, which led to concentrations of Gypsies and Travellers in bricks and mortar. It was, however, reported that many would prefer to be on a residential site, especially the children of those in housing.
- 5.45 Stakeholders agreed that there was a need for a network of transit sites that would be jointly managed. Services and facilities on these sites should be basic and the location should ideally be distant from residential sites.
- 5.46 Discrimination often led to poor access to services. It was reported that Gypsies and Travellers were often cautious of visiting GP surgeries and therefore requested outreach workers. Access to primary education was good and the levels achieved similar to those of the settled community. However, for reasons of cultural differences and discrimination many opted to take children out of secondary education.
- 5.47 Stakeholders believed that there was tension between the settled community and Gypsies and Travellers. Tensions were expressed through unrelenting low level discrimination which Gypsies and Travellers found hard to escape.
- 5.48 The relationship between the council and Gypsies and Travellers was relatively poor. An example of good practice was Walsall's Gypsy and Traveller Forum which met monthly to discuss the needs of the community and how best to express these to the Council.

## 6. Survey methodology

### Introduction

6.1 The Black Country GTANA has been conducted in line with Government Practice Guidance. This chapter provides details on how it was conducted to meet the requirements.

### The questionnaire

6.2 A questionnaire was designed in consultation with the Steering Group using a template from previous studies where piloting of the questionnaire was undertaken. There were in fact three questionnaires used in the survey tailored for different groups and accommodation circumstances:

- Gypsies and Travellers living on sites, including authorised and unauthorised
- Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar accommodation
- Travelling Showpeople living on yards

### Determination of the sample

6.3 The sample was constructed by collecting information from a variety of sources including: Traveller Education Services, the Councils and The Showmen's Guild. It is important to stress that these are population estimates only, and due to the lack of secondary data collected on Gypsies and Travellers they are the most accurate information available. It was estimated that in the Black Country there was 861 Gypsy and Traveller households (including Travelling Showpeople), the majority of whom lived in Walsall and Dudley.

6.4 Based on data from the survey and stakeholders, we have produced estimates for the total number of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople families in the Black Country. Particularly with families in housing, we stress that these are estimates as no reliable secondary data exists on their numbers. These are the baseline figures used in each District's accommodation assessments in Chapters 12 and 13. The following table shows the estimated size of the population in each District for each accommodation type.

**Table 6.1 Estimated number of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople families in the Black Country**

Area	Accommodation type				Total
	Authorised site	Unauthorised site	Housing	Travelling Showpeople	
Dudley	29	4	158	62	253
Sandwell	15	3	50	20	88
Walsall	20	4	300	56	380
Wolverhampton	40	10	74	8	132
No fixed location	-	8	-	-	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>861</b>

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

6.5 It was agreed with stakeholders that a total of 150 interviews would take place across all accommodation types and ethnic groups, representing 17% of the base population. In total 125 interviews took place in the Black Country representing 15% of the base population. The sample was constructed to proportionally reflect the accommodation and ethnic breakdown of the population. However, numbers on sites were boosted in order to collect robust data.

## Project management

6.6 A group of Gypsy and Traveller interviewers with previous experience of working with Gypsies and Travellers and a site resident from Dudley were recruited for the project. The questionnaires were checked for quality by Fordham Research. Interviews took place between August 2007 and January 2008, with Travelling Showpeople being interviewed in the first month before they travelled for work.

6.7 Where possible, frontline workers from health and education acted as ‘gatekeepers’ and introduced interviewers to participants. This was particularly important for Gypsies and Travellers living in housing who may have wished to conceal their identity. A briefing note was distributed to Gypsies and Travellers during the July Caravan Count and also when the fieldworkers initially visited the site, explaining the purpose of the research and encouraging participation (see Appendix 1).

6.8 One reason for the unusually long fieldwork period was the difficulties in reaching housed Gypsies and Travellers. This was not the case in Walsall where Traveller Education Services (TES) were able to introduce our fieldworkers to participants. However, in other boroughs where TES were unable to help, progress was significantly slower.

## **Feedback session**

- 6.9 A feedback focus group session was organised through the Walsall Gypsy and Traveller Forum. The session enabled researchers to allow the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople community to comment on the findings of the research. Turnout to the event was good and included representatives from the local authority site, housed Gypsies, residents of local unauthorised developments and Travelling Showpeople.
- 6.10 Their comments on the report are dispersed throughout the remaining chapters.

## **Summary**

- 6.11 Based on data collected from a variety of sources, a sample was constructed reflecting the distribution of Gypsies and Travellers in the Black Country. A total of 125 interviews were completed, representing 83% of the target number. A questionnaire was designed with input from stakeholders. Access to participants living on sites and in housing was assisted by frontline workers from health and education who acted as 'gatekeepers'.



## 7. Gypsies and Travellers living on authorised sites

### Introduction

7.1 This chapter starts by outlining the profile of participants living on authorised sites, before describing their accommodation circumstances. The conditions on the sites are then discussed before participants' accommodation history and travelling patterns. Views on the sites are those of the participants and it was beyond the scope of this study to assess conditions on sites. Finally the accommodation expectations of participants and other family members are described.

### The sites and sample

7.2 There are four residential sites owned by local authorities in the Black Country and one privately owned site in Dudley. They have a combined total of 101 pitches. In all 27 interviews were carried out with families living on authorised sites, comprising 27% of the current total residents and 22% of the entire survey sample. The following table shows where the interviews were conducted.

**Table 7.1 The sample of local authority sites**

Site Name	District	Ownership	Occupied pitches	Interviews completed	%
Tipton	Sandwell	LA	15	5	33%
Showell Road Traveller Site	Wolverhampton	LA	40	8	20%
Smithy Lane	Dudley	Private	8	3	37%
Oak Lane Site	Dudley	LA	19	7	37%
Willenhall Lane	Walsall	LA	19	4	21%
<b>Total</b>			101	27	27%

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

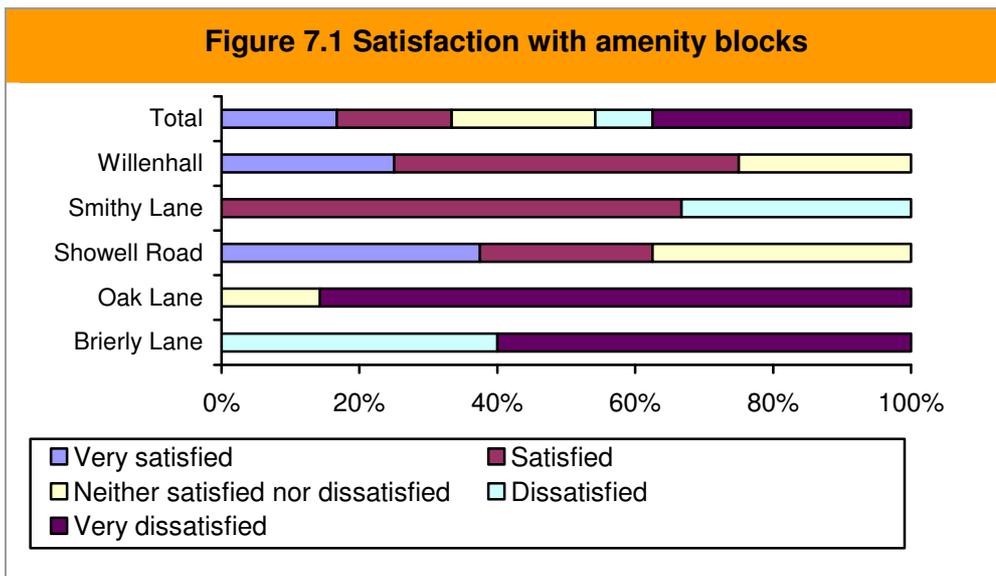
- 7.3 The sites were generally occupied with a larger percentage of English Gypsies than Irish Travellers and small numbers of Welsh Travellers.
- 7.4 The majority of participants (82%) had been living on their site for more than five years and when asked how long they intended to stay on the site, all responded that they did not intend to move or did not know when they would.
- 7.5 Experiences of finding their current site accommodation were mixed, although those that found the experience difficult or very difficult were in a slight minority.

7.6 Participants of the feedback session noted that the survey had not raised concerns residents had over their license agreement with the Council. As licensees, site residents receive less security and fewer rights than council tenants in bricks and mortar accommodation. Site residents were unhappy with this situation and wanted some explanation from the Council as to why they could not have the same rights as others living in social accommodation.

**Site facilities and condition**

7.7 Participants were asked a series of questions about the facilities on their pitch and site and what additional facilities were required.

7.8 All but one respondent from the Smithy Lane site reported that they had a utility block on their pitch. However, satisfaction levels varied between sites. Satisfaction was highest amongst residents from the Showell Road, Smithy Lane (except for the resident who had no utility block) and Willenhall site and significantly lower for those who lived on the Tipton and Oak Lane sites. The table below illustrates this:

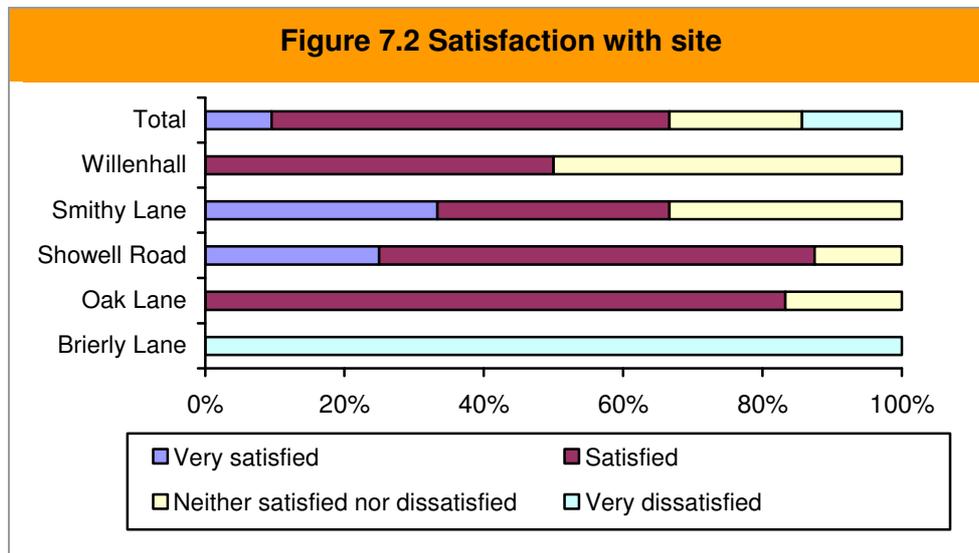


Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

7.9 These disparities can be linked to the facilities contained in amenity blocks. In addition to hot and cold water, electricity and a separate WC, utility blocks on Showell Road, Smithy Lane and Willenhall also have a kitchen and dining room, secure storage for medicines etc, enclosed storage for food, washing and cleaning items and space for a cooker, fridge and washing machine. Oak Lane and Tipton does not have these additional facilities and satisfaction levels were lower.

## Living on sites

7.10 General satisfaction with sites was relatively low. All respondents from the Tipton site were very dissatisfied with their accommodation. The only sites where participants reported they were very satisfied was on the Showell Road and Smithy Lane sites. The following figure illustrates the different satisfaction levels within each site and the overall totals.



Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

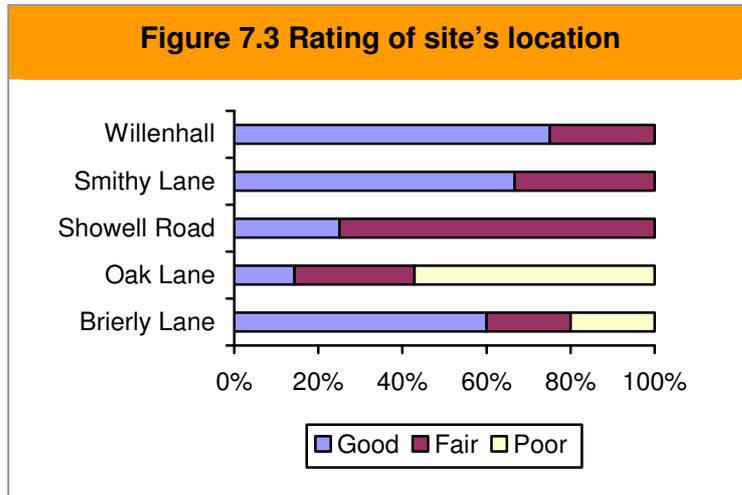
7.11 The Showell Road and Smithy Lane sites were the only sites where participants felt children had a safe area to play in. Respondents were concerned for their children and wanted *'somewhere safe for the kids to play'*. Security around the site was also an issue when it came to children on the Oak Lane site: *'Being surrounded by an industrial estate – our girls don't feel safe walking to the shops because of the gangs of men outside the factories'*.

7.12 Access to the sites was also highlighted as a problem. In some cases there was no lighting or pavement on the main road used to access the sites which raised safety and security issues. In other circumstances the access roads were heavily utilised and were viewed as dangerous and noisy: *'There's a dangerous road. We can't even walk to the shop which is just the other side!'* This did not seem to be a problem for the Willenhall site.

7.13 The accessibility of local services such as shops, health centres and schools was generally good. Participants from Oak Lane and Smithy Lane did, however, have the most difficulties in reaching services. .

7.14 The environment in which some of the sites were located in was sometimes unfavourable. Respondents from the Oak Lane sites commented on how the site has been built up around: *'...the landfills that have been put up around the sites, and there are recycling sites. It's unbelievable...lots of the kids have asthma here'* and *'before this became an industrial area, this was a really lovely site, now we are surrounded by tips and industry'*.

7.15 The following table illustrates participants' views regarding the location of their site. Willenhall and Tipton were perceived to have the best locations and Oak Lane the worst.



Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

7.16 Positives attributed to living on the sites centred mainly on the proximity of family and the community: *'I am with my family which I have tried to be for years but there was no pitch available'*. Family was seen as central and the support that family offered was critical to some: *'my family are here and they support my needs as a disabled person'*.

7.17 Participants were asked for their opinion regarding site regulations, in particular, if there were some that were problematic and others that should be considered. There appeared to be no major problems with site regulations that were in place, however some comments were made on the management of sites; in particular changes to the management of Oak Lane site were discussed and although regulations were thought to be fair, it was voiced that more contact and consultation would be appreciated: *'[they] have spent virtually no time on the site talking to people, they are changing things without consulting us and have no idea of traveller needs'*.

7.18 The feedback session revealed that some site residents and those waiting for a pitch on sites were unhappy with how waiting lists were operated. Participants reported that although the criterion for priority was transparent, the waiting list offered false hope for those on the list. It was suggested that those entering their name onto the waiting list should be made fully aware of the extent of over-subscription to the site and their level of priority in general terms.

7.19 When asked what regulations they would like introduced many expressed the need for traffic calming devices for the site and to the surrounding areas. Respondents from Tipton also expressed the need for a site warden who could control the site and target issues such as roaming dogs and the number of vehicles on the site.

- 7.20 Respondents from Oak Lane, which has a Site Warden agreed that a good warden was seen as a replacement for a long list of regulations: *'we don't need more regulations. We work together and if someone has a problem we go to the warden who is a traveller and it gets sorted out'*.

### **Accommodation expectations**

- 7.21 Participants were asked what they feel local authorities should provide for Gypsies and Travellers in the Black Country. There was a strong consensus that the Black Country authorities needed to provide more permanent residential sites and some transit sites: *'I think we need more residential and permanent sites. Yes, out of the wilderness and with a bus route and lighting so the children can walk on footpaths'*.
- 7.22 The need for these was deemed to stem from both Gypsies and Travellers in the area who had no place on sites, and from family formation: *'there needs to be more sites for the young ones that have been brought up here'* and *'there are a lot of illegally parked travellers around who need somewhere'*.
- 7.23 The type and management of the required residential sites was important to participants and some mixed views were expressed. Some participants preferred private sites, *'sites run by travellers. Private or through the Gypsy Council'*. It was sometimes thought that *'private sites are nicer and better run like this one. People should be allowed to provide for themselves and get planning permission'*. It was therefore believed that those who had the means to provide for themselves should be assisted with the planning process.
- 7.24 The majority of participants (79%) noted that they would like to buy their own land if they could afford it, however a minority (12%) thought that they would be able to afford to buy land in the Black Country. All of those who did not foresee finances being an issue requested advice on the process of buying land and obtaining planning permission.
- 7.25 It was also felt that local authorities should provide sites for Gypsies and Travellers: *'there needs to be more council run sites around here...I would never stay on a private site, they are expensive and you can't get benefits – the rules are very strict. With council sites everyone is on an equal footing'*.
- 7.26 Transit sites were also raised as an issue in the Black Country: *'A site that is only transit is needed, I wouldn't mix transit and residential'*. This view was expressed by many of the participants.

## Future needs

- 7.27 A total of 11 participants noted that one or more members of their family are likely to move to their own separate home within the next five years, accounting for 41% of the sample and resulting in 23 emerging households over the next five years.
- 7.28 It was believed that these households would be looking for a socially rented site in the Black Country, commonly within the same district as their family. There was a minor indication that some might be interested in owning their own sites. It was not believed that they would want to move into bricks and mortar accommodation.

## Travelling

- 7.29 When asked how many times respondents had travelled in the past 12 months responses varied from those who had not travelled at all to those who had been approximately 50 times. Whilst the majority of the participants had not travelled within the last year (70%), there appeared to be a difference between sites. Those on Tipton and Willenhall were the most settled, whilst those on Showell Road and Smithy Lane travelled most: this could be due to regulations that affect how long site residents can keep their pitch whilst away travelling.
- 7.30 Most travelled to visit family and to attend cultural fairs across the country. Whilst some had stayed on private and social sites whilst travelling, the majority reported that they had stayed roadside or on an unauthorised site on someone else's land whilst travelling.
- 7.31 Of those who had been travelling in the past 12 months a third had been evicted from their stopping place. Experiences of being evicted were mixed: some were resigned to the fact that evictions were a way of their life – *'nothing new'*, whilst others were angered by the way evictions were carried out – *'sometimes I'd be very angry, the police would bang on the door at 6am. Sometimes I wouldn't even be allowed to give the children breakfast.'*
- 7.32 A quarter of those interviewed revealed that they had stopped travelling and a further minority (13%) could envisage a time when they would. The most prevalent reasons given for stopping travelling were due to harassment, the threat of evictions and a lack of transit sites and places to stay whilst they were travelling.

## Summary

- 7.33 A total number of 27 interviews were carried out with participants from authorised sites, comprising 22% of the sample. Each borough has a local authority site and Dudley has a privately owned site – interviews were carried out on each one.

- 7.34 The majority of participants (82%) had been on the site for longer than five years and did not expect to move. Satisfaction with the site was generally low. Sites where satisfaction with amenity blocks was low also displayed a greater level of dissatisfaction with the site.
- 7.35 The accessibility of services from the sites was lower for participants from Oak Lane and Smithy Lane: both sites reported problems accessing local services due mainly to poor access roads and lighting to the sites. Participants, particularly from the Tipton site, requested that traffic calming devices were used both for the surrounding and internal roads of the site.
- 7.36 Participants felt that there was a definite need for both permanent and transit pitches in the Black Country. The drivers for this need were thought to be newly forming families and those on unauthorised sites looking for permanent accommodation in the Black Country.
- 7.37 More than half of the participants living on sites had not travelled in the past 12 months. Those that travelled did so to visit family and to attend to cultural fairs. Reasons for ceasing to travel included harassment, the threat of eviction and the lack of transit pitches.



## 8. Gypsies and Travellers living on unauthorised sites

### Introduction

8.1 As well as Gypsies and Travellers living on council and privately owned sites, the survey included those on unauthorised sites. These participants were interviewed using the same survey form. This chapter starts by describing the sample of Gypsies and Travellers living on unauthorised sites, before describing their accommodation circumstances. The conditions on the sites are then discussed before participants' accommodation history and travelling patterns. Finally the accommodation expectations of participants and other family members are described.

### The sites and sample

8.2 During the fieldwork 13 interviews were carried out with residents of unauthorised sites, comprising 10% of the sample. The Black Country had four known unauthorised developments and had two known unauthorised encampments at the time of fieldwork. Although efforts were made to contact all unauthorised groups, some declined to take part in the study. Interviews therefore took place with two unauthorised developments and one unauthorised encampment in the Black Country.

8.3 The unauthorised encampment was a large group of Irish Travellers mentioned by stakeholders in Chapter 5. During the fieldwork period they were resident in Wolverhampton. However, this may not be their preferred Borough to reside in as they did not specify where in the Black Country they would want to settle.

### Current accommodation

8.4 Over half of the participants from unauthorised sites identified themselves as Irish Travellers: the following table illustrates the ethnic distribution of the interviews.

Table 8.1 Profile of participants		
Ethnicity	No. of interviews	No. of interviews
Irish Traveller	8	61.5%
Romany / Gypsy	5	37.5%
Total	13	100%

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

- 8.5 As would be expected with unauthorised encampments, participants had been on their site for less than one month. Those on unauthorised developments had a longer history, with some having lived on their unauthorised development for more than four years.
- 8.6 This trend is reflected in how long participants envisaged staying on their site. For those on an unauthorised encampment it was felt that they would be there for less than one month. For those on unauthorised developments two themes arose: it was clear that one site had an uncertain future, whilst another felt that they would not be moving in the near future.
- 8.7 Three-quarters of the sample (77%) mentioned that they were currently actively looking for alternative accommodation within the Black Country. This included all participants from the unauthorised encampment. It was stated that their preference was for a site within the Black Country rather than any other area of the UK, but they did not state in which Borough they would prefer to reside in.
- 8.8 The majority of participants were looking for accommodation on socially rented sites. None of the participants were reported to be looking at moving into bricks and mortar accommodation.

### **Living on unauthorised sites**

- 8.9 When participants were asked for their overall satisfaction with their current site those on an unauthorised encampment were unsurprisingly dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. Those on unauthorised developments had higher levels of satisfaction, but these differed between each site. Only one participant noted that they were satisfied.
- 8.10 Those living on an unauthorised encampment had limited positive aspects of the experience. Their only comment was that their current location was off the road. Negatives reflected their environment and the lack of facilities available to them: *'dirty and messy, with no toilets or rubbish'*. It was also reported that participants did not feel safe living on the site and that they did not receive post.
- 8.11 Positive aspects of living at their current site for those on unauthorised developments mainly revolved around friends and family: *'I'm with my family and friends nearby'* and *'We have secure facilities'*. Negatives focused on the expense of running the site.

## Accommodation expectations

- 8.12 When participants were asked what they thought was needed in the Black Country all agreed that there was a need for more residential and transit sites. Small, family sized sites were favoured. However, a need for a mixture of local authority owned sites and land available to buy with planning permission was expressed.
- 8.13 The feedback session revealed that residents from unauthorised developments are frustrated at the barriers they face in planning: these barriers included literacy issues to a degree and discrimination within Council planning departments. It was suggested that clearer and shorter time-scales should be provided to applicants.
- 8.14 Residents on unauthorised developments report that there is a lack of guidance on what land is likely and, equally important, unlikely to gain planning permission. Clearer guidance and joint working between the community and the planning departments is needed.
- 8.15 Participants from the feedback session could not understand the opposition to private sites within the Councils: in their opinion it is a way for the Council to meet the needs of their Gypsy and Traveller community at little cost to themselves. Although current unauthorised developments are family sized sites, owners expressed an interest in working with the Council to provide private rented pitches in the area.
- 8.16 Four participants reported that a family member would need or was expected to move into their own separate home within the next five years, representing 31% of the sample. All expected this accommodation to be a socially rented site.

## Travelling patterns

- 8.17 All those interviewed had travelled at least once in the past 12 months: this was unsurprisingly higher for those on a unauthorised encampment. When asked their reasons for travelling those on the unauthorised encampment noted that it was primarily for work, but that they were also often evicted from stopping places. Other participants from unauthorised developments explained that they travelled for *'work and to see family'*.
- 8.18 Participants living on the unauthorised encampment displayed a degree of resignation to their situation: *'we're used to it...always being moved on before actual evictions take place'*, and *'we're tired of it'*.
- 8.19 Participants living on unauthorised developments were divided into those who had stopped travelling and those who could foresee a time when they would. In contrast, those living on unauthorised encampments could not foresee a time when they would stop travelling.

## **Summary**

- 8.20 13 interviews were carried out with Gypsies and Travellers on three unauthorised developments and one unauthorised encampment. The unauthorised development had been there for a number of years, and, as expected, the unauthorised encampment for less than one month. Those on the unauthorised encampment noted that they were actively looking for somewhere to settle in the Black Country area.
- 8.21 Satisfaction with their site was low for both those on developments and encampments, with only one participant being satisfied with their accommodation. Positives of living on their site were based on the closeness of family. However, negatives included security issues, the environment and access to facilities and services.

## 9. Gypsies and Travellers living in housing

### Introduction

9.1 This chapter focuses on the circumstances and needs of Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar accommodation. It starts by considering their current accommodation circumstances before looking at their future expectations and requirements.

### The sample

9.2 Almost two fifths (40%) of the total interviews were conducted with Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar accommodation. The following table shows where the 50 interviews took place, along with estimates of the total number of Gypsy and Traveller families (as discussed in Chapter 6). Most interviews took place in Walsall, where almost half of the estimated population live.

<b>Table 9.1 Sample of interviews with Gypsies and Travellers living in housing</b>			
Local authority	Number interviewed	Estimated population	Percentage interviewed
Dudley	16	158	10%
Sandwell	6	50	12%
Walsall	18	300	6%
Wolverhampton	11	74	15%
Total	50	582	9%

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

9.3 The survey sample therefore comprises 9% of the total estimated population. The table below shows the ethnic profile of participants. A slight majority were English Gypsies.

<b>Table 9.2 Profile of participants</b>		
Ethnicity	No. of interviews	% of interviews
English Gypsy	30	60%
Irish Traveller	20	40%
Total	50	100%

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

9.4 The average family size was 3.1. However, Irish Travellers had larger families (4 members on average) than English Gypsies (three members).

9.5 The following table shows where participants had lived prior to moving into housing. It is noticeable that the previous home for a large proportion of participants was on a site: almost half (42%) had previously lived on an unauthorised site and a further 18% on an authorised site.

<b>Table 9.3 Previous accommodation</b>		
Accommodation type	Number	%
Social rented site	21	42%
Unauthorised encampment	9	18%
Owner-occupied housing	7	14%
Unauthorised development	4	8%
Private rented housing	4	8%
Socially rented housing	3	6%
Private site	2	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

### Current accommodation

9.6 Participants predominated in the rented housing sector (94%), and within this sector were almost equally divided between the social (54%) and private rented sector (40%).

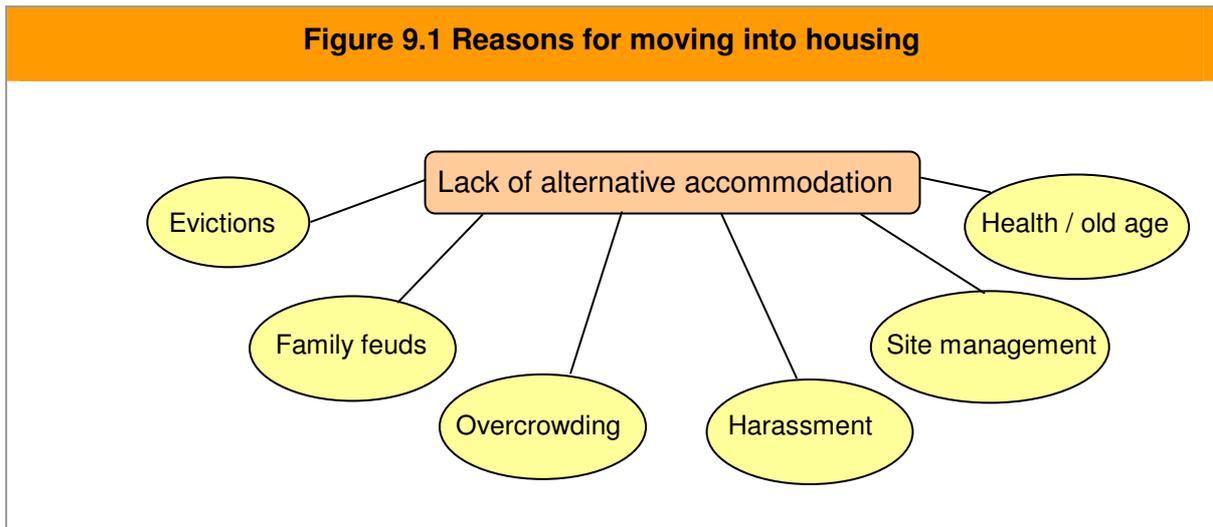
<b>Table 9.4 Tenure profile</b>		
	Number	Percentage
Council / RSL rented	27	54%
Private rented	20	40%
Owner-occupier	3	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

9.7 Most participants did not experience difficulty finding their home – 30% said it was difficult to do so. Difficulties were mainly reported on the amount of time it took for good houses to become available through the council, or the need to find a good landlord. Many also reported that it had been difficult to find somewhere that was near their support network: *‘I wanted to find somewhere that was near my family’*.

9.8 There appeared to be one main reason given for moving into housing: the lack of alternative accommodation. There appears to be six main causes of this. The figure below demonstrates the reasons why participants felt they had no alternative accommodation in the area:

Figure 9.1 Reasons for moving into housing



- 9.9 Those moving into housing due to ill health and old age often did so to be able to access care. One participant explained: *'because my mam and dad were ill and we needed to be signed up to a doctor'*. For those on unauthorised sites a lack of available pitches meant that to receive education and health services they had to move into bricks and mortar accommodation.
- 9.10 The threat of eviction also meant that families chose to move to bricks and mortar housing rather than live what was considered a very hard life on the road: *'because there was no pitches available on the site and I couldn't travel on the road because it's just too hard when you've got children'*.
- 9.11 Family feuds were reported as reasons for moving into housing and this could take the form of disputes between families or marital separations. The lack of alternative sites to move to often means that if a person decides not to live on a particular site there is little other choice other than to move to housing: *'I needed to get away from my partner'*. This reflects problems highlighted by stakeholders regarding re-housing victims of domestic violence.
- 9.12 Site management on both private and local authority sites was also mentioned. One participant explained that they had moved into a house *'because the owner of the site was getting too bossy, so we moved off before there was an argument. I didn't want to move into a house, but it was either travel the roads or move into a house'*.
- 9.13 Harassment was viewed as a problem associated with the address of the site and was closely related to people's ability to work. Participants noted that *'I got a job in a hairdresser and didn't want people to know I lived on the site'* and *'because we got too much harassment on the site and I wanted to start my own business'*.

9.14 Overcrowding on local sites had led many to move into housing: *‘because my sons got married and there was only enough room for one son to stay on my plot, so I couldn’t say which son could stay with me, so it was easier to move into a house to save hurting their feelings’.*

9.15 The following table shows satisfaction with the current home by previous accommodation type. Overall nearly half (47%) said they were satisfied with their current accommodation. However, those who had previously been on unauthorised sites were less likely to be satisfied, possibly due to the threat of evictions meaning they felt forced to move into housing.

Table 9.5 Satisfaction with current home						
Previous accommodation	Satisfaction					Total
	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither / nor	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	
Authorised site	22%	39%	26%	7%	4%	100%
Unauthorised site	-	17%	28%	39%	17%	100%
Housing	14%	57%	14%	14%	-	100%
Total	14%	33%	24%	22%	8%	100%

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

9.16 The most common positive attribute of living in bricks and mortar housing was the better utilities and services available: *‘getting better services than you would if you were living on a caravan site’* and *‘having a bath and a toilet and central heating’.*

9.17 The main disadvantage was related to the threat to cultural identity from no longer living on a site: *‘It’s a big change in a Gypsy’s life’;* *‘people thinking that you don’t want to live with your own ethnic group, when really all you want is to be in a caravan but have the same equality [as someone living in a house]’.*

9.18 Isolation and the effect that living in a house had on their mental health was also mentioned; *‘...[it’s] like a prison, being boxed in with no freedom’;* *‘it makes me depressed’.* This was emphasised during the feedback session, where isolation was felt to have an effect both on adults and the children who often lost a sense of their identity.

9.19 Overall more than half (57%) said they would go back to living on a site if they had the chance. However this should not be confused with a definite need to move back to a site, rather an accommodation preference should a suitable site become available.

9.20 Small proportions were overcrowded: 7.8% were assessed as being in overcrowded conditions using the bedroom standard. This compares to the national overcrowding average of 7.1%.

- 9.21 The following table compares previous accommodation with overcrowding levels. Those who had previously been on sites were more likely to be in overcrowded conditions than those who had previously lived in housing, suggesting that the initial move into housing is not always successful.

Table 9.6 Overcrowding and previous accommodation type				
Previous accommodation	Over-occupied	OK	Under-occupied	Total
Authorised site	14%	86%	4%	100%
Unauthorised site	8%	92%	-	100%
Housing	-	100%	-	100%
Total	8%	88%	4%	100%

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

### Accommodation expectations

- 9.22 When asked whether they thought there was enough accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers in the Black Country, the overwhelming majority (90%) said there was not. Participants emphasised the need to increase the number of sites in the Black Country, and the importance of having both permanent residential sites and transit sites: *'more sites need to be provided. If travellers were on sites then the kids would be in school and we would have access to services. Permanent sites, with good sized pitches where you can go away and have family over on'*.
- 9.23 Over a third (37%) said they needed or were likely to move to a different home within the next five years, all of whom stated a preference to move to an authorised site. The most common reasons for moving were a lack of space and the suffering of harassment at their current location.
- 9.24 A third (35%) expected a family member to move into their own separate home within the next five years. The preference for future families was for socially rented sites.

### Travelling

- 9.25 Two thirds of the participants living in housing (66%) had not travelled within the past 12 months. Those that had travelled typically stayed on unauthorised encampments or on sites provided by the local authority.
- 9.26 Levels of travelling were higher for those in bricks and mortar accommodation than for those living on sites. This is typically due to the need of housed travellers to express their identity through travel and attendance at local and national cultural fairs.

9.27 Participants at the feedback session noted that travelling could be hindered once they had moved into housing due to the lack of space to keep a caravan. Gypsies and Travellers in housing often had to choose whether to sell their caravans or not.

## Summary

9.28 Two fifths of the interviews took place with those living in bricks and mortar housing (50). The majority had previously lived on sites (72%) and nearly a half lived in socially rented housing (49%). The main reason for living in a house was due to a lack of alternative accommodation: this was fuelled by different reasons including eviction, family feuds, overcrowding on sites, harassment, issues with site management and health and old age.

9.29 Satisfaction with housing was low, with only 47% reporting that they were satisfied. Those who had previously lived on an authorised site or in housing had the highest satisfaction levels. Positives included better access to services and facilities than was available on sites. However, the negative was that participants often felt isolated from their community and felt that their identity was threatened.

9.30 The majority of participants in housing thought there was a need for more pitches in the Black Country area: all of those who expressed a desire to move in the next five years (37%) stated that their preference would be for a site rather than housing. This was also true of newly forming households.

9.31 When asked if they had travelled within the last 12 months, 34% had done so. This is slightly higher than the percentage of Gypsies and Travellers living on sites and may reflect the need for housed Gypsies and Travellers to travel in order to assert their identity.

# 10. Access to services

## Introduction

10.1 While the focus of the survey was on accommodation requirements, the questionnaire also collected information on access to services, including health and education. Research has found that poor accommodation can prevent access to services and so cannot be seen in isolation.<sup>40</sup> This chapter outlines the main findings with emphasis on barriers to service uptake and how services can be improved.

## Health and support needs

10.2 Permanent registration with a GP surgery was high, at 96%. The percentage was lowest for those on unauthorised sites (92%) and highest for those on local authority or private sites (100%).

Table 10.1 Registration with GP				
Accommodation	Permanent	Temporary	None	Total
Local authority site	100%	-	-	100%
Private site	100%	-	-	100%
Unauthorised site	92%	8%	-	100%
Housing	94%	6%	-	100%
Total	96%	4%	-	100%

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

10.3 When asked if the participant or anyone else in their family had any health issues the majority of households from both sites and bricks and mortar accommodation had one or more health problems. The most prevalent health issues were asthma and long-term illnesses. The rate of asthma in the sample population is alarming taking into consideration that in the UK it is estimated that 10% of children and 8% of adults suffer from asthma<sup>41</sup>.

<sup>40</sup> E.g., Glenys Parry, et al, The Health Status of Gypsies & Travellers in England: Summary of a report to the Department of Health, University of Sheffield, 2004.

<sup>41</sup> *Key Facts and Statistics: For journalists* Asthma.org

Table 10.2 Health issues		
	Sites	Housed
Asthma	32.5%	25.5%
Long-term illness	20.0%	23.5%
Physical disability (adult)	12.5%	2.0%
Health or mobility problems due to old age	7.5%	5.9%
A learning disability	7.5%	9.8%
Physical disability (child)	5.0%	3.9%
Severe sensory impairment	2.5%	-
Mental illness	-	7.8%
Other	10.0%	9.8%
No health problems	30.0%	39.2%

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

- 10.4 When asked if they received help with their health issues from the council or health services, more participants from sites answered that they did: 53% compared to 47% in housing. It is important to note that only one participant from an unauthorised encampment received care for their health problems.
- 10.5 Although registration with GP surgeries was high, the majority of participants (63%) had used a hospital's Accident and Emergency department because they couldn't see their GP. This was notably higher for participants on unauthorised encampments (100%) and on local authority sites (80%).
- 10.6 The high levels of registration do however conceal some realities: for some authorised sites it was reported that *'we can't get permanent [GP] registration here so I'm registered at my mums who lives in a house'*. For others the location of sites made accessing their surgeries difficult; *'it's very hard to get to the doctors'*.
- 10.7 Participants in housing were more satisfied with the access they had to their GPs (*'I can use the NHS now that I'm in a house'*). However, they did share concerns with site travellers over the lack of understanding health authorities showed towards travellers: *'[health services] need to do more studies on travellers. English or Irish, we all have the same ways when it comes to the privacy of our bodies'*.
- 10.8 When asked if any form of treatment had been disrupted through being moved on or evicted, 38% of those on unauthorised encampments reported that treatment had been disrupted in this way.

## Education, employment and skills

- 10.9 Of participants with children of primary school age, a large majority (97%) said all or some of their children attended school. The following table shows that bullying was given as the main reason for preventing attendance, with just under a half (44%) of participants with school-age children reporting this as a factor: *'the children at secondary school age are not attending because the schools are very prejudiced'*

Table 10.3 Reasons preventing children from attending school	
Reason	Percentage
Bullying	44%
Evictions / being moved on	36%
Lack of transport	26%
Lack of permanent address	18%

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

- 10.10 A third of participants (33%) felt that they had been denied work because of their background. This was significantly higher amongst housed travellers where nearly half (43%) felt that this was the case. Many housed travellers were self-employed and had similar stories: *'when I was carrying out garden work, the lady heard me talk and asked if I was a Gypsy, I didn't know to say yes or no, but when I said yes she asked me to leave'*.
- 10.11 Many travellers escaped this persecution by denying their identity: *'I am in employment at the moment but they don't know I'm a Gypsy. I know that it is shameful that I pretend to be a gorerger but if I didn't I wouldn't have got the job'*. Participants on sites found hiding their identity more difficult due to their caravan site address. Participants therefore felt trapped between the need to earn a living and the indignity of hiding their identity in order to be able to do so.
- 10.12 Participants on sites found hiding their identity more difficult due to their caravan site address. The site address was deemed a problem in many respects and in particular it limited residents' ability to apply for jobs and services: *'even though this site has been here a long time, we can't use this address for Housing Benefits or work'*.
- 10.13 When asked if they would like training or education to aid their family's ability to work 33% said that they would like this. Participants expressed a clear desire for vocational courses that were more aligned with their traditional lifestyle such as bricklaying, plumbing and electricity. Literacy skills were recognised as low and many participants expressed an interest in courses for travellers: *'A lot of people on this site are illiterate, I have to read people's private mail for them'*.

## Summary

- 10.14 Registration with GP surgeries was high with all participants having permanent (96%) or temporary (4%) registration. Site participants however did note that they had to use housed relatives' addresses since registration was not possible with a site address. Asthma and long-term illnesses were the most prevalent health issues.
- 10.15 For those on the unauthorised encampment treatment had been disrupted due to being moved on or evicted.
- 10.16 The majority of school aged children were registered with a local school (97%). However, respondents noted that reasons for the children not attending included bullying, evictions and being moved on, lack of transport and the lack of a permanent address to be able to register with.
- 10.17 A third of participants felt they had been denied work because of who they were. Participants reported feeling trapped between the need to earn a living and the indignity of hiding their identity in order to be able to do so.
- 10.18 Participants on sites felt it was harder for them to hide their identity due to their address. This was also a problem with other services and facility providers. Literacy skills were also low and many expressed a desire for reading and writing courses for travellers, as well as vocational training.

# 11. Travelling Showpeople

## Introduction

11.1 As described in Chapter 3, Travelling Showpeople are included in the definition of Gypsies and Travellers for the purposes of housing strategies, but are subject to separate planning guidance. Given the presence of Travelling Showpeople in the Black Country and that they face similar accommodation issues to Gypsies and Travellers in the area, they have been included in this report. However in recognition of their different cultural identity, a separate questionnaire was administered leading to a separate accommodation needs assessment in Chapter 13. The questionnaire (see Appendix 2) was adapted to recognise the different accommodation requirements that Travelling Showpeople may have.

## The sample

- 11.2 Thirty-five interviews were conducted with Travelling Showpeople families residing in the Black Country, equivalent to 28% of the entire sample. Based on information from the Showman's Guild, it is estimated that there were 146 Travelling Showpeople families in the Black Country. A sample of 35 interviews therefore represents 24% of the population.
- 11.3 The majority of interviews were carried out on private sites with planning permission (77%). However a further 12 interviews were carried out on five unauthorised developments situated in Sandwell and Dudley. Where disparities occur in the accommodation experiences of these groups they will be discussed. However, the main body of this chapter will discuss both site types.
- 11.4 The cultural practice of Travelling Showpeople is to live on a plot in a site yard in static caravans or mobile homes, along with smaller caravans used for travelling or inhabited by other family members (for example, adolescent children). Their equipment (including rides, kiosks and stalls) is often kept on the same plot. It should consequently be borne in mind that the amount of land needed to live on is greater than for Gypsies and Travellers. For clarity, we refer to Travelling Showpeople 'plots' rather than 'pitches' to recognise the differences in design.

## Accommodation

11.5 The average number of people living on each plot was three. A significant majority (80%) reported that a member of their family lived on the plot all year round, suggesting that yards are commonly no longer solely used for winter quarters, but also a residential base. All of the respondents reported that this was their main home.

- 11.6 Over half of those questioned (54%) reported that they did not have enough space for their family. When asked how much extra space was required, answers varied between ¼ and 1 acre. Reasons given as to why there was a need for more land were commonly reported as being for growing families and equipment. Participants noted: *'In the winter the yard here is absolutely full. We have to find other places to store our rides and there is nowhere to do maintenance'*, and *'our children need room to grow and keep the tool of their trade'*.
- 11.7 Participants were well established at their yards: 97% said they had lived there for more than five years, and only one family had been there for less than five years. A further 83% said they expected to remain on their plot for more than five years, with six households unsure of how long they would stay.
- 11.8 When participants were asked if there were any services or facilities that they were lacking on the yard, the need for two main services was expressed. Some participants had problems with refuse collection, whilst others had no sewerage system: *'Our rubbish is often left un-collected for weeks at a time – if I threaten to leave them by the allotments then they come and pick them up'*, and *'we have a cesspit, but we'd rather have a proper sewerage system'*.
- 11.9 Nevertheless, satisfaction with the yards was very high, with 80% of participants noting that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their yard. There appeared no significant difference in the level of satisfaction between those on authorised and unauthorised sites.
- 11.10 When participants were asked for the positives of living on the yard answers mainly centred on the community within and outside the yard, and safety: *'...there are good schools and it's a good area. This is our Council.'*, *'...we're accepted here'* and *'it's with family, someone always around to look after equipment'*.
- 11.11 The main negative aspect of the yard was the lack of space: *'nothing, just that it gets cramped in winter'*, *'overcrowding leads to family arguments over space, and there's nowhere for the kids to go when they grow up'*. A significant minority (20%) felt that safety was an issue on the site.
- 11.12 When asked if extra land was needed in the Black Country for Travelling Showpeople, a significant majority responded positively *'we need more yards'*. Many believed that overcoming the issues with planning permission was the largest barrier to meeting this need: *'We need to get planning permission. Quite a lot of people have bought land and just not been able to get past planning'*.

## Travelling patterns

11.13 When participants were asked how many months a year they spent on the yard in winter, just under half (43%) noted that they spent the entire year on the yard. The following table illustrates the answers given.

**Table 11.1 Number of months spent on yard**

1 – 3 month	5.8%
3 – 6 months	22.8%
6 - 11 months	28.6%
12 months	42.9%

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

11.14 The number of participants making use of the yard year-round was significant, although a significant minority reported that the yard was used as a traditional winter quarters and for less than six months per year (29%).

## Accommodation provision

11.15 A large majority of participants (86%) thought there was a lack of accommodation for Travelling Showpeople in the Black Country. Participants noted that there was a need for more space, both residential and for work purposes. When asked what the barriers were in accessing land, participants responded that planning permission was the main issue.

11.16 Just under a half of participants (49%) had bought their own land at some point, and the majority felt that affordability was not the main issue (65%) to living on their own land, but that gaining planning permission was the difficulty. However, participants on unauthorised developments noted that they could not compete with local and national developers for the price of good land.

11.17 When asked when they felt they would need, or were likely to move to a different home the majority of those on unauthorised encampments reported that they had no need or were not likely to move. However, responses from those on authorised sites varied between those who anticipated moving now (14%) and those who did not intend to move (36%).

11.18 All of those who expressed a desire to move within the next five years (32%) would like to move onto land they own themselves. None reported that they wanted to move into bricks and mortar housing. The main reason given for needing to move to alternative accommodation was the size of current yards: *'yard not big enough', 'need space to work'*. Others were also thinking about their futures: *'[the yard is] too small. If I get married to another Showman we will have nowhere to go'*.

## **Summary**

- 11.19 35 interviews were carried out with Travelling Showpeople in the Black Country, 12 of which were with households who lived on unauthorised developments. A significant majority (80%) reported that one or more family members lived on the yard all year.
- 11.20 Over half (54%) of participants felt they needed more space and reported that during winter when all members of the family and equipment were on the site there was a lack of space. Nevertheless, satisfaction with yards was high (80%).
- 11.21 When asked what was required in the Black Country the majority of participants agreed that assistance with planning permission was needed. As business people they did not think that affordability was too much of an issue. However, for those who were on unauthorised developments, competition with national developers was changing this situation.
- 11.22 Of those who expressed a desire to move within the next five years, all but two wished to remain within the Black Country and to own their own land with planning permission. None reported wanting to move into housing.

## SECTION C: NEED ASSESSMENTS

The final section of this report contains the accommodation need assessments. Chapter 12 contains the assessments for Gypsies and Travellers, and outlines need in terms of residential pitches, transit pitches and bricks and mortar accommodation. A similar methodology is applied in Chapter 13 which contains the assessment of plots for Travelling Showpeople.



## 12. Gypsy and Traveller accommodation need

### Introduction

- 12.1 This chapter presents the detailed technical calculation of the Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment. The model used is based on the example given in the GTAA Guidance.<sup>42</sup> General comments on the findings will be found in Chapter 14.

### Requirement for residential pitches, 2008-2013: summary

- 12.2 The need for residential pitches in the study area is assessed according to a 14-step process, closely based upon the model suggested in CLG Guidance (page 22). The results of this are shown in the table below, while the subsequent section contains explanations of the sourcing and calculation of the figures for each step.
- 12.3 As can be seen the overall need is for 67 pitches, in addition to the supply of 15 pitches already planned. This amounts to a total need, additional to any existing planned construction, for approximately 13 pitches per annum for the 2008-2013 periods.
- 12.4 The main drivers of need are family formation expected to remain on sites and the need of unauthorised sites.

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<sup>42</sup> ODPM [CLG] (2006) op cit. page 22.

**Table 12.1 Estimate of the need for permanent / residential site pitches, 2008-2013**

1) Current occupied permanent / residential site pitches	104.0
<i>Current residential supply</i>	
2) Number of unused residential pitches available	0.0
3) Number of existing pitches expected to become vacant through mortality 2008-2013	2.9
4) Number of family units on sites expected to leave county in next 5 years	8.2
5) Number of family units on sites expected to move into housing in next 5 years	12.8
6) Residential pitches planned to be built or to be brought back into use 2008-2013	15.0
7) Additional supply generated by movement within the stock	23.3
Total Supply	62.2
<i>Current residential need: Pitches</i>	
8) Family units (on pitches) seeking residential pitches in the area, 2008-2013, excluding those already counted as moving due to overcrowding in step 11	12.2
9) Family units on unauthorised encampments requiring residential pitches in the area	4.7
10) Family units on unauthorised developments requiring residential pitches in the area	16.0
11) Family units currently overcrowded on pitches seeking residential pitches in the area, excluding those containing an emerging family unit	11.1
12) New family units expected to arrive from elsewhere	8.2
13) New family formations expected to arise from within existing family units on sites	25.0
Total Need	77.2
<i>Current residential need: Housing</i>	
14) Family units in housing but with a psychological aversion to housed accommodation	52.0
Total Need	129.2
<i>Balance of need and supply</i>	
Total Additional Pitch Requirement	<b>67</b>
Annualised Additional Pitch Requirement	13

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

## Requirement for residential pitches, 2008-2013: steps of the calculation

### **Step 1: Current occupied permanent / residential site pitches**

12.5 Based on information provided by the Traveller Education Services, districts and corroborated by information from site surveys, currently there are estimated to be 104 occupied (and authorised) Gypsy and Traveller pitches in the study area. These sites include those owned by a local authority and privately.

### **Step 2: Number of unused residential pitches available**

12.6 During the survey all local authority and private pitches were in use.

**Step 3: Number of existing pitches expected to become vacant, 2008-2012**

12.7 This is calculated using mortality rates, as applied in conventional Housing Needs Assessments. The figures for mortality, however, have been increased in line with studies of Gypsy and Traveller communities suggesting a life expectancy approximately 10 years lower than that of the general population.<sup>43</sup> The table below shows the relevant calculation:

**Table 12.2 Number of existing pitches expected to become vacant 2008-2013**

<i>From authorised pitches</i>	
Current supply of occupied permanent / residential site pitches	104
Pitches released from this number by mortality per year according to adjusted mortality rates (assuming inheritance of pitch by any remaining adult residents of pitch)	0.58
Expected pitches released 2008-2013 (0.58 × 5)	2.9

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

**Step 4: Number of family units in site accommodation expressing a desire to leave the Black Country**

12.8 Data collected through fieldwork estimated that 8.2 would be moving out of the Black Country area.

**Step 5: Number of family units in site accommodation expressing a desire to live in housing**

12.9 Using the survey data it was calculated that 12.8 families expressed a desire to move into bricks and mortar housing.

**Step 6: Residential pitches planned to be built or brought back into use, 2008-2013**

12.10 Overall 15 pitches are to be provided according to current plans in the Black Country in the next five years.

**Step 7: Additional supply generated by movement within the stock**

12.11 This figure, although not included in the CLG draft model, allows for the fact that movement of families from pitches onto different pitches (steps 8 and 10) not only generates demand/need but also supply. Pitches vacated by moves out of the Black Country or into housing are excluded, since these are already counted in steps 4 and 5 above. This generates a total supply of 23.3 pitches.

12.12 It is recognised that those moving from overcrowded pitches will not release pitches large enough for every family: however there are many smaller newly forming family units within the total households generating need.

<sup>43</sup> E.g. L. Crout, *Traveller health care project: Facilitating access to the NHS*, Walsall Health Authority, 1987. NB: For Travelling Showpeople, the standard mortality rate is used.

**Step 8: Family units on pitches seeking residential pitches in the area, 2008-2013**

12.13 The Guidance suggests that those moving from pitch to pitch should be included in the need section. The supply also generated by this is taken into account in step 7. These family units reported that they 'needed or were likely' to move to a different home in the next five years, and wanted to stay on an authorised site, or that they were currently seeking accommodation.

12.14 This category of need overlaps with those moving due to overcrowding, counted in step 11, and so any family units which are both overcrowded and seeking accommodation are deducted from this total. This generates a total need from this source of 12.2 pitches.

**Step 9: Family units on unauthorised encampments seeking residential pitches in the area**

12.15 Guidance indicates that all those living on unauthorised encampments or developments must be provided with alternative accommodation. Using survey data, it has been calculated how many families on unauthorised encampments (including long term ones tolerated by councils) want residential pitches in the Black Country. They generate a need for 4.7 residential pitches.

**Step 10: Family units on unauthorised developments seeking residential pitches in the area**

12.16 The Guidance also states that all those living on unauthorised developments must be provided with alternative accommodation. Regularising families living on their land without planning permission would reduce the overall level of need by the number of pitches given planning permission. There are 16 pitches on unauthorised developments in the County and these are shown separately for each district.

**Step 11: Family units on overcrowded pitches seeking residential pitches in the area**

12.17 Guidance indicates that those on overcrowded pitches should be provided with pitches of an adequate size. Households which also contain a newly formed family unit that has not yet left are excluded. This is because it is assumed that once the extra family unit leaves (included in the need figures in step 12) their accommodation will no longer be overcrowded. This step results in 11.1 pitches.

**Step 12: New family units expected to arrive from elsewhere**

12.18 In the absence of any data derivable from secondary sources on the moving intentions of those outside the Black Country, it is assumed that inflow of Gypsies and Travellers into the County will be equivalent to the outflow.

**Step 13: New family formations expected to arise from within existing family units on sites**

12.19 The number of individuals needing to leave pitches to create new family units was estimated from survey data to be 49 in the next five years. Allowing for those planning to leave the County, and for estimated rates of marriages to both Gypsies and Travellers and non-Gypsies and Travellers, it is thought that this will result in the formation of 25 new households requiring residential pitches during the 2008 to 2013 period.

**Step 14: Family units in housing with a psychological aversion to housed accommodation**

- 12.20 Government Guidance instructs the model to include an element of those in housing who have a proven psychological aversion to bricks and mortar accommodation. Due to the difficulties in ascertaining a 'proven' psychological aversion from a questionnaire, a proxy is used. This was determined by identifying those respondents who said in their questionnaire responses that they suffered adverse psychological effects due to living in bricks and mortar accommodation.
- 12.21 Even if the family unit in question was in overcrowded or unsuitable housing, psychological aversion was taken into account, since if no psychological aversion was present, the need for larger accommodation could potentially be met within the housing stock.
- 12.22 The level of psychological aversion found through the survey was 13%. However due to the small sample size this was rounded down to 10%. This generated a total need for 52 housing units from Gypsies and Travellers.

**Requirements for transit pitches: 2008-2013**

- 12.23 As discussed in Chapter 8, many of the family units living on unauthorised sites present a need for permanent, residential pitches or housing in the Black Country. Survey participants and stakeholders all agreed that there was an additional need for transit pitches in the area.
- 12.24 Transit pitches were seen as a necessity as they supported authorised sites by providing a place for visiting family members to stay. Stakeholders also agreed that transit pitches would ease community tensions that often evolved when unauthorised encampments occurred.
- 12.25 We therefore suggest that 10 -12 pitches would be required in the Black Country to cater for this need.

**Requirement for housing, 2008-2013: summary**

- 12.26 The need for housing generated by Gypsies and Travellers in the study area is assessed according to an 11-step process, based upon the inputs and outputs to the pitch requirements model above (which itself is based upon CLG Draft Guidance). The results of this analysis are shown in the tables below, while the subsequent section contains explanations of the sourcing and calculation of the figures for each step.
- 12.27 The main driver for the increase in the need of bricks and mortar accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers stems from family formation from those already in housing in the area.

**Table 12.3 Estimate of the need for bricks and mortar dwellings, 2008-2013**

<i>Dwellings currently occupied by Gypsies and Travellers</i>	
1) Dwellings occupied by Gypsies and Travellers	520
<i>Current supply of dwellings from Gypsy and Traveller Sources</i>	
2) Number of dwellings expected to become vacant through mortality 2008-2013	0.0
3) Dwellings vacated by those with a psychological aversion to bricks and mortar moving onto sites	52.0
4) Number of households in housing expected to leave the County 2008-2013	0.0
5) Dwellings vacated by movement within the stock (steps 6 and 8 below)	108.7
<b>Total Supply</b>	<b>160.7</b>
<i>Current need for dwellings</i>	
6) Households (currently in housing) seeking new accommodation without psychological aversion to bricks and mortar and therefore not moving to a site 2008-2013	62.1
7) Family units on unauthorised pitches seeking housing in the area	3.4
8) Family units in over-crowded housing without psychological aversion to bricks and mortar and therefore not moving to a site	46.6
9) Households moving into the Black Country	0.0
10) Newly forming family units	170.7
11) Households moving into housing from sites	5.9
<b>Total Need</b>	<b>288.7</b>
<i>Additional need</i>	
Total additional housing likely to be occupied by Gypsies and Travellers	<b>128</b>
Annualised Additional Housing	<b>26</b>

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

## **Requirement for housing, 2008-2013: steps of the calculation**

### ***Step 1: Current numbers of dwellings occupied by Gypsies and Travellers***

12.28 Currently there are estimated to be 520 houses occupied by Gypsies and Travellers in the study area.

### ***Step 2: Number of existing houses expected to become vacant, 2008-2013***

12.29 This is calculated using modified mortality rates based on lower life expectancy of Gypsies and Travellers.

### ***Step 3: Number of dwellings vacated by those with a psychological aversion to housing***

12.30 This supply arises from family units moving onto sites that were considered to have a psychological aversion to housing, as detailed in step 13 of the assessment of pitch requirements. This relates to 52 units.

### ***Step 4: Number of family units in housing expected to leave the county in the next 5 years***

12.31 The survey revealed that no households expressed the desire to move out of the Black Country therefore at this step there is no additional supply of housing.

**Step 5: Dwellings vacated by movement within the stock**

12.32 This figure, although not included in the CLG model, allows for the fact that movement of families from one house into another (steps 6 and 8) not only generates demand/need but also supply. Dwellings vacated by moves out of the County and by those with a psychological aversion to housing are excluded, to prevent overlap with the supply counted in steps 3 and 4 above.

12.33 It is recognised that of course those moving from overcrowded dwellings will not release dwellings large enough for every family. However, there are many newly forming family units within the total households generating demand, which are likely to be seeking smaller units.

**Step 6: Family units seeking new accommodation (without a psychological aversion to housing and therefore not moving onto a site)**

12.34 It is assumed in this model that only need will be met, rather than demand. Therefore any household not determined to have a psychological aversion to housing but declaring that they 'need or are likely to move' in the next five years is considered to be likely to generate a need for a house.

12.35 The calculation shown in the table below provides the total number moving into bricks and mortar dwellings from this source. Deductions are made to avoid overlap with those moving for reasons of overcrowding or psychological aversion to housing. This results in the 62.1 units.

**Step 7: Family units on unauthorised pitches seeking housing in the area**

12.36 There has been a trend of moving from unauthorised sites into housing for a variety of reasons. Even if permission was granted for some pitches, it is likely that this trend will continue, estimated to be the equivalent to 3.4 family units in the next five years.

**Step 8: Family units in overcrowded housing (without a psychological aversion to housing and therefore not moving onto a site)**

12.37 Many family units living in overcrowded housing do not have a psychological aversion to housing and therefore generate a need for a larger house rather than a pitch. These family units are considered in the table below, although households which also contain a newly formed family unit that has not yet left are excluded. This is because it is assumed that once the extra family unit leaves (included in the need figures in step 12) their accommodation will no longer be overcrowded.

12.38 The working also discounts those who, even though overcrowded under the model, report that they are 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their current accommodation in any case. This amounts to 46.6 households in need.

**Step 9: New family units expected to arrive from elsewhere**

12.39 In the absence of any data derivable from secondary sources on the moving intentions of those outside the Black Country, movement into the County was expected to equal movement out of the County, both from existing and emerging households, in this case zero.

**Step 10: New family formations expected to arise from within existing family units in housing**

12.40 This measures the number of individuals needing to leave bricks and mortar dwellings to create new family units in the next five years. Allowing for those planning to leave the Black Country and for estimated rates of marriages to both Gypsies and Travellers and non-Gypsies and Travellers, it is thought that this will result in the formation of 170 new households during the 2008-2013.

**Step 11: Family units voluntarily moving into housing from sites**

12.41 This is the result of steps 8 and 12 of the assessment of pitch requirements, which showed that 0 households located on pitches need or expect to move into housing in the next five years.

**Requirement for residential pitches, 2013 to 2018: summary**

12.42 CLG suggests family formation at the rate of 3.90%, applying this rate to the base figures as of 2013 leads to the formation of an extra 42 households in the Black Country.

12.43 The base figure is calculated by adding the current level of authorised pitches (104), those planned to be built or brought back into use over the next five years (15) and the additional requirement to be met (67).The table below illustrates these figures.

**Table 12.4 Estimate of residential pitches, 2013-2018**

Pitches occupied by Gypsies and Travellers	186
Family formation 2013 - 2018	31.4
Total additional pitch requirement, 2013-2018	31.4
Annualised additional pitch requirement	6.3

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

**Requirements for transit pitches: 2008-2018**

12.44 The assumption for transit pitches for 2008-2018 allows a vacancy rate and spare capacity. It is unlikely that the extent of travelling will increase in the future, so it is assumed that no further transit pitches will be needed. This assumption should however be kept under review.

## District and Borough summaries

12.45 The following table gives an overview of projected need for residential pitches by district borough, over the 2008-2018 periods. These figures are evidence of need and are not targets for new provision; the final borough targets will be defined in the Regional Spatial Strategy. The requirements are in addition to pitches already planned for 2008 (shown in districts' individual tables).

**Table 12.5 Additional residential pitch requirements for the Black Country, 2008-2018**

	Total at 2008	Req'mt 2008-2013	Total at 2013*	Req'mt 2013-2018	Total at 2018*	<b>Total Req'mt 2008-2018</b>	Annualised Req'mt
Dudley	29	14	46	8	54	<b>22</b>	2.2
Sandwell	15	-1	20	3	23	<b>2</b>	0.2
Walsall	20	30	56	9	65	<b>39</b>	3.9
Wolverhampton	40	25	65	11	76	<b>36</b>	3.6

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

\* Including new pitches planned in 2008.

12.46 Information gathered from the community at the feedback session suggested that these figures were too low and should be regarded as the minimum additional need in the Black Country.

## District and Borough breakdowns

12.47 The following tables show a detailed breakdown of projected need for residential pitches and for housing units for each Borough of the Black Country, over the 2008-2018 period. They first show the calculations of need for residential pitches for both 2007-2012, broken down into contributions from overcrowding, planned moves and newly forming family units. The summary table further down each sheet shows the overall need broken down equally over each five year period, and an annual average need figure. (NB: due to rounding, the sum of the district totals may exceed the Countywide totals).

12.48 These are based on the proportions of pitches and houses showing these needs or demands on a countywide basis, rather than individual cases within the District or Borough. This is because the statistical sample for individual districts and boroughs is relatively small, and therefore analysing small sub-groups within individual districts and boroughs, especially where the overall Gypsy and Traveller population is small, may create significant anomalies.

- 12.49 The pitch requirements are based on an assessment of need following fieldwork in Summer – Winter 2007. Local authorities may wish to consider whether circumstances have changed when including figures in their planning and housing strategies. For example, if long-term unauthorised encampments tolerated by councils and unauthorised developments have been regularised since this assessment took place, the overall need figure will fall by the number of pitches given planning permission.
- 12.50 It is also important to note that the large group of unauthorised Irish Travellers were in Wolverhampton at the time of fieldwork and their need has therefore been calculated there.
- 12.51 In addition the summaries show the projected changes to the overall Gypsy and Traveller population in housing, although this change is dependent on the provision of the pitches reported to be required. The number of Gypsies and Travellers in Bricks and Mortar housing should be taken into account when planning and providing mainstream and BME housing related services and strategies.
- 12.52 Finally, the summary provides an overview of the resulting situation in terms of the location of the Gypsy and Traveller population over the 2008-2018 periods, starting with the base figures at the current time (2008).

**Dudley****Table 12.6 Five year estimate of the need for permanent / residential site pitches (2008-2013)**

1) Current occupied permanent / residential site pitches	29
<i>Current residential supply</i>	
2) Number of unused residential pitches available	0.0
3) Number of existing pitches expected to become vacant through mortality 2008-2013	0.8
4) Number of family units on sites expected to leave county in next 5 years	2.3
5) Number of family units on sites expected to move into housing in next 5 years	3.6
6) Residential pitches planned to be built or to be brought back into use 2008-2013	3.0
7) Additional supply generated by movement within the stock	6.5
Total Supply	16.2
<i>Current residential need: Pitches</i>	
8) Family units (on pitches) seeking residential pitches in the area, 2008-2013, excluding those already counted as moving due to overcrowding in step 11	3.4
9) Family units on unauthorised encampments requiring residential pitches in the area	0.0
10) Family units on unauthorised developments requiring residential pitches in the area	4.0
11) Family units currently overcrowded on pitches seeking residential pitches in the area, excluding those containing an emerging family unit	3.1
12) New family units expected to arrive from elsewhere	2.3
13) New family formations expected to arise from within existing family units on sites	6.3
Total Need	19.1
<i>Current residential need: Housing</i>	
14) Family units in housing but with a psychological aversion to housed accommodation	10.6
Total Need	29.7
<i>Balance of need and supply</i>	
Total Additional Pitch Requirement	<b>14</b>
Annualised Additional Pitch Requirement	<b>3</b>

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

\* excluding those counted in step 11 \*\* excluding those containing an emerging family unit

**Table 12.7 Ten year summary (2008 – 2018)**

	Base Numbers 2008	Additional need 2008- 2018	Additional need 2013- 2018	Additional need 2008- 2018*	Numbers as at 2018**
Unauthorised encampments	0	-	-	-	-
Unauthorised developments	4	-	-	-	-
Residential pitches	29	14	8	22 (2.2)	54
Housing	106	28	23	51	157

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

\*annualised figures shown in brackets \*\*including new pitches planned for 2008

**Sandwell**

**Table 12.8 Five year estimate of the need for permanent / residential site pitches (2008-2013)**

1) Current occupied permanent / residential site pitches	15
<i>Current residential supply</i>	
2) Number of unused residential pitches available	0.0
3) Number of existing pitches expected to become vacant through mortality 2008-2013	0.4
4) Number of family units on sites expected to leave county in next 5 years	1.2
5) Number of family units on sites expected to move into housing in next 5 years	1.8
6) Residential pitches planned to be built or to be brought back into use 2008-2013	6.0
7) Additional supply generated by movement within the stock	3.4
Total Supply	12.8
<i>Current residential need: Pitches</i>	
8) Family units (on pitches) seeking residential pitches in the area, 2008-2013, excluding those already counted as moving due to overcrowding in step 11	1.8
9) Family units on unauthorised encampments requiring residential pitches in the area	0.0
10) Family units on unauthorised developments requiring residential pitches in the area	0.0
11) Family units currently overcrowded on pitches seeking residential pitches in the area, excluding those containing an emerging family unit	1.6
12) New family units expected to arrive from elsewhere	1.2
13) New family formations expected to arise from within existing family units on sites	2.9
Total Need	7.4
<i>Current residential need: Housing</i>	
14) Family units in housing but with a psychological aversion to housed accommodation	4.3
Total Need	11.7
<i>Balance of need and supply</i>	
Total Additional Pitch Requirement	-1
Annualised Additional Pitch Requirement	0

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

\* excluding those counted in step 11 \*\* excluding those containing an emerging family unit

**Table 12.9 Ten year summary (2008 – 2013)**

	Base Numbers 2008	Additional need 2008-2013	Additional need 2013-2018	Additional need 2008-2018*	Numbers as at 2018**
Unauthorised encampments	-	-	-	-	-
Unauthorised developments	-	-	-	-	-
Residential pitches	15	-1	3	2 (0.2)	23
Housing	43	12	9	21 (2.1)	64

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

\*annualised figures shown in brackets

**Walsall****Table 12.10 Five year estimate of the need for permanent / residential site pitches (2008-2013)**

1) Current occupied permanent / residential site pitches	20
<i>Current residential supply</i>	
2) Number of unused residential pitches available	0.0
3) Number of existing pitches expected to become vacant through mortality 2008-2013	0.6
4) Number of family units on sites expected to leave county in next 5 years	1.6
5) Number of family units on sites expected to move into housing in next 5 years	2.5
6) Residential pitches planned to be built or to be brought back into use 2008-2013	6.0
7) Additional supply generated by movement within the stock	4.5
Total Supply	15.1
<i>Current residential need: Pitches</i>	
8) Family units (on pitches) seeking residential pitches in the area, 2008-2013, excluding those already counted as moving due to overcrowding in step 11	2.4
9) Family units on unauthorised encampments requiring residential pitches in the area	0.0
10) Family units on unauthorised developments requiring residential pitches in the area	4.0
11) Family units currently overcrowded on pitches seeking residential pitches in the area, excluding those containing an emerging family unit	2.1
12) New family units expected to arrive from elsewhere	1.6
13) New family formations expected to arise from within existing family units on sites	4.6
Total Need	14.7
<i>Current residential need: Housing</i>	
14) Family units in housing but with a psychological aversion to housed accommodation	30.0
Total Need	44.7
<i>Balance of need and supply</i>	
Total Additional Pitch Requirement	<b>30</b>
Annualised Additional Pitch Requirement	<b>6</b>

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

\* excluding those counted in step 11 \*\* excluding those containing an emerging family unit

**Table 12.11 Ten year summary (2008 – 2018)**

	Base Numbers 2008	Additional need 2008-2013	Additional need 2013-2018	Additional need 2008-2018*	Numbers as at 2018**
Unauthorised encampments	-	-	-	-	-
Unauthorised developments	4	-	-	-	-
Residential pitches	20	30	9	39 (3.9)	65
Housing	300	71	62	133 (13.3)	433

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

\* annualised figures shown in brackets \*\*including new pitches planned in 2008

**Wolverhampton**

**Table 12.12 Five year estimate of the need for permanent / residential site pitches (2008-2013)**

1) Current occupied permanent / residential site pitches	40
<i>Current residential supply</i>	
2) Number of unused residential pitches available	0.0
3) Number of existing pitches expected to become vacant through mortality 2008-2013	1.1
4) Number of family units on sites expected to leave county in next 5 years	3.1
5) Number of family units on sites expected to move into housing in next 5 years	4.9
6) Residential pitches planned to be built or to be brought back into use 2008-2013	0.0
7) Additional supply generated by movement within the stock	9.0
Total Supply	18.2
<i>Current residential need: Pitches</i>	
8) Family units (on pitches) seeking residential pitches in the area, 2008-2013, excluding those already counted as moving due to overcrowding in step 11	4.7
9) Family units on unauthorised encampments requiring residential pitches in the area	4.7
10) Family units on unauthorised developments requiring residential pitches in the area	8.0
11) Family units currently overcrowded on pitches seeking residential pitches in the area, excluding those containing an emerging family unit	4.3
12) New family units expected to arrive from elsewhere	3.1
13) New family formations expected to arise from within existing family units on sites	11.2
Total Need	35.9
<i>Current residential need: Housing</i>	
14) Family units in housing but with a psychological aversion to housed accommodation	7.1
Total Need	43.0
<i>Balance of need and supply</i>	
Total Additional Pitch Requirement	<b>25</b>
Annualised Additional Pitch Requirement	<b>5</b>

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

\* excluding those counted in step 11 \*\* excluding those containing an emerging family unit

**Table 12.13 Ten year summary (2008 – 2018)**

	Base Numbers 2008	Additional need 2008-2013	Additional need 2013-2018	Additional need 2008-2018*	Numbers as at 2018**
Unauthorised encampments	10	-	-	-	-
Unauthorised developments	8	-	-	-	-
Residential pitches	40	25	11	36 (3.6)	76
Housing	71	25	16	41 (4.1)	112

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

\* annualised figures shown in brackets \*\*including new pitches planned in 2008

## Summary

12.53 The following table summaries the number of residential and transit pitches required. It shows that, in addition the 15 new pitches being planned, a further 103 residential pitches are needed over the ten years. Additionally 10 – 12 transit pitches are required.

<b>Table 12.14 Summary of Gypsy and Traveller net accommodation needs</b>		
Period	Residential pitches	Transit pitches
Total 2008-13	67 (+15*)	10 - 12
Total 2013-18	36	0
Total 2008-2018	103 (+15*)	10 - 12

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

\* allowing for newly built pitches in 2008

12.54 It is important to note that Wolverhampton's need includes 5 pitches arising from an unauthorised encampment that travels throughout the Black Country authorities. This group did not indicate which Borough their preference was within, but stated that they were actively looking for pitches within the Black Country boundaries. Further consultation with this group or their representatives should therefore take place before a decision is made as to which borough should take on this need.



# 13. Travelling Showpeople accommodation need

## Introduction

- 13.1 This chapter seeks to quantify the level of need for the provision of new accommodation for Travelling Showpeople within the study area, based on the survey data derived from interviews with 38 families. Based on the estimate of 149 families in the sub-region, this comprises 26% of the population.
- 13.2 It is important to note that multiple families can live on the same yard, often on their own 'plot', demarcated from the rest of the yard. As with Gypsies and Travellers, we have based our assessment on each family unit requiring a plot.
- 13.3 Our model for calculating the accommodation needs of Travelling Showpeople are in line with the Practice Guidance issued by the CLG. In common with the calculations carried out by the Showmen's Guild for the Interim Regional Statement, the model contains components relating to overcrowding and family formation; however the CLG model also takes into account need arising from unauthorised developments, planned moves and supply.

## Need calculation: 2008-2013

### *Stage 1: Number of families on authorised yards*

It is estimated that there are 149 Travelling Showpeople families in the Black Country, distributed as in the table below. These act as the baseline figures for assessing need.

**Table 13.1 Number of Travelling Showpeople families in the Black Country**

Borough	Authorised yards	Unauthorised developments	Housing	Total
Dudley	10	0	52	62
Sandwell	13	3	7	23
Walsall	55	1	0	56
Wolves	5	0	3	8
Total	83	4	62	149

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

## Stage 2: Overcrowding

- 13.4 It was assumed that any family currently living on an overcrowded plot would require an additional plot. Overcrowding was according to the criteria shown in the table below.

**Table 13.2 Criteria for overcrowding**

**HOUSEHOLDS CONSIDERED TO BE OVERCROWDED MUST:**

Consider themselves to have insufficient space when asked

**AND FULFIL AT LEAST ONE OF THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:**

Mentioned lack of space for essential purposes\* when asked about drawbacks of the yard

Mentioned lack of space for essential purposes\* when asked to give general comments about the yard

Had a high ratio of bedrooms needed\*\* to number of trailers (more than 2.1)

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

\* 'Essential Purposes' were considered to be space for residential accommodation or for the basic maintenance and testing of rides. Additional space for storage of all rides and/or equipment was not considered essential since a separate storage yard was often used.

\*\* Bedrooms needed was defined as: One bedroom per couple or single person; children under the age of 10 could share a room

- 13.5 Almost (46%) of participants considered themselves not to have enough space for their family; however in the case of Travelling Showpeople the issue of overcrowding is complicated by differentiating between overcrowding in terms of essential living space, and overcrowding in terms of a lack of space impeding the commercial aims of the business.
- 13.6 Reasons not considered to be 'overcrowding' in the strictest sense might include the commercial goal of storage of all rides and equipment on one yard or having space for possible future purchases, the desire to unite related families currently living separately, or a household wanting to allocate space on an adjacent plot for future generations.
- 13.7 Using the extended criteria shown above, the number of families considered to be living on currently overcrowded plots was 25% (21 families).
- 13.8 There is however an overlap of overcrowding with over categories, as some plots considered to be overcrowded at the present time will resolve this situation in the next five years either through a newly formed family unit leaving the plot, or through a planned move to a larger plot. Sixteen of the overcrowded households questioned fell into this category and so will have been counted twice in Stage 1 and in either Stage 2 or Stage 3, and so must be subtracted from the total.

### **Stage 3: Emerging households**

- 13.9 Of the 83 households on authorised yards in the study area, the data suggested that 31 contained one or more family members wanting or needing to move out of the family home in the next five years, totalling 49 individuals. None wished to move into housing but six wanted to move out of the Black Country, and so the total number of individuals that were expected to leave forming new family groups and requiring plots in the next five years was 43.
- 13.10 This figure needs to be discounted by approximately half to allow for marriages or partnerships between these individuals when forming new family units. Since not all will necessarily marry a Travelling Showperson, and some may remain single, a discount of 40% was felt to be appropriate, bringing the estimate of the total number of new family units to 26.
- 13.11 The data indicates that all of the new households questioned would prefer to stay on the same plot; however this will clearly not always be possible. An examination of the data suggested that of the plots in this situation, almost half were already overcrowded. As a result, we have assumed that only an estimated 20% of new households wishing to remain on their present plot (6) would be able to do so, reducing the overall number of family units to 20.

### **Stage 4: Families on unauthorised development**

- 13.12 Government Guidance states that all families on unauthorised sites should be provided with authorised accommodation. There are four families on unauthorised developments in the Black Country (in Sandwell and Walsall) and they are included in the demand.

### **Stage 5: Planned moves**

- 13.13 Almost a quarter of Travelling Showpeople households (23%, or 19) expected to move in the next five years. All of these hoped to remain on yards, and five expected to move out of the Black Country. This put the total demand for plots from this source at 12. It should be noted that these moves will also generate a supply of empty plots, dealt with later in the calculation.

### **Stage 6: Supply**

- 13.14 No new yards are currently expected to be built in the Black Country in the next five years, given the current difficulties faced by Travelling Showpeople in gaining planning permission. Applying standard mortality rates to the dataset indicated that the probability of any empty plots being created from this source in the next five years was very low. This should be unsurprising, given that Travelling Showpeople ordinarily live in large extended family groups with younger family members still living on the plot inheriting it in most cases after the death of an older plot owner.
- 13.15 The main source of supply was from moves from existing plots vacated by families moving around the area. However, it is not clear that every move will always leave a free plot; for example a vacated plot could be sold off for purposes other than housing Travelling Showpeople. Therefore a discount of 10% has been made, bringing the total supply down to 17 plots.

### **Travelling Showpeople living in housing**

- 13.16 An element of the need assessment for Gypsies and Travellers is a transfer from bricks and mortar accommodation to sites. The basis for including the element of need relates to ‘psychological aversion’ to living in housing among some Gypsies and Travellers, and the recognition in case law that local authorities should consider its negative effects when allocating housing.
- 13.17 It is not clear whether this should also apply to Travelling Showpeople. We are unaware of any research which has identified elements of psychological aversion. Our sample contained one interview with a Travelling Showperson; this participant wanted to stay in housing but the sample is clearly too small to base assumptions for the rest of the population.
- 13.18 In the absence of evidence to suggest that psychological aversion may be an issue for Travelling Showpeople, we have not included this as an element of need.

### **Overall requirement**

- 13.19 Overall, this indicated a supply of 10 new plots, compared to a gross need for 19, indicating a net need for the provision of 9 additional plots for Travelling Showpeople in the next five years, bringing the total number of used plots in the County up from 27 to 36, an increase of 33%. This appears a large increase, but it must be taken into account that there were a significant number of long term concealed households contained in the sample, who might have been expected to move out in previous years given the opportunity.

13.20 All Travelling Showpeople assessed as needing or likely to move in the next five years that answered questions on tenure preference wished to live in privately owned (or privately rented) rather than social rented accommodation.

13.21 The calculations described above are detailed in the table below.

<b>Table 13.3 Calculation of Need: Travelling Showpeople – Plots – 5 years</b>	
1) Number of families on authorised sites	83
<b>2) Overcrowding</b>	
Currently overcrowded	21
Minus overlap with categories counted below	-16
<i>Sub-total</i>	5
<b>3) Newly forming family units within 5 years</b>	
Individuals reported on existing plots as likely to form new family units	47
Discounted by 40% to allow for marriages/partnerships to form single family unit	-19
Minus 20% of those wanting to stay on same plot**	-6
Minus those moving into houses	0
Minus those moving out of the Black Country	-6
Allowance for those moving into Black Country (100% of outflow)	6
<i>Sub-total</i>	22
<b>4) Families on unauthorised developments</b>	
Number of families on unauthorised developments requiring provision in the Black Country	4
<i>Sub-total</i>	4
<b>5) Planned moves within 5 years</b>	
Needing or likely to move within 5 years	19
Minus those moving into houses	0
Minus those moving out of the Black Country	-5
Allowance for those moving into the Black Country (100% of outflow)	5
<i>Sub-total</i>	19
<b>6) Supply</b>	
Plots likely to be freed up by above moves*	-17
Plots likely to be freed up through mortality***	0
New building of yards projected	0
<i>Sub-total</i>	-17
<b>Net need: 2007-2012</b>	
<b>Total additional plot requirement, 2008-2013</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Annualised additional plot requirement, 2008-2013</b>	<b>3.3</b>

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

\* not all moves result in free plots, for example if a move is forced by a Compulsory Purchase Order or sold for other purposes.

\*\* overcrowding data suggests approximately 25% of those wanting to stay on the same plot might be able to.

\*\*\* assuming inheritance of plot by any surviving adult resident family members

## Requirement for plots, 2013 to 2018: summary

13.22 Looking further into the future, with all unauthorised developments assumed to have been taken into account, a growth rate needs to be applied to estimate need for years five to ten. The base figures for this calculation are shown below.

**Table 13.4 Base figures as at 2013, assuming all need is met for 2008-2013**

	2007 base	Change 2008-2013	2013 base
Family units on authorised yards	83	+33	116

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

13.23 As with Gypsies and Travellers, a growth rate of 3.9% is applied for 2013-18. The following table shows how this affects the estimated requirement of plots.

**Table 13.5 Estimate of the need for plots, 2013-2018**

Plots occupied by Travelling Showpeople	116
Newly forming family units (3.9% per annum)	23
Annualised additional plot requirement, 2012-2017	4.6

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

### Plot numbers required: 2008-2018

13.24 The findings above are summarised in the following table.

**Table 13.6 Estimated plots required: 2008-2018 summary**

	Additional plots	%age increase	Total plots at end of period
Current situation: 2008	n/a	n/a	83
Required 2008-2013	33	39.8%	116
Required 2013-2018	23	19.8%	139
<i>Overall 2008-2018</i>	<i>56</i>	<i>59.6%</i>	<i>139</i>

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

13.25 For the purposes of implementing policy based on these requirements, it is useful to create a breakdown of need by district and housing sub-region within the study area. This has been done by breaking down the overall plot requirements according to the existing distribution of population. As with Gypsies and Travellers, this method is based on need where it arises and not necessarily where it should be met. Boroughs with large populations consequently have larger levels of need.

13.26 It also needs to be emphasised that the data refers to the number of family units which require additional provision; it is not equivalent to the number of yards as multiple families live on each yard.

13.27 The method initially takes into account only the level of need generated within authorised yards (29 plots) and then, for the two boroughs which have unauthorised developments, the plots required to resolve this have been added.

**Table 13.7 Calculation of need: Travelling Showpeople families, 2008-2013**

Area	Families on authorised yards	% of authorised population	Need from existing authorised yards	Need from unauthorised developments	2008-2013 total requirement
<b>2008-2013</b>					
Dudley	10	12.0%	3	0	3
Sandwell	13	15.7%	5	3	8
Walsall	55	66.3%	19	1	20
Wolves	5	6.0%	2	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>2013-2018</b>					
Dudley	13	12%	3	-	3
Sandwell	21	18%	4	-	4
Walsall	75	65%	15	-	15
Wolves	7	6%	1	-	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>23</b>

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

13.28 Information gathered from the community at the feedback session suggested that these numbers were too low and should be regarded as the minimum additional need for the Black Country.

## Summary

13.29 The summary results of these calculations are:

**Table 13.8 Net accommodation requirements for Travelling Showpeople**

Area	2008-13	2013-18	Total 2008-18
Dudley	3	3	6
Sandwell	8	4	12
Walsall	20	15	35
Wolves	2	1	3
<b>Total 2008-18</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>56</b>

Source – Black Country GTANA 2008

13.30 From this it can be seen that there is a net additional requirement in both periods studied. The shortfall is small when compared with the larger Gypsy and Traveller community also considered in this study, but quite distinct in nature.

# 14. Conclusions and Recommendations

## Introduction

14.1 The research on which this report is based comprised of multiple components, including a review of legislation and policies, a stakeholder consultation with agencies and service providers and a survey of Gypsies and Travellers in the area. This final chapter brings together the key findings of the research under a series of recommendations for policies the local authorities in the Black Country could pursue to meet the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers. In total we make 15 recommendations grouped into three sub-categories:

- Accommodation provision
- Facilities, access and service provision
- Recording and monitoring process

14.2 This chapter makes reference to two consultation papers: *Draft Guidance on the Design of Sites for Gypsies and Travellers* and *Draft Guidance on the Management of Gypsy and Traveller Sites*, both of which were published by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) in May 2007. Reference is also made to *Circular 01/2006 Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites*.

## Accommodation provision

14.3 There is a calculated need for residential pitch accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers in the Black Country. The total assessment of need is for 125 pitches, created by overcrowding, unauthorised sites and future family formations. This figure takes into account planned extensions to be carried out in 2008.

14.4 We break down to borough level the recommendations on meeting the needs of Gypsies and Travellers. Gypsies and Travellers responded that their preference was for small family sized sites with approximately 10-15 pitches and this sentiment is echoed in the *Draft Guidance on the design of sites for Gypsies and Travellers* which recommends that sites should not exceed 20 pitches. However the Guidance does state that where this is unavoidable, the design should include 'closes' within the site for extended families. An example of how this has been achieved is the Shirenewton Site in Cardiff which has 52 pitches. Effective management of larger sites is crucial and the Shirenewton Site is an example of how a large site needs an on site team.

- 14.5 The precise location, design and facilities of any new site should be drawn up in consultation with local Gypsies and Travellers and take into account directions in the *Draft Guidance on the design of sites for Gypsies and Travellers*. The health and safety implications of a new site's location should be considered in finding a balance between offering sites in good locations and the additional land costs this would entail. The settled community neighbouring the sites should also be involved in the consultation from an early age.
- 14.6 An element of the Black Country's level of need is created by Gypsies and Travellers living on their own land without planning permission. Assisting these site residents in obtaining planning permission retrospectively could be a cost-efficient way of increasing authorised site provision in the Black Country. It would also mean that the levels of need for boroughs would be reduced accordingly.
- 14.7 It is worth noting when building new sites that the site names were reported as problematic when accessing health and employment opportunities. Consideration should be given to neutral names that avoid the words 'caravan site'.
- 14.8 The survey did not reveal high levels of segregation between different Gypsy and Traveller groups and families, and found that mixed sites with effective management were working well in the area.
- 14.9 In terms of tenure, the majority of participants did not think they would be able to afford to buy their own land in the Black Country, although qualitative comments made in the interviews suggest there is an aspiration for self-owned, family sized sites. Given the affordability barriers that participants said they would face providing their own sites, the majority of future provision for Gypsies and Travellers should to be supplied as socially rented pitches.
- 14.10 The Gypsy and Traveller Sites Grant 2008-2011 provides funding for the creation of new sites and the improvement of existing sites by local authorities or Registered Social Landlords (RSLs). The Guidance states that '*the Government is keen to encourage innovative solutions for addressing the shortage of accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers. All reasonable proposals will be considered for funding, including those involving use of public funding to facilitate private provision*'.
- 14.11 Local Development Plan Documents (DPDs) should specify small family-sized sites that could be bought privately by Gypsies and Travellers who are in a position to do so. Consultation on the DPDs should involve Gypsies and Travellers.

### Recommendation 1: Gypsies and Travellers

#### Dudley

Dudley has a need for an additional 22 pitches. This could be reduced to 18 pitches if planning permission was granted on the unauthorised developments.

The current local authority site has 19 pitches and three in the planning stages. It is recommended that the remaining need for 18 pitches be met through the creation of two 9 pitch sites, or if this is not possible the creation of a larger 18 pitch mixed site.

#### Sandwell

Sandwell has a need for an additional two pitches. The current local authority site has 15 pitches and the authority is bidding for a grant to provide a further six, bringing the eventual total to 21 pitches. We therefore recommend that the need for two pitches be met by extending the current site.

#### Walsall

Walsall has a need for 39 pitches in addition to those in planning. This could be reduced to 34 pitches if planning permission was granted to the current unauthorised developments. The current local authority site has 13 pitches and the authority is in the process of gaining funds for a further six pitches for this site. We therefore recommend that the need be met for the remaining 34 pitches through the creation of two new 17 pitch mixed sites in the Borough.

#### Wolverhampton

Wolverhampton has a need for an additional 36 pitches. This could be reduced to 31 pitches if planning permission was granted to unauthorised developments. The current local authority site has 40 pitches. It is recommended that the remaining need for 31 pitches be met through the creation of two new mixed sites.

If the decision is made to meet the need of the unauthorised encampment in a different borough within the Black Country, Wolverhampton's need will decrease to 24 pitches. It is recommended that the 24 pitches be met through the creation of two new mixed sites.

14.12 It is important to note that Wolverhampton's need figure of 36 pitches includes pitches arising from an unauthorised encampment that travels throughout the Black Country authorities. This group did not indicate which borough their preference was within, but stated that they were actively looking for pitches within the Black Country boundaries. Further consultation with this group or their representatives should therefore take place before a decision is made as to which borough should take on this need.

14.13 The model calculates that there is a further need for 56 Travelling Showpeople plots. The survey revealed that there is a strong preference for private yards and expanding existing sites rather than being provided with Council owned sites. However, gaining planning permission was reported as problematic.

## Recommendation 2: Travelling Showpeople

### **Dudley**

Dudley has a need for an additional 6 plots. Consideration should be given to extending the current yard or to identifying suitable land in DPD

### **Sandwell**

Sandwell has a need for an additional 12 plots. There are 3 unauthorised developments in Sandwell, which if granted planning permission would decrease the need in the area by the amount of plots granted. Any outstanding need should be met by the identification of suitable land in DPD

### **Walsall**

Walsall has a need for an additional 35 plots. Granting planning permission to extend the current yards to take into account newly forming households should be explored. Suitable land for development should also be identified in DPD.

### **Wolverhampton**

Wolverhampton has a need for an additional three plots. Consideration should be given to the expansion of the current yard to take into account newly forming households.

- 14.14 There is also the issue of transit site provision. Both stakeholders and survey participants agreed that there was a definite need for transit sites in the area; both also agreed that these should be provided separately from residential sites. Elsewhere in the country transit can be difficult to manage due to high turnover, and therefore transit sites are easier to manage when they are small. *The Draft Guidance on the design of sites for Gypsies and Travellers* recommends that the number of pitches on transit sites should not exceed 15.
- 14.15 Due to the number of unauthorised encampments within the Black Country, it is recommended that a transit site with 10-12 pitches should suffice.
- 14.16 Apart from the preference for not combining residential and transit sites, the survey did not reveal any particular locations where transit sites should be situated. During the stakeholder consultation it was reported that the Bilston area in Wolverhampton could house a transit site successfully.
- 14.17 The location of a transit site should take into account many of the requirements of a residential site as set out in the Draft Guidance. However, only the need for access to schools should be regarded as essential, whilst other communal facilities should be regarded as recommendations.
- 14.18 Consultation should be carried out with Gypsies and Travellers regarding the location of a transit site in the area and the best form of management for the transit site. In addition to the requirements of Draft Guidance, the location of the transit site should have good transport links. A starting point to locating suitable locations would be to look at the historic pattern of unauthorised encampments in the area.

### Recommendation 3: Transit pitches

The Black Country should work together to identify land appropriate for a transit site with 10-12 pitches.

- 14.19 While a transit site would reduce the number of unauthorised encampments in the Black Country from non-residents passing through the area, the priority should be in bringing forward residential pitches. If transit pitches are provided before the shortfall in residential pitches is met, there is a risk that they will effectively be used as permanent/residential sites with all the ensuing management issues this would incur.
- 14.20 Given the preference of Travelling Showpeople and a small number of Gypsy and Traveller households in the survey to own their own land, the policy emphasis should be on identifying suitable land to buy and proactively assisting them in obtaining planning permission. This should include planning authorities providing advice and practical help on the application process, including pre-application discussions. Such an approach is in line with latest Government Guidance which promotes private site provision<sup>44</sup>.
- 14.21 Where land affordability is an issue, the Councils should consider the disposal of local authority land at less than best price and their powers of compulsory purchase.

### Recommendation 4: Private sites

The local authorities in the Black Country should identify suitable land for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople who can afford to buy to do so, allowing them to establish small owner-occupied sites. Assistance with the planning process should be proactively offered from an early stage. Specific sites available to buy should be outlined in future DPDs and guidance should be offered on the type of land that is likely to obtain planning permission as well as land that is *unlikely* to.

## Facilities, access and service provision

- 14.22 As well as site capacity, a series of recommendations can be made to improve current facilities available to Gypsies and Travellers, and their access to services and the wider community.
- 14.23 The facilities provided in participants' amenity blocks related to their overall level of satisfaction with the site. We recommend that all new amenity blocks should have a full range of facilities, and old amenity blocks be refurbished to meet this standard.

<sup>44</sup> *Planning for Gypsies and Travellers* ODPM Circular 01/2006

### Recommendation 5: Site conditions

All amenity blocks should be in line with the *Draft Guidance on the design of sites for Gypsies and Travellers*. The Guidance states the following are essential facilities:

- As a minimum: hot and cold water supply, a separate toilet, a bath/shower room, a kitchen and dining area
- Must include secure storage space for harmful substances/medicines; enclosed storage for food, brooms, washing, cleaning items etc and space for connection of cooker, fridge/freezer and washing machine
- Must meet the requirements of the current building regulations, Housing Corporation Design and Quality Standards, the Institution of Electrical Engineers regulations and the local water authority
- Must have adequate and sensibly situated electrical outlets with switching and controls throughout
- There must be heating which provides a temperature suitable for room use, which is economical and capable of individual control for each room
- The width of main entrances, doorways and passageways must comply with building regulations to ensure mobility standards
- Fixtures and fittings in the amenity block must be of a domestic nature, but robust
- Features should be in line with standards for social housing

14.24 There appears frustration from both communities and the Councils over the lack of information and understanding of each others needs – for example the cultural needs of Gypsies and Travellers, or the need for Councils to go through certain bureaucratic systems.

14.25 Walsall were complemented by stakeholders for bridging this gap by creating a site residents group which met regularly in order to discuss problems and how best to approach the Councils about them.

### Recommendation 6: Residential groups

Each local authority should set-up a residents group for Gypsies and Travellers chaired by a person able to bridge the gap between the community and the Council.

14.26 Many local authorities have found that creating floating support for Gypsies and Travellers can ease the transition from sites to housing. For example, the survey revealed that the initial move by Gypsies and Travellers into bricks and mortar housing was often unsuccessful and a Gypsy and Traveller floating support service could aid this transition.

### **Recommendation 7: Support**

The local authorities should consider commissioning a floating support service through Supporting People.

14.27 Participants and stakeholders agreed that issues were resolved swiftly on sites where proactive Site Wardens existed. *The Draft Guidance on the Management of Gypsy and Traveller Sites* states that management 'is a key element in establishing a new site – and the most important in sustaining it as a successful one'.

### **Recommendation 8: Site management**

The management of any new and existing sites should be in line with recommendations made in the *Draft Guidance on the Management of Gypsy and Traveller Sites*. Careful consideration and consultation should be taken on the provision of a site warden for each site.

14.28 Concern was expressed throughout the research as to the safety of sites in relation to roads. Oak Lane and Smithy Lane in particular noted the dangerous roads used to access the site, and residents commented that reaching certain services and facilities by foot was hindered by this.

### **Recommendation 9: Site safety**

Traffic calming devices should be implemented on busy access roads to sites, and a well lit pavement should be provided for accessing local services.

### **Recommendation 10: Site access**

Site locations should be taken into account when planning future local transport routes within the Black Country.

14.29 Relations with the settled community were often strained. It was noted by stakeholders that there was constant low level discrimination, and survey participants felt that in some instances they had been discriminated against. Stakeholders and participants reported that the local media portrayed Gypsies and Travellers in a negative light.

### **Recommendation 11: Community relations**

The Black Country authorities should work closely with the police and local media agencies to ensure that articles published in the local media do not give inaccurate or stereotypical accounts of Gypsies and Travellers and do not contribute to hostility towards this community.

## Recording and monitoring process

14.30 The population and accommodation situation of Gypsies and Travellers is not static and is liable to change over time. Having accurate secondary data on population levels and site types is therefore crucial for the strategic planning of accommodation and services for Gypsies and Travellers. We make three recommendations in relation to this:

### Recommendation 12: Counting practices

We recommend that the Black Country authorities draw up a common set of guidelines for undertaking the Caravan Count and involve Gypsies and Travellers in the process. Consistent practices would allow for meaningful comparisons of Gypsy and Traveller population levels within the Black Country. Local authorities should consider employing Gypsies and Travellers in the process, as exemplified by Cornwall.

### Recommendation 13: Updating the GTANA

The accommodation needs assessment should be carried out every three to five years to take into account the relatively young age at which families form in Gypsy and Traveller communities, and the preference of young families to live on their own pitch on the same site as their extended family.

### Recommendation 14: Monitoring procedure

The four Boroughs should consider identifying a position in either Housing or Planning to take or co-ordinate responsibility for monitoring Gypsy and Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople sites. Mechanisms should be put in place for other council departments – for example legal and environmental health, to contribute to this.

### Recommendation 15: Ethnic monitoring

The local authorities should ensure that ethnic monitoring within all departments use the updated Census classifications which contains a category for Gypsies and Travellers.

## Summary

14.31 The overall finding of the accommodation assessment is that there is a lack of authorised residential and transit sites in the Black Country. Unauthorised sites, overcrowding and the needs of newly forming families mean that there is a need for an additional 99 Gypsy and Traveller pitches, 10-12 transit site pitches and 56 Travelling Showpeople plots.

14.32 The majority of the need should be met through socially rented sites. The Gypsy and Traveller Sites Grant 2008-2011 provides funding for creating new sites and refurbishing existing ones and is available to local authorities and Registered Social Landlords.

- 14.33 The need for local authorities to provide these numbers can be reduced by granting current unauthorised developments planning permission. Further reductions can be made by identifying suitable land in future DPDs and proactively engaging with Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople who wish to buy their own land.
- 14.34 In addition to accommodation needs figures, the research also compiled further recommendations for the Black Country authorities to enable Gypsies and Travellers to have greater access to local services including health and education.



# Glossary

*[This Glossary aims to define terms used in the report. Where there is an existing definition (e.g. in Government Guidance) reference is made to it. Otherwise the terms are defined simply in the way used in the report]*

## **GTANA / GTAA**

Both refer to the accommodation assessment of Gypsies and Travellers and follow CLG Guidance. The majority of Government documents refer to Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments (GTAAs). However, some documents exist refer to Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments (GTANAs).

## **Affordability**

A measure of whether households can access and sustain the cost of private sector housing. There are two main types of affordability measure: mortgage and rental. Mortgage affordability assesses whether households would be eligible for a mortgage; rental affordability measures whether a household can afford private rental. Mortgage affordability is based on conditions set by mortgage lenders – using standard lending multipliers (2.9 times joint income or 3.5 times single income (whichever the higher)). Rental affordability is defined as the rent being less than a proportion of a household's gross income (in this case 25% of gross income).

## **Affordable housing**

Affordable housing includes social rented and intermediate housing, provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Affordable housing should be at a cost which is below the costs of housing typically available in the open market and be available at a sub-market price in perpetuity (although there are some exceptions to this such as the Right-to-Acquire). [There is an ambiguity in PPS3: Housing, where 'intermediate housing' is defined as being below market entry to rent, while 'affordable housing' is defined to be below the threshold to buy (normally much higher than the private rental one). But in principle the Guidance defines affordable housing as below the market threshold, and rationally speaking, that includes the private rented as well as purchase sectors].

## **Annual need**

The combination of the net future need plus an allowance to deal progressively with part of the net current need.

## **Average**

The term 'average' when used in this report is taken to be a mean value unless otherwise stated.

## **Balanced Housing Market model**

A model developed by Fordham Research which examines the supply and demand for different types and sizes of housing across different areas and for specific groups.

### **Bedroom standard**

The bedroom standard is that used by the General Household Survey, and is calculated as follows: a separate bedroom is allocated to each co-habiting couple, any other person aged 21 or over, each pair of young persons aged 10-20 of the same sex, and each pair of children under 10 (regardless of sex). Unpaired young persons aged 10-20 are paired with a child under 10 of the same sex or, if not possible, allocated a separate bedroom. Any remaining unpaired children under 10 are also allocated a separate bedroom. The calculated standard for the household is then compared with the actual number of bedrooms available for its sole use to indicate deficiencies or excesses. Bedrooms include bed-sitters, box rooms and bedrooms which are identified as such by respondents even though they may not be in use as such.

### **Concealed household**

A household that currently lives within another household but has a preference to live independently and is unable to afford appropriate market housing.

### **Current need**

Households whose current housing circumstances at a point in time fall below accepted minimum standards. This would include households living in overcrowded conditions, in unfit or seriously defective housing, families sharing, and homeless people living in temporary accommodation or sharing with others.

### **Demand**

This refers to market demand. In principle anyone who has any financial capacity at all can 'demand' something, in other words want to acquire it and be prepared to pay for it. The question is whether they can pay enough actually to obtain it. Thus many households who are unable fully to afford market housing to buy do aspire to buy it. The word 'demand' is therefore used in two senses in this report:

'demand' when used in the general text refers to the ordinary understanding of 'wanting' something that has a market price

'demand' when associated with numbers (as in the Balancing Housing Markets model) refers to expressed demand: the numbers of people who can actually afford the type of housing in question

In relation to (expressed) demand mention should be made of the private rented sector where typically there are not only households who can afford to rent at market prices, but also others who are unable to access affordable housing but who are able to access the private rented sector due to the subsidy of Housing Benefit. Such households do not have a demand in the sense used here, as they can only access the private rented sector with a subsidy.

### **Disaggregation**

Breaking a numerical assessment of housing need and supply down, either in terms of size and/or type of housing unit, or in terms of geographical sub-areas within the District.

### **Entry level market housing**

The survey of prices and rents is focussed on 'entry level' prices/rents. That is to say the price/rent at which there is a reasonable supply of dwellings in reasonable condition. The purpose of this approach is to ensure that when assessments are made of say first time buyers, that the prices are the appropriate ones for the typical members of this group. Thus it would in many areas involve second-hand terraced housing, rather than newbuild, which would be much more expensive. Testing affordability against newbuild would clearly produce an underestimate of those who could afford to buy.

### **Financial capacity**

This is defined as household income+savings+equity (the value of the property owned by owner occupiers, typically the family home, net of mortgage). This provides an indication, when put on a capital basis, of the amount which the household could afford to pay for housing. Since equity is now a substantial part of the overall financial capacity of the large fraction of owner occupiers it is essential to use this measure rather than the old price/income ratio to measure the activity of a housing market.

### **Forecast**

Either of housing needs or requirements is a prediction of numbers which would arise in future years based on a model of the determinants of those numbers and assumptions about (a) the behaviour of households and the market and (b) how the key determinants are likely to change. It involves understanding relationships and predicting behaviour in response to preferences and economic conditions.

### **Grossing-up**

Converting the numbers of actual responses in a social survey to an estimate of the number for the whole population. This normally involves dividing the expected number in a group by the number of responses in the survey.

## **Headship rates**

Measures the proportion of individuals in the population, in a particular age/sex/marital status group, who head a household. Projected headship rates are applied to projected populations to produce projected numbers of households.

## **Household**

One person living alone or a group of people who have the address as their only or main residence and who either share one meal a day or share a living room.

## **Household formation**

The process whereby individuals in the population form separate households. 'Gross' or 'new' household formation refers to households which form over a period of time, conventionally one year. This is equal to the number of households existing at the end of the year which did not exist as separate households at the beginning of the year (not counting 'successor' households, when the former head of household dies or departs).

### **(A) household living within another household**

Is a household living as part of another household of which they are neither the head or the partner of the head.

## **Household reference person**

For the purposes of our study the survey respondent is taken to represent the household reference person (HRP).

## **Households sharing**

Are households (including single people) who live in non-self-contained accommodation but do not share meals or a living room (e.g. 5 adults sharing a house like this constitute 5 one-person households).

## **Housing demand**

The quantity of housing that households are willing and able to buy or rent.

## **Housing Market Area**

The geographical area in which a substantial majority of the employed population both live and work, and where most of those changing home without changing employment choose to stay.

## **Housing need**

Housing need is defined as the number of households who lack their own housing or who live in unsuitable housing and who cannot afford to meet their housing needs in the market.

## **Housing Register**

A database of all individuals or households who have applied to a local authority or RSL for a social tenancy or access to some other form of affordable housing. Housing Registers, often called Waiting Lists, may include not only people with general needs but people with support needs or requiring access because of special circumstances, including homelessness.

## **Housing size**

Measured in terms of the number of bedrooms, habitable rooms or floorspace. This guidance uses the number of bedrooms.

## **Housing type**

Refers to the type of dwelling, for example, flat, house, specialist accommodation.

## **Income**

Income means gross household income unless otherwise qualified

## **Intermediate Housing**

PPS3 defines intermediate housing as 'housing at prices and rents above those of social rent but below market prices or rents and which meet the criteria set out above. These can include shared equity products (e.g. HomeBuy), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent.'

## **Lending multiplier**

The number of times a household's gross annual income a mortgage lender will normally be willing to lend. The most common multipliers quoted are 3.5 times income for a one-income household and 2.9 times total income for dual income households.

## **Lower quartile**

The value below which one quarter of the cases falls. In relation to house prices, it means the price of the house that is one-quarter of the way up the ranking from the cheapest to the most expensive.

## **Market housing/low cost market housing**

This is defined by CLG as anything not affordable. In the Housing Gaps figure it is anything above market entry. CLG has not defined 'low cost market' other than that it falls within the market range. Since this is very wide, it is not very helpful. The most useful kind of low cost market would be that which falls into the rent/buy gap on the Housing Gaps figure. Shared ownership would provide a partial equity solution for those unable to afford second hand entry level purchase, for example.

## **Mean**

The mean is the most common form of average used. It is calculated by dividing the sum of a distribution by the number of incidents in the distribution.

## **Median**

The median is an alternative way of calculating the average. It is the middle value of the distribution when the distribution is sorted in ascending or descending order.

## **Migration**

The movement of people between geographical areas primarily defined in this context as local authority Districts. The rate of migration is usually measured as an annual number of households, living in the District at a point in time, who are not resident in that District one year earlier.

## **Net need**

The difference between need and the expected supply of available affordable housing units (e.g. from the re-letting of existing social rented dwellings).

## **Newly arising need**

New households which are expected to form over a period of time and are likely to require some form of assistance to gain suitable housing together with other existing households whose circumstances change over the period so as to place them in a situation of need (e.g. households losing accommodation because of loss of income, relationship breakdown, eviction, or some other emergency).

## **Non-self-contained accommodation**

Where households share a kitchen, bathroom or toilet with another household, or they share a hall or staircase that is needed to get from one part of their accommodation to another.

### **Overcrowding**

An overcrowded dwelling is one which is below the bedroom standard. (See 'Bedroom Standard' above).

### **Planning Gain**

The principle of a developer agreeing to provide additional benefits or safeguards, often for the benefit of the community, usually in the form of related development supplied at the developer's expense.

### **Primary data**

Information that is collected from a bespoke data collection exercise (e.g. surveys, focus groups or interviews) and analysed to produce a new set of findings.

### **Potential households**

Adult individuals, couples or lone parent families living as part of other households of which they are neither the head nor the partner of the head and who need to live in their own separate accommodation, and/or are intending to move to separate accommodation rather than continuing to live with their 'host' household.

### **Projection**

Either of housing needs or requirements is a calculation of numbers expected in some future year or years based on the extrapolation of existing conditions and assumptions. For example, household projections calculate the number and composition of households expected at some future date(s) given the projected number of residents, broken down by age, sex and marital status, and an extrapolation of recent trends in the propensity of different groups to form separate households.

### **Random sample**

A sample in which each member of the population has an equal chance of selection.

### **Relets**

Social rented housing units which are vacated during a period and become potentially available for letting to new tenants.

## **Rounding error**

Totals in tables may differ by small amounts (typically one) due to the fact that fractions have been added together differently. Thus a table total may say 2011, and if the individual cell figures are added the total may come to 2012. This is quite normal and is a result of the computer additions made. Figures should never be taken to be absolutely accurate. No such state exists. The figures in this document are robust estimates not absolutely precise ones. The usual practice is to use the stated total (in the above case 2011) rather than the figure of 2012 to which the individual figures sum. That is because the total will have resulted from a rounding after all the fractions are taken fully into account.

## **S106 agreements**

Contractual agreements entered into between a local planning authority and a developer that determine what proportion of units provided in residential developments will be designated as affordable housing units

## **Sample survey**

Collects information from a known proportion of a population, normally selected at random, in order to estimate the characteristics of the population as a whole.

## **Sampling frame**

The complete list of addresses or other population units within the survey area which are the subject of the survey.

## **Secondary data**

Existing information that someone else has collected. Data from administrative systems and some research projects are made available for others to summarise and analyse for their own purposes (e.g. Census, national surveys).

## **Shared equity schemes**

Provide housing that is available part to buy (usually at market value) and part to rent.

## **SHMA (Strategic Housing Market Assessment)**

SHMA derives from government guidance suggesting that the 'evidence base' required for the good planning of an area should be the product of a process rather than a technical exercise.

**Social rented housing**

PPS3 defines social rented housing as 'rented housing owned by local authorities and registered social landlords, for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime', the proposals set out in the Three Year review of Rent Restructuring (July 2004) were implemented in policy in April 2006. It may also include rented housing owned or managed by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Housing Corporation as a condition of grant'.

**Special Needs**

Relating to people who have specific needs: such as those associated with a disability.

**Stratified sample**

A sample where the population or area is divided into a number of separate sub-sectors ('strata') according to known characteristics based, for example, on sub-areas and applying a different sampling fraction to each sub-sector.

**Specialised housing**

Refers to specially designed housing (such as mobility or wheelchair accommodation, hostels or group homes) or housing specifically designated for particular groups (such as retirement housing).

**Supporting People**

This term refers to a programme launched in 2003 which aims to provide a better quality of life for vulnerable people by aiding them to live independently and maintain their tenancies/current home life. The programme covers a wide variety of vulnerable people from travellers, to young people at risk, to those with HIV or AIDS. Supporting People provide housing related support in many different forms but include enabling individuals to access their correct benefits entitlement, ensuring they have the correct skills to manage their tenancy and providing advice on property adaptations.

**Under-occupation**

An under-occupied dwelling is one which exceeds the bedroom standard by two or more bedrooms.

## Unsuitably housed households

All circumstances where households are living in housing which is in some way unsuitable, whether because of its size, type, design, location, condition or cost. Households can have more than one reason for being in unsuitable housing, and so care should be taken in looking at the figures: a total figure is presented for households with one or more unsuitability reason, and also totals for the numbers with each reason.

## Definitions

ABI - Annual Business Inquiry

BME - Black and Minority Ethnic

CBL - Choice Based Lettings

CORE - The Continuous Recording System (Housing association and local authority lettings/new tenants)

DETR - Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions

GIS - Geographical Information Systems

HMO - Households in Multiple Occupation

HSSA - The Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix

IMD - Indices of Multiple Deprivation

LA - Local Authority

LCHO - Low Cost Home Ownership

LDF - Local Development Framework

NeSS - Neighbourhood Statistics Service

NHSCR - National Health Service Central Register

NOMIS - National On-line Manpower Information System

NROSH - National Register of Social Housing

ODPM - Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

ONS - Office for National Statistics

PPS - Planning Policy Statement

RSL - Registered Social Landlord

RSR - Regulatory and Statistical Return (Housing Corporation)

RTB - Right to Buy

SEH - Survey of English Housing

TTWA - Travel to Work Area

# **Appendix 1: Briefing notes**

- A1.1 An information flyer was distributed to local Gypsies and Travellers through frontline workers and site management to inform the community of the research project. A separate flyer was designed for Travelling Showpeople.

## FINDING OUT THE ACCOMMODATION NEEDS OF GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS IN THE BLACK COUNTRY

A survey is taking place in the Black Country which affects you and where you live. This note explains what this survey is. We hope you'll want to take part.

### MORE AND IMPROVED SITES

The Government wants to increase the number of sites for Gypsies and Travellers and to improve the quality of existing ones.



As the first step towards doing this councils must gather information on what the needs of local Gypsies and Travellers are. This means interviewing

Gypsies and Travellers to find out about the type of site they'd like and how it should be designed.



### THE ASSESSMENT

The Black Country are working together on the assessment. They have appointed our company, Fordham Research, to find out the needs of Gypsies and Travellers. We're an independent company and everything you tell us will be completely confidential. This means we won't be asking for names or collect individual details and there is no way anyone from the councils can find out who said what.



### THE INTERVIEWS



Our interviewers will be visiting sites. We won't interview all families on the site and you don't have to take part. We'll also speak to Gypsies and Travellers who live in housing and may need your help finding them.

The interviews last about 40 minutes. If there are questions you would prefer not to answer then that won't be a problem.

## WHAT DO WE WANT TO FIND OUT

We want to know about where you currently live and what you think about it. We'll ask whether you have enough space and how the site can be improved. If you have children we'll also ask about their needs and whether they'd like a pitch to live on. If you live in housing we'll like to know whether you'd prefer to live on a site. We'll also ask about access to health, education and other services that you want for you or your family.

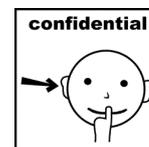
All this information will help the councils plan sites for the future and improve existing services.

## WHY SHOULD YOU TAKE PART

This is a genuine chance to let the council know how you think accommodation and other services can be improved. It'll make it much harder for councils to ignore Gypsies' and Travellers' needs as they will be reported in the Regional Spatial Strategy and will help with the planning of future sites.



***Remember – the interview is completely confidential and no one can find out who has taken part***



## NEXT STEPS

Once the survey is finished, we'll prepare a report for the Councils. This will explain the need for any additional sites in each area. We'll also be making arrangements to share the findings with Gypsy and Traveller communities so you can find out what we think Councils should do.



**FURTHER INFORMATION** If you'd like to find out more or are worried about anything; feel free to speak to us. Please call **Jamie Keddie** or **Sara Elias** on free-phone 0800 163 231.