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Gypsy Traveller Accommodation (and Other Needs) Assessment



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Gypsy Traveller Accommodation (and Other Needs) Assessment 2006-2016

Prepared For:

Bath and North East Somerset Council

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REPORT

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACERT	Advisory Council for the Education of Romanies and Other Travellers
ACTES	Avon Consortium of Traveller Education Services
ARU	Anglia Ruskin University
B&NES	Bath and North-East Somerset District Council
BCC	Bristol City Council
BCUC	Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
CJPOA	Criminal Justice and Public Order Act
CLG	Communities and Local Government
CRE	Commission for Racial equality
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government
DfES	Department for Education & Skills
DH	Department of Health
GLO	Gypsy Liaison Officer
GTAA	Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessment
IHT	Irish Traveller Heritage (PLASC)
LA	Local Authority
LEA	Local Education Authority
LHA	Local Housing Authority
LPA	Local Planning Authority
NS	North Somerset Council
ODPM	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
PCT	Primary Care Trust
PLASC	Pupil Level Annual School Census
RG	Romany Gypsy (PLASC)
RSL	Registered Social Landlord
RSS	Regional Spatial Strategy
SARI	Support Against Racist Incidents
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SG	South Gloucestershire Council
TES	Traveller Education Service
THP	Travellers Health Project
UA	Unitary Authority
UB	University of Bristol
UD	Unauthorised Development
UE	Unauthorised Encampment
WoE	West of England

PART ONE

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 The brief

1.1.1 In December 2007 the four partner authorities Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES); Bristol City Council (BCC); North Somerset (NS) and South Gloucestershire (SG) commissioned Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College (BCUC) to undertake a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) for a study area (known as the West of England) consisting of the four unitary authorities listed above. In undertaking this study BCUC has worked closely with academics from the University of Bristol (UB) and Anglia Ruskin University (ARU); and independent consultants (John Bloxson Housing Services and Home Hunt Consultancy) as well as members of the Gypsy/Traveller/Showman communities.

1.1.2 The Housing Act 2004 (s225) requires local authorities to assess the accommodation need for Gypsies and Travellers residing in or resorting to their areas, in a manner similar to that used to undertake accommodation assessments for the rest of the population. Such Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessments may focus narrowly on need for accommodation on sites and in housing, or (following draft Government guidance issued in February 2006¹) may elect to include wider elements which can assist authorities' planning for a range of other statutory or discretionary duties and help to inform wider work on improving Gypsy and Traveller access to services, for example in the field of health, education and employment.

1.1.3 Having undertaken such an exercise, local authorities must then develop a strategy which addresses the need arising from the accommodation assessment, through either public or private provision.

1.1.4 The local authority which exercises housing authority functions must also take the strategy into account when exercising their other functions. For example, if a local housing authority (LHA) is also a local planning authority (LPA) it must take account of the GTAA when exercising planning functions, or if the local authority is a local educational authority (LEA) it must take the strategy into account when exercising LEA functions.

1.1.5 The Regional Planning Body, on the basis of local authority assessed need for accommodation, will determine how many pitches should be provided across the region. It will then specify in the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) how many pitches need to be provided in each local authority area, ensuring that collectively local authorities make provision in a way which is equitable and meets the assessed pattern of need.

1.1.6 Local planning authorities will be obliged to identify sites in their Development Plan Documents, in line with the requirement identified in the Regional Spatial

¹ ODPM (2006a) *Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments: Draft practice guidance* (London, ODPM)

Strategy. It will no longer be acceptable just to specify planning criteria for sites; local authorities will be expected to identify land.

- 1.1.7 Where there is a clear need, if local planning authorities fail to identify sites in their Development Plan Documents, the Secretary of State has the power to direct them to do so.
- 1.1.8 Local authorities do not have to wait until the end of this planning process before providing more sites. GTAAs must therefore provide a robust evidence base for the development of future policy work, Local Development Frameworks, Regional Spatial Strategies and for use at planning appeals.
- 1.1.9 The West of England brief (amended to some extent following discussion with the local authority clients) set out the following main objectives for this study:
 - a) To generate reliable estimates of future accommodation needs and to produce detailed information about local Gypsies and Travellers including:
 - demographic characteristics;
 - current accommodation; and
 - aspiration for various types of accommodation.
 - b) Secondary requirements included an exploration of the following elements:
 - employment;
 - health and education (and access to such services);
 - experiences of discrimination;
 - experiences of homelessness services;
 - support needs of Gypsies and Travellers; and
 - mobility/movement and potential use of transit provision.
- 1.1.10 Some minor amendments to the brief/topic guide were incorporated following consultation with community members during the process of developing a Gypsy/Traveller/Showman Forum to assist in developing the study (see below under Research Methodology – Chapter 2).
- 1.1.11 This report presents the findings from the Gypsy Traveller Accommodation (and wider needs) Assessment undertaken in the West of England sub-regional area between January and June 2007.
- 1.1.12 The report is divided up into discrete parts in the following manner: Part One: introduction, definitions, and data sources; Part Two: methodologies used in the GTAA and characteristics of the local Gypsy/Traveller/Showmen populations; Part Three: Accommodation assessment (residential, transit and Showmen) and policy implications; Part Four: existing accommodation provision: authorised, unauthorised and findings from respondents in housing. Part Five considers accommodation preferences, overcrowding and population growth and Part Six travelling and transit sites. In Part Seven we look at employment, health, education, use of homelessness services and support needs of Gypsies and Travellers. The final section of this report provides conclusions and recommendations on site provision.

Recommendations pertaining to specific sections of the report are provided within each section and summarised in Appendix G.

1.1.13 Appendices, provided in a separate document, include a glossary, accommodation assessments by authority, questionnaires, focus group summaries and methodological summary otherwise excluded from the main report.

1.2 Definitions

1.2.1 In law there are numerous definitions of the groups known as 'Gypsies and Travellers' (see below under national policy and legal background), depending upon which statute or regulatory regime is under consideration.

1.2.2 For the purposes of s225 of the Housing Act 2004², (duties of local housing authorities: accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers) "gypsies and travellers" (sic) means:

- (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 grounds only of their own or their family's or dependant'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).

1.2.3 Following draft Government guidance on undertaking GTAA³ the West of England study is based upon a new survey and supported by material from relevant public agencies and other sources such as pre-existing reports and planning decisions. The survey for this GTAA comprised face-to-face interviews with Gypsies/Travellers/Showmen on sites of all types and in housing, within the study area, undertaken between March and June 2007. A total of 188 interviews were undertaken by a supervised team of mainly Gypsy/Traveller interviewers, and provided data on 744 individuals (408 of whom were dependent children), representing some 38% of the estimated Gypsy/Traveller/Showmen population of the study area.

1.2.4 67 interviews (35% of total sample, and equating to 55% of all interviews undertaken in that authority) were carried out in South Gloucestershire in 2006, in advance of the main GTAA. At that time period the four partner local authorities had intended to employ a former local authority officer, experienced in this field, to undertake the research although this did not ultimately transpire. To avoid re-interviewing South Gloucestershire families

² Statutory Instrument 2006 No 3190, *The Housing (Assessment of Accommodation Needs) (Meaning of Gypsies and Travellers) (England) Regulations 2006*

³ ODPM (2006a) *Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments: Draft practice guidance*. (London, ODPM)

who had completed the lengthy questionnaire prior to the main fieldwork period, we incorporated those responses into the survey data, undertook additional interviews in that locality and convened focus groups with site and housed residents in South Gloucestershire (as well as the three other authorities). The questionnaire used in the 67 South Gloucestershire interviews undertaken during the pilot phase was broadly similar to the final schedule utilised in the GTAA. Approximately 75% of questions remained identical between the pilot and final versions of the questionnaire. All questions pertaining to site satisfaction, accommodation preference, numbers of caravans and individuals who require to be accommodated with the respondent remain identical and are comparable across the entire data set. Questions which are omitted in the pilot questionnaire are predominantly focussed on service usage (for example, distance learning options provided by the Traveller Education Service, experience of accessing advice services) and thus do not impact on the accommodation assessment element of this study. Focus group data which supports the findings in the four authorities (in particular South Gloucestershire) and develops core themes further, is referred to in the main body of this report and presented in Appendix C.

1.2.5 In undertaking this GTAA we have followed the recommended methodology in the ODPM draft GTAA guidance issued in February 2006 (ODPM, 2006a), which recognises that Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs may differ from those of the rest of the population. The guidance cites five specific factors: patterns of extended family living, nomadism or semi-nomadism, a preference for caravan-dwelling, movement between housing and caravans, and presence on unauthorised caravans or developments. It proposes that GTAAs should address potential accommodation types, including standard housing, group homes, permanent residential sites, transit sites and (if appropriate) stopping places⁴. During the development of the questionnaire questions on use of 'stopping places' were largely omitted as Forum members did not consider these particularly relevant to the specific circumstances within the study area. Questions on transit site use, preference and location were however explored in some detail (see Part Six) and it may be that the partner authorities consider that transit provision recommended for the study area should consist of a mixture of licensed 'emergency stopping places' (with a maximum stay of 28 days) and more formal transit sites catering for residence of up to three months.

1.2.6 Although Showmen are included within the definition of Gypsies and Travellers under s225 of the Housing Act 2004, significant differences exist between the needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Showmen and all groups are

⁴ 'Stopping places' may vary between 'traditional' halts where Travellers and Gypsies have camped over decades although these are largely in decline across the country as a result of increased development; 'tolerated' stopping places to which council officers may direct Gypsies and Travellers who are living in an unsafe or unsuitable location if transit or other provision does not exist and council or RSL run 'emergency stopping places' with extremely basic facilities which provide short-term provision (up to a maximum of 28 days) for vulnerable families. Pat Niner (see Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Gypsies' and Travellers' accommodation needs assessment (2007 :74) Birmingham: CURS) uses the term to include both tolerated and non-tolerated unauthorised encampments and in the more formal sense of 'emergency stopping places' which may be provided by a mixture of private and public provision.

aware of and keen to emphasise these differences. Accordingly, the accommodation needs of Showmen have been assessed separately from those of other Gypsies and Travellers (Part Two). A total of 35 interviews were carried out with Showmen in South Gloucestershire, Bath and North East Somerset and Bristol. No Showmen were identified by the Showmen's Guild as living in North Somerset and none were interviewed while passing through or stopping in that location for employment purposes.

1.3 National policy and legal background

1.3.1 Three Acts of Parliament since 1960 have had a major impact upon the Gypsy/Traveller way of life.

- a) The Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act of 1960 empowered local authorities to stop the unlicensed development of caravan sites and prohibit encampment on commons, and resulted in the closure of many sites traditionally used by Gypsies/Travellers.
- b) The Caravan Sites Act 1968 (Part II) then required local authorities 'so far as may be necessary to provide adequate accommodation for Gypsies residing in or resorting to their area'. It also 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; designation gave local authorities additional powers to remove unlawful encampments. By 1994 a third of local authorities had achieved designation.
- c) The 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (CJPOA) 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, with heavy sanctions, to camp on land without the owner's consent.

1.3.2 By the late 1990s, pressure was being exerted upon Government over the effects of the 1994 Act. The outcomes of the CJPOA has been the requirement for Councils to spend substantial funds monitoring and securing the removal of unauthorised illegal encampments⁵; with amenity, countryside and the settled community being adversely affected. In addition, the costs, in financial, health, educational and other respects, to Gypsies/Travellers themselves are high and disproportionately negative.

1.3.3 The shortage of suitable accommodation has been recognised as the most pressing issue to face Gypsies and Travellers, with other health and social care needs unlikely to be addressed until adequate appropriate accommodation is available (IPPR, 2003). The University of Birmingham study for the ODPM, *The Provision and Condition of Local Authority*

⁵ Bristol City Council identifies that after the provision of the St Anthony's Park transit site in 2002 the costs of enforcement against unauthorised encampments fell from an average of £200,000 per year to less than £5,000 with an average saving of £190,000 per annum on eviction and incidental costs (DCLG, 2007 :14). Morris & Clements (2002).

Gypsy/Traveller Sites in England (Niner, 2002), estimated the need for more caravan pitches in England at 1,000-2,000 residential, and 2,000-2,500 transit or stopping places, over a five-year period.

- 1.3.4 A major review of law and policy is now reaching completion. In addition to the amendments to the Housing Act 2004 under which duty this GTAA has been undertaken planning guidance was issued in February 2006 (Circular 1/06) with the explicit aim of enhancing the opportunity for Gypsies and Travellers to self-provide their own sites in the absence of any reinstated duty for local authorities to provide public sites. Amongst other provisions Circular 1/06 amended the definition of 'Gypsy/Traveller' which prior to that date had required individuals to retain a nomadic way of life. Accordingly, retired Gypsies and Travellers or individuals too unwell to travel are no longer (under a technicality) excluded from development of, or access to 'Gypsy sites'. Accordingly, under **planning law** (as opposed to s225 of the Housing Act, or the definition under the Race Relations Acts):

For the purposes of this Circular "gypsies and travellers" means:

Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling show people or circus people travelling together as such. (Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Sites, ODPM Circular 1/2006: 6)

- 1.3.5 The definition within the ODPM/DCLG draft GTAA guidance (2006) is wider, and (in recognition of the difficulties facing Gypsies and Travellers which may mean some families living in housing would prefer site accommodation) includes "*all other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism and/or caravan dwelling.*" (DCLG, 2006, GTAA Draft Practice Guidance :9).
- 1.3.6 In November 2006 a commencement order was issued⁶ bringing into force the duty to undertake GTAAs, and affirming the wider definition of Gypsies and Travellers which includes Showmen for the purposes of s225 of the Housing Act.
- 1.3.7 From January 2007 all authorities who had not yet commenced the assessment process were required to begin the process as a matter of urgency. It is expected that all GTAAs will be completed by December 2007⁷, enabling adequate assessment of accommodation need at a regional and national level.
- 1.3.8 Further consultations and studies which have been issued in 2007 and have been taken into account during the preparation of this report include:

⁶ SI 2006/3190 *The Housing (Assessment of Accommodation Needs) (Meaning of Gypsies and Travellers) (England) Regulations 2006* [WWW] Available from http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2006/uksi_20063190_en.pdf [Accessed 02/07/07]

⁷ See statement by Meg Munn (Minister with responsibility for Gypsy and Traveller policy) at CLG (2007) *Gypsy and Traveller accommodation policy* [WWW] Available from <http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1153489> [Accessed 02/07/07]

- a) A benchmarking exercise on the preparation of GTAAs for regional special strategy reviews undertaken by the Universities of Birmingham, Salford and Sheffield Hallam which provides a formula for checking both the robustness of GTAAs and general 'ball-park' figures against which recommendations for pitch requirements can be assessed⁸.
- b) Consultation for review of the Circular on Planning for Travelling Showmen⁹.
- c) The DCLG Summary of Responses and Final Regulatory Impact Assessment on the definition of the term 'gypsies and travellers' for the purposes of the Housing Act 2004¹⁰.
- d) Consultation on draft guidance on the design of Gypsy and Traveller sites¹¹.

1.4 Sources of data

1.4.1 Apart from the survey, other sources for this study include:

- a) **Official counts of caravans.** Central government has since 1979 required 'gypsy caravans' (distinguished from other types of caravan or mobile home) to be counted on a six-monthly basis by local authorities. Currently returns are made under two main categories; 'authorised' (divided into socially rented and private); and 'unauthorised' (classified by Gypsy or non-Gypsy ownership and whether or not the site is 'tolerated' or 'not tolerated'). The first count recorded some 8,000 caravans in England, and the figure has now risen to over 15,000. The count has been criticised for various reasons (Drakakis-Smith & Mason, 2001; Niner, 2003) but offers a time-series record of the distribution of Gypsy/Traveller caravans in England. Until recently the count did not record New Travellers, and still excludes those dwelling in a caravan stationed in a residential curtilage, and Travelling Showmen.

⁸ **Universities of Birmingham, Salford and Sheffield Hallam** (2007) *Preparing Regional Spatial Strategy Reviews on Gypsies and Travellers by Regional Planning Bodies* (London, DCLG) [WWW] Available from

http://www.communities.gov.uk/pub/209/PreparingRegionalSpatialStrategyreviewsonGypsiesandTravellersbyregionalplannings_id1508209.pdf [Accessed 29/06/07]

⁹ **Communities and Local Government** (2007) *Consultation on revised planning guidance in relation to Travelling Showpeople* [WWW] Available from <http://communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1505792> [Accessed 04/04/07] Consultation period: 29/01/07 to 27/04/07

¹⁰ DCLG (2007) *Summary of Responses and Final Regulatory Impact Assessment on the definition of the term 'gypsies and travellers' for the purposes of the Housing Act 2004*. London: DCLG [WWW] Available from

http://www.communities.gov.uk/pub/818/DefinitionofthetermgypsiesandtravellersforthepurposesoftheHousingAct2004FinalRet_id1505818.pdf. [Accessed 5/8/07]

¹¹ DCLG (2007) *Draft Guidance on the design of sites for Gypsies and Travellers - A Consultation Paper* London: DCLG [WWW] Available from

http://www.communities.gov.uk/pub/560/DraftGuidanceonthedesignofsitesforGypsiesandTravellersAConsultationPaper_id1510560.pdf [Accessed 07/08/07] Consultation period: 16/05/07 to 22/08/07

- b) **Local data.** This includes baseline data provided by the West of England local authorities, schedules of sites and encampments, waiting list and 'turn-over' information for housing or authorised public sites; PLASC and TES data on Gypsy/Traveller children and Traveller Health Projects records of contacts. All of these data sources have limitations and omissions, which are commented on below where they affect our calculations.
- c) **Partner and Stakeholder Consultations.** At regular intervals throughout the preparation of this GTAA the research team have participated in discussion groups, advisory forum meetings with representatives from both community and service providers (see further under Research Methodology – Chapter 2) and informal interviews/discussions with a range of key local authority officers and other stakeholders, for example, Traveller Health Project, Traveller Education Service, Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officers, Environmental Health Officers and representatives of local Gypsy/Traveller Support Groups. Forum meetings in particular have proved a fruitful opportunity to discuss local community characteristics and projected population sizes with a range of stakeholders as well as enabling discussion on site preferences and proposed planning applications.

Plate 1: Forum and research team members considering site recommendations



The principal investigator has been available for face to face meetings, telephone discussions and consultation with both community members and key service providers between January and July 2007 and has had one-to-one dialogue with relevant officers in various roles from all four partner local authorities as well as site residents in South

Gloucestershire and in excess of thirty community members from diverse Gypsy/Traveller populations who wished to contribute information to the study.

- d) **Other research.** These include the Birmingham University study of council sites (Niner, 2002), the recent RSS benchmarking study (University of Birmingham et al, 2007), the Sheffield University Health Study (Parry et al, 2004), the Leeds Race Equality Council study of Travellers in Leeds (Baker, 2005), the CRE report on good race relations and provision of sites for Gypsies and Travellers (CRE, 2006) and other GTAAs (Cambridge 2006, Dorset 2006, North and East Surrey, 2007; East Kent, 2007; Devon, 2006). These research studies were used to enable us to triangulate our findings against similar or related research reports, to inform our recommendations within a framework of up to date knowledge and best practice, and thus provide a robust set of data against which the accommodation and equalities status of Gypsies and Travellers in the West of England can be critically evaluated.

PART TWO

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The ODPM (draft) guidance, issued in February 2006 (OPDM, 2006a), was non-prescriptive as to the precise methodologies required for undertaking a GTAA but indicated that an up-to-date survey of Gypsies and Travellers' (as defined within the Housing Act 2004 s225) should be undertaken with research/assessment findings supported by material from relevant public agencies and other sources such as pre-existing reports and planning decisions. In undertaking this GTAA we have been compliant with this guidance.

2.1.2 As outlined in Chapter One, the following sources of administrative and other secondary data have been examined and analysed:

- Official counts of caravans; and
- Local (baseline) data, for example, Unitary Authority (UA) scoping exercises, Traveller Health Project records; Traveller Education Service (TES) and Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) data

2.1.3 Partner and stakeholder consultations have been undertaken with a range of community members, service providers and activists.

Plate 2: Gypsies, Travellers, Showmen and Council Officers considering the GTAA at a Forum meeting



2.1.4 The researchers' personal knowledge/expertise and a range of other research studies have supported the findings and been triangulated against local data.

- 2.1.5 A range of important relevant statutory responsibilities, relating to greater social inclusion of minority groups, have been taken into account in undertaking this research and informing findings - in particular:
- a) the obligation upon public bodies to promote equality of opportunity and good relationship between persons of different racial groups (Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended) s71);
 - b) and the Planning Act 2004 requirements for community involvement in new local development frameworks.
- 2.1.6 To supplement this, the research has also involved undertaking primary data collection through four focus groups and interviews with 188 individuals from the Gypsy/Traveller/Showmen community's resident on all types of site and in housing.

2.2 Background research

- 2.2.1 The desk-top research included a literature review, analysis of the six-monthly official caravan count data, and an exploration of baseline data provided by the client on service delivery and other data relating to the Gypsy/Traveller communities in the locality (for example, Traveller Education Service statistics; waiting list data for the Bristol City site, etc).
- 2.2.2 The lead researchers were relatively well-networked into the community, and able to bring professional experience in law, planning and social policy to the project; important factors given the various and complex elements of the study. In addition, having undertaken a series of other GTAAs across the country we were able to utilise their experience of successful elements of the above projects and knowledge of community partnership work with Gypsies, Travellers and Showmen. When coupled with the expertise of highly experienced local authority officers, a network of local academics and access to a variety of service providers these range of knowledge bases proved valuable in assessing existing data.

2.3 Methodological issues

- 2.3.1 Gypsies/Travellers are often treated in official studies and policy documents as 'hard to reach' and 'socially excluded'. Surveying them poses certain methodological problems:
- a) **Small, dispersed and shifting population.** While the relatively small numbers mean in theory that good coverage can be achieved, in practice the target population frequently moves around (whether in caravans or through transfer within housing stock (Greenfields & Smith, forthcoming) making it difficult to locate respondents and ensure a response.
 - b) **Establishing a sample frame.** In quantitative social surveys this is usually based upon a list of addresses, such as council tax register or postcode address file, from which (ideally) a random sample can be selected, but

there is no reliable such list for Gypsies/Travellers, especially those on unauthorised sites. The six-monthly official counts (supplemented by schedules of sites in some authorities) provide data on numbers of caravans in different categories, from which a stratified sample can be derived, but caravans are not households, and some may be short-stay only. Also the counts do not record data on Gypsies/Travellers in housing, or information on the Showman population. Difficulties in identifying children through TES/PLASC data are explored below. In any event, such records are subject to data protection act responsibilities which limits their effectiveness for accessing a stratified sample of Gypsy/Traveller/ Showmen families.

Plate 3: Authorised site and respondent – North Somerset



- c) **Defining a household.** For a discussion on identifying ‘households’ for the purpose of establishing a sampling frame see Chapter 3.
- d) **Cultural factors and response rates.** Those surveyed may be reluctant to respond for a study promoted by official agencies, who they believe may be monitoring them for ‘hostile’ purposes. Having long been subject to persistent discrimination and hostility from sedentary populations, they may feel exploited by researchers and academics, and that their views are misrepresented or ignored. Estimates of household income and savings, emphasised in DCLG guidance, are difficult to establish and in this survey were omitted on the advice of the researchers and community Forum members, although certain elements (such as affordability of self-provided sites) were retained.
- e) **Higher costs of interviews over postal questionnaires.** Because of the known high levels of illiteracy, difficulties in ensuring secure postal

delivery, and other factors, postal questionnaires are not recommended for this target group, but the alternative, of interviews, is resource-intensive.

- f) **Housing needs and demand.** This may differ from those of the settled population, for example, larger family sizes and preference for different types of accommodation. In particular, Showman households will generally require greater/special provision on sites to permit the storage of rides and other equipment.

2.4 Gypsy/Traveller involvement

- 2.4.1 DCLG guidance recommends that hard-to-reach groups should be stakeholders in research about their needs. Involvement with the Gypsy/Traveller/Showman community was embedded in the tendering process, and the project was designed to achieve partnership working, a methodology fully agreed with the client. An advisory group of Gypsies, Travellers and Showmen was formed based upon the nucleus of the Bristol Gypsy, Traveller and Showman's Forum although expanded to incorporate community members from across all four unitary authorities.
- 2.4.2 A series of Forum meetings took place throughout the lifetime of the project and members of the forum (which included members who were subsequently trained as community interviewers) participated in the development of the questionnaire to be used with both housed and 'sited' (including 'roadside') Gypsies, Travellers and Showmen.
- 2.4.3 Forum members include at least one representative of each local authority (either from housing, planning or Gypsy/Traveller services; specialist health and TES staff as well as representatives of Romany Gypsy/Irish Traveller/Showman and New Traveller communities.
- 2.4.4 It is intended that the Forum will continue to meet once the GTAA has been completed and will form a basis for future consultation and development across the sub-region. To avoid 'professional overload' and ensure that community members feel that their voices are adequately heard:
- As devised during the lifetime of the GTAA, the Forum consisted of a minimum of 50% membership who were Gypsy, Traveller or Showmen.
 - Community members and childcare and travel expenses were paid for attendance at the Forum.
 - Forum/advisory group members received regular updates on the process of the GTAA and emerging findings.
 - Information leaflets and publicity about both the survey and the Forum were being devised in consultation with community members who had (in some cases) previously undertaken similar community work across the authority areas. See Appendix E for copies of the questionnaires and Appendix F for a copy of the information leaflet.

Plate 4: Community Forum members



2.4.5 From inception it was intended that most interviewers would be Gypsies/Travellers/Showmen (supervised by the senior researchers). This would ensure that that community capacity could be developed, creating a core of Gypsy/Traveller/Showman interviewers available for future work and available to disseminate their training and knowledge and to form the nucleus of the on-going Community Forum to consult with the authorities and other service providers on a range of initiatives.

2.4.6 Forum members/interviewers consisted of the following individuals: two sited Showpeople (male and female); housed Irish Travellers (two female and one male); five female Romany Gypsy interviewers (four sited and one housed); housed New Traveller (male) and a male community activist with a wealth of experience who is well known and trusted by all Gypsy/Traveller communities through his work across the region on planning and other related activities.

2.4.7 Interviewers predominantly undertook survey work in their own localities, although where appropriate or requested, interviewees were able to be interviewed by someone from another area in the interests of preserving privacy or (for example) or where it was necessary to substitute an interviewer of a distinct ethnicity or occupation (for example Showman) or gender.

2.5 Questionnaire design

2.5.1 The questionnaire (informed by DCLG guidance) which was used in a pilot study in South Gloucestershire was designed by the local authorities in consultation with various officers and following input from a DCLG staff

member. In general, we considered that that this questionnaire was of a good quality and fit for purpose although in need of some amendment.

- 2.5.2 At some stage prior to the appointment of the consultants a decision was made to adopt the South Gloucestershire questionnaire across the entire sub-region subject to one or two minor amendments (for example, those suggested by members of the former Bristol Gypsy/Traveller/Showmen Forum).
- 2.5.3 This 'second-phase' questionnaire formed the basis of the questionnaire used across the region within the GTAA although subject to some changes suggested by the consultants and members of the newly convened West of England Gypsy, Traveller and Showman Forum/interview team members. Amending the questionnaire after 67 pilot interviews had been undertaken, did however mean that some questions were omitted from South Gloucestershire interviews albeit not those pertaining to pitch requirements or household size.

2.6 Recruitment and Training of Community Interviewers

- 2.6.1 Given the importance of existing or latent inter-personal skills, and need to 'match' interviewers/interviewees by accommodation types, and/or knowledge of particular communities and localities, full equal opportunities procedures were not followed in selection of interviewers. The interviewers were selected, on the recommendation of known contacts, pre-existing community activities, prior (Bristol) forum membership and agencies such as the TES and specialist health services. As a matter of policy English Gypsies, Irish Travellers, New Travellers and Showmen were recruited, both as Forum/advisory group members and as interviewers. Given the highly gendered nature of Gypsy/Traveller society, that more female than male interviewers were recruited was not problematic as this was considered to reflect the anticipated composition of respondents.
- 2.6.2 All recruited interviewers received a full day's training in interview methods comprising the following elements:
- Confidentiality and child protection reporting duties;
 - Discussion on the project outline (compulsory elements of report such as calculating overcrowding and future needs) and interviewers' role in refining the questionnaires. Awareness of information to be provided to participants (leaflets, etc);
 - Payment and quality control elements;
 - 'Selling' an interview to someone who might be dubious about participating (utilising existing skills interviewers had – although hadn't always self-identified);
 - 'Skills audit' exercise regarding verbal skills, developed through working at fairs, markets or door to door sales, situations when people are required to talk to strangers and convince them of something;
 - Discussions on importance of valuing what they were doing in participating in the study and being able to say 'this is what we want to happen' but being aware it might be a slow process until delivery of sites and informing respondents of that fact openly;

- Dealing with verbal challenges and knowing when/how to refer people back to the academic team for more information;
- Open and closed questions and probes;
- How to rephrase a question slightly if someone didn't understand;
- Familiarisation with the questionnaires – discussion of questions and how these might be perceived by respondents;
- How to deal with common queries, for example, 'why do you want to know about my health'?
- Developing contacts, for example, probing for family members' details etc.
- Explaining about focus groups and the launch event (sharing ownership of the project with respondents);
- Developing focus group topic guides; and
- INTERVIEW EXERCISE.

Plate 5: Community interviewers (with leaflets explaining the survey)



2.6.3 All interviewers were be able to speak to a senior researcher at all times during the life-span of the project and potential and actual interviewees were given an information leaflet which supplied contact details for senior researchers if they wished to raise concerns or discover more about the project and eventual outputs.

2.6.4 At the end of the fieldwork period interviewees were encouraged to participate in a de-briefing/group discussion and their experiences of the project which formed part of the research data fed into the final report production process.

2.7 Quality Control Issues

- 2.7.1 All interviewers received clear information on the importance of obtaining good quality data during their training sessions. In addition, some of the interviewers were already experienced in interviewing as a result of their previous work on community projects and/or activism.
- 2.7.2 In general (in line with standard survey training provision) after initial training and observation of the interviewers (in part during their 'pilot interviews') senior researchers only needed to return to observe survey work if concerns existed over quality of data returned. All questionnaires were received and checked by a senior researcher (Sarah Cemlyn or Margaret Greenfields) prior to payment being made. Quality of the data was discussed and issues flagged up during regular meetings and telephone conversations/email exchanges between relevant team members (in-putter/assistant analyst) and senior researchers.
- 2.7.3 Senior researchers retained the right – subject to interviewer permission – to return and re-run all or part of a questionnaire where concerns existed pertaining to quality of data received. Feedback was received from interviewers on a regular basis and all team members were aware that they could contact senior researchers with any issues which were raised during fieldwork or to seek clarification at any point. Close contact and support was provided to interviewers during the entire fieldwork phase of the study.

2.8 Survey method and sample selection

- 2.8.1 The target sample consisted of interviewing approximately 200 Gypsies/Travellers/Showmen on sites of all types, and in housing, within the study area (in fact 188 interviews were achieved). Interviewees were selected in proportion to the study area official caravan counts of the three categories (council authorised, private authorised and unauthorised) with an uplift in certain districts for Showman sites (percentage confirmed after discussions with the local Showman's Guild representative) and following discussion with Forum members and service providers (for example, TES/Health project) on the ethnic (and occupational/lifestyle) make-up of the local Gypsy/Traveller population.

2.9 Field survey implementation

- 2.9.1 Interviews took place between the months of March and June 2007 (which was considered to be the optimal period for reaching both less and more mobile respondents), by visits to identified respondents in housing and at known sites (unauthorised sites and developments as well as authorised private and public sites), at different times of the day (morning, afternoon and evening) on weekends and week-days. On completion of interview, respondents were provided with an information leaflet, with brief information about services, and encouraged to refer other potential interviewees (the 'snowball' method).

Plate 6: Participant in the survey at home



2.9.2 The field survey work encountered certain problems which are relatively common when undertaking such studies:

- Some interviewers were initially lacking in confidence (for example, reluctant to stop at roadside camps to 'sell' the project).
- Field work was resource intensive, involving much travel, some of it abortive when interviewees were not at home or unwilling to respond. It is our experience that attempts to set up interviews in advance by telephone (or through site managers) have limited success, so in most cases surveyors arrived unannounced and at times found that families had moved off sites or were otherwise unavailable for interview.
- Surveys often took longer than planned, requiring close management, and regular email and telephone support for interviewers.
- As a result of some localised disputes (and indeed a large-scale police raid on one site which caused considerable disquiet amongst local Gypsy/Traveller households) it proved far more difficult than envisaged for some interviewers to gain access to certain groups of interviewees.
- Several interview team members were affected by bereavements and/or planning difficulties which led to delays/disruptions in engagement with the interview process.
- Access to housed Irish Traveller families proved relatively slow in Bristol with a breakthrough in contact/development of trust, only

occurring right at the end of the fieldwork period. Unfortunately tight timescales and the requirement to complete the survey by a particular date precluded our interviewing more than a few housed families in the City.

2.9.3 On the positive side, the use of community interviewers and the commitment of local authority officers and other agencies (for example, TES/health services) meant that we were able to access (the potentially hard to reach) 'roadside' Gypsies/Travellers living at unauthorised encampments with relative ease. The inclusion of housed community members as interviewers also assisted us in reaching that particular group of respondents.

2.10 Focus Groups

2.10.1 The ODPM guidance recommended the use of qualitative assessments through focus groups and open interviews as the only feasible way of obtaining information where numbers are small or more in-depth discussion of topics was required. Sarah Cemlyn of the University of Bristol who has significant experience of running such groups co-convened (with Gypsy/Traveller interviewers) a series of four focus groups at different localities in the sub-region. Participants were invited to take part and topics were agreed in consultation with Local Authority/Forum members in partnership with the co-convenor who took the lead in the discussions. The focus groups permitted access to in-depth information on a range of areas such as educational aspirations, site conditions and aspirations, health and disability; employment issues facing Gypsies and Travellers and discrimination, etc.

2.10.2 Focus group findings are summarised at Appendix C. We believe that this element of the report will assist local authority teams and other agencies/service providers in future planning of service delivery for youth and elders, etc.

2.11 Data analysis

2.11.1 Survey data was analysed using Microsoft Excel and SPSS software (Martin Dimov, University of Oxford and Michael Weatherburn, BCUC), and caravan count data was analysed using Microsoft Excel by Ros Lishman (Home Hunt Consultancy).

2.11.2 Demographic data was analysed, but normal demographic forecasting methods (for example, components of change, household formation rates) were difficult to apply to such a small, mobile and changing population and thus whole-life fertility rates figures could not be included in the report.

2.11.3 Professor Rob Home of Anglia Ruskin University and John Bloxsom of John Bloxsom Housing Services undertook data analysis and forecasting of pitch requirements using accepted DCLG guidance, amended in line with current

best practice followed by Pat Niner¹² and other research teams, and compatible with (and amended from) the RSS bench-marking process outlined in the report by the University of Birmingham et al (2007).

2.12 Summary

2.12.1 This GTAA involved mixed methodologies successfully utilised in earlier GTAAs undertaken by members of the research team and informed by recent best practice and Government guidance. The main innovative feature, the involvement of English Gypsies, Irish Travellers, New Travellers and Showmen in the design and delivery of the survey, represents an advance in community involvement, and should facilitate better community relations across the study area in the future. Community members are stake-holders in the project, and capacity has been developed amongst often socially excluded communities, as well as enhanced awareness of the requirements of transparent government and local planning processes.

RECOMMENDATION

- (1) That the West of England Gypsy/Traveller/Showman Forum continues to meet on a regular basis and acts as an advisory/research resource for local authorities and other service providers working on Gypsy/Traveller/Showman issues.**

¹² Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Gypsies' and Travellers' accommodation needs assessment (2007) Birmingham: CURS)

3. CHARACTERISTICS OF LOCAL GYPSY/ TRAVELLER POPULATION

3.1 Population Data

3.1.1 This study, using the definition set out in GTAA Draft Guidance (2006), asked respondents to self-identify under the following six categories: English Gypsies/Romanies, Irish Travellers, Showmen, New Traveller, Scottish Traveller-Gypsy and Other. The 'Other' category includes individuals who prefer to self-identify as 'English or Welsh Gypsy', for example, or where they are married to an 'ethnic' Gypsy/Traveller and reside on a site but are not of such origins themselves. We have avoided imposing our own definitions on respondents even where, for example, it would be possible to classify 'English Travellers' as 'English Gypsy/'Romany' or individuals who ticked 'other' and added commentary such as 'just a human being', but whom interviewers would themselves have classified as 'New Travellers'.

3.1.2 The distribution of interviews achieved is shown in Table 1 below. The balance between all four main 'types' is unusual in our experience of undertaking GTAAs as in other localities where we have worked (as well as findings from other GTAAs and non GTAA research examined – see 1.4.1d) tends to reveal a significant preponderance of one or other 'ethnic' Gypsy/Traveller communities¹³ across a study area. During the pre-survey consultation period our discussions with Forum/community members and service providers/officers led us to form the opinion that across the West of England study area the division between Irish Travellers and English Gypsies was broadly even in terms of 'ethnic' Gypsies/Travellers, although with variations in the distribution of ethnic groups across the distinct unitary authorities. Data from the Showmen's Guild, who retain good records on their professional (occupational Traveller) members, indicated that Showmen represented perhaps 20-25% of the (known) population eligible for inclusion into GTAA surveys. No accurate data set exists on New Travellers but information from service providers and community members suggested that we should seek to ensure that perhaps 15-20% of the GTAA sample were New Travellers who are recognised as predominantly residing in Bath and North East Somerset on unauthorised encampments. We suggest that the division of ethnic and other types of Traveller (and Showmen's sites) is likely to relate both to availability of public provision and planning policies pertaining to private sites within a given locality.

¹³ Gypsies and Travellers who are recognised as 'ethnic minorities' under the Race Relations Acts are English Gypsies/Romanies and Irish Travellers – both of whom fulfil the *Mandla v Dowell Lee* criteria and accordingly have been held to be ethnic groups in case law. See further: Commission for Racial Equality (undated) *Gypsies and Travellers: The Facts* [WWW] Available from http://www.cre.gov.uk/gdpract/g_and_t_facts.html [Accessed 12/08/07]

Table 1: Distribution of Sample (rounded)

Area	Romany Gypsy	Irish Traveller	Showman	New Traveller	Other	No ethnicity provided	Total
B&NES	-	2	2	14	3	-	21
BCC	10	2	8	1	1	-	22
NS	14	2	-	6	3	-	25
SG	34	43	25	1	16	1	120
Study Area	58	49	35	22	23	1	188
	31%	26%	19%	12%	12%	1%	100%

- 3.1.3 ODPM/DCLG guidance expects need to be assessed by ‘households’, which it equates to ‘residential site pitches’. For the purposes of census and housing needs assessments, a ‘household unit’ is defined as those who share either a living room or at least one meal a day. Usually a household is in an identifiable physical unit living behind their own front door, but for Gypsies/Travellers residing in caravans, one household may comprise three generations living in several caravans, and travelling together. Thus a caravan often does not always equate to a household, and the household unit is not usually the unit of occupation. The number of caravans on a pitch may vary, (and may consist either of several households living on one pitch/plot or residents of several caravans who are all one household), as does the size of a caravan (which may be up to 1,200 square feet under present law). Some council pitches have a notional capacity for three caravans (for example, South Gloucestershire), but may contain a large twin-unit mobile home and a small tourer; whilst other individuals in our survey no longer kept a touring caravan.
- 3.1.4 Accordingly, where individuals have been *surveyed* they are provided with an opportunity to self-identify their household unit which may thus vary from the interpretation apparent from a basic count of caravans. We have found, for example, single pitches containing two household units where adult children co-reside on a pitch with elderly parents (albeit in some cases of this type respondents recorded that they would wish for their own discreet pitch adjoining that of their relatives); and self-identified single household units where two siblings co-reside on a (private) pitch or friends share meals yet have separate sleeping and storage space in caravans on unauthorised encampments. This element has led in some cases to a higher number of households being counted through our survey, than appears in local authority data which, for example, may record one family with five caravans, yet on surveying those individuals, we find that they are three households, closely related (perhaps being siblings, their spouses and children).
- 3.1.5 Our survey returns produced found an average household size of 3.9 persons, 1.5 persons per caravan, and 2.5 caravans per household. The average number of caravans per household (all respondents) is in our experience extremely high and we would note that this relates in part to the high number of trailers/touring equipment counted on Showmen’s sites. Household sizes varied between site types, and by respondent age, and ethnicity. The household size is within the range we have found in other

studies, which varies between 4.7 in Cambridgeshire (where we found more families on unauthorised developments due to less enforceable restrictions on size of household resident on site and/or larger family units moving onto such sites due to accommodation need), 3.5 in Dorset (low public site provision and higher number of New Travellers which decreases the average household size), 3.5 in North Surrey and 3.3 in East Surrey where respondents tend to be older, more likely to be English Gypsies/Romanies and living on local authority sites). National statistics for the majority white British population of England (and West of England) produce a lower average household size of 2.25 persons (South West Observatory, 2006)¹⁴, which probably reflects an older age structure and higher proportion of one-person households in the general population. Our survey found (as expected) a higher proportion of children than the general population (average 2.1 dependent children per household, varying between 3.4 (Irish Traveller families) and 1.2 (Showmen and New Travellers), and lower proportions of older people, reflecting high birth rates and low life expectancy (Baker, 2005; Parry et al, 2004) respectively.

Plate 7: Mobile home on a public site in North Somerset



¹⁴ South West Observatory (2006): *Environment: Populations: Dwellings and Population Density* [WWW] Available from <http://www.swenvo.org.uk/environment/population.asp#southwest> [Accessed 09/08/07]

Table 2: Persons per household and average caravans

Ethnicity	Household size: Sited respondents	No of trailers per household (mean)	Household size: Housed respondents
Romany Gypsy	3.9	2.5	2.9
Irish Travellers	5.3	2.1	3.8
Showman	3.4	3.7	4
New Traveller	2.6	1.8	5
Other	1.9	1.6	6.1
U/K ethnicity (1 case only)	2	2	n/a
All categories	3.9	2.5 (8 n/r)	4.0

3.2 Population

- 3.2.1 The decennial national population census does not identify Gypsies/Travellers as a separate racial group. The official caravan counts currently record some 14,000 Gypsy caravans in England, estimated to represent about 10,000 families, or up to 40,000 individuals. Estimates of the total Gypsy population (including those in conventional housing) range between 120,000 and 300,000, with schools census data suggesting a figure at the higher end of that range.
- 3.2.2 In the absence of data on Gypsy/Traveller births, marriages and deaths, it is difficult to apply usual population and household forecasting methods (for example, components of change, household formation rates). Furthermore, the study population is small, mobile and shifting, creating further methodological difficulties. When Gypsies and Travellers are recorded as a separate census category (as is expected to occur in 2011) this may go some way towards assisting in demographic calculation, albeit that many 'ethnic' Gypsy/Traveller families may choose not to self-identify, an issue commonly reported by statisticians and other professionals working with school census (PLASC) records.
- 3.2.3 Despite the deficiencies of PLASC data and (in many localities) TES records which may fail to identify all children in an area (particularly those who are highly mobile or living on unauthorised encampments), school roll data can help to estimate population size. The Avon Consortium Traveller Education Service retains good records and has a high level of engagement with Gypsies/Travellers and Showmen resident in the study area, a factor which assists greatly in devising a population estimate framework for the West of England.
- 3.2.4 By triangulating TES/PLASC data sets against our survey data and national patterns of Gypsy/Traveller households/educational engagement it is possible to estimate the total Gypsy/Traveller (but not Showman) populations even with the limitations of the available data sets.
- 3.2.5 By applying a series of assumptions based upon best available evidence (Appendix D provides a technical summary of the exercise undertaken) we calculate an overall total of 1,933 individuals. Dividing this figure by the

average household size identified in our survey data, equates to approximately 500 Gypsy/Traveller households in the study area.

- 3.2.6 Based upon the best available data (for example applications for housing where such information exists) TES/PLASC records and the knowledge of TES/health staff and council officers we estimate that across the entire study area approximately 28-30% of families live in housing. This proportion varies by local authority area, with considerably more families living in housing in Bristol, and higher numbers living on sites in South Gloucestershire.
- 3.2.7 To calculate the percentage of the survey to population ratio we take (as a crude proxy, whilst recognising the criticisms of the caravan count) the average number of caravans across the last five counts, divide this figure by the average number of caravans possessed by each family (we apply a figure of **two caravans** in recognition of the fact that Showmen possess more caravans and are **not** included in the caravan count) to reach a figure (Table 5 below) and then triangulate this figure against the assumptions detailed above regarding average number of dependent children per household, the percentage of children not currently supported by the TES (the majority of whom are resident on short-term unauthorised sites - see under Education, Chapter 14) and household numbers per area.
- 3.2.8 Applying this series of assumptions enables us to estimate the approximate Gypsy/Traveller/Showman population in each unitary authority. We consider that, despite the limitations of this exercise, it provides a more accurate population estimate than that available by undertaking a (relatively crude) calculation based upon numbers of households divided by caravan ownership, which is the only calculation available where the caravan count is the sole dataset utilised. Use of DCLG caravan count data divided by average numbers of caravans per respondents (excluding Showmen) would lead us to assume a population of 188 (sited) households existed across the study area (15 in Bath and North East Somerset; 9 in Bristol City; 41 in North Somerset; and 123 in South Gloucestershire).
- 3.2.9 By applying the TES/PLASC formula referred to above, not only do we consider that our estimated population figure become more robust than if calculations are attempted using other methods, but families in housing are also included in the estimate of Gypsy/Traveller households.

Table 3: Estimated Resident Gypsy/Traveller/Showman Households by Unitary Authority

	B&NES	BCC	NS	SG	All
Estimated 'sited' Gypsy/Traveller households by population grossing x TES supported/PLASC/dependent children formula (excludes showmen)	13	12	38	130	193 (42%)
SHOWMEN HOUSEHOLDS ¹⁵ (housed + sited)	6	16	-	88	110 (23%)
Estimated housed households by TES/PLASC formula x household size x localised data waiting lists/etc.	3	86	35	38	162 (34%)
TOTAL ESTIMATED HOUSEHOLDS by applying % of TES/PLASC supported children to house or sited population respectively	22	114	73	256	465 (100%: rounded)
Other households unallocated to specific categories (e.g. transient; or housed and not declaring ethnicity)	-	-	-	-	35 (7% of estimated population)

3.2.10 Based upon the above calculations, we consider that the official caravan count underestimates numbers of caravans in some authorities and (through omitting housed populations) gives a somewhat misleading view of the percentage of Gypsies and Travellers resident in any given authority. Table 4 (below) shows the distribution of Gypsies and Travellers across the study area when both the TES/PLASC formula is utilised and caravan count (DCLG) data.

Table 4: Percentage distribution of estimated population by UA (rounded)

Mechanism used to calculate population	B&NES	BC	NS	SG	All
Distribution of caravans (DCLG figures) (<i>excludes Showmen and housed families</i>)	8%	5%	22%	65%	100%
Application of TES/PLASC etc. formula (includes Showmen)	5%	25%	16%	55%	100%
Households calculated as resident in the study area (by TES/PLASC/etc. formula but unallocated to a particular UA (e.g. transient, or in housing and not declaring ethnicity)	-	-	-	-	7%

3.2.11 As can be seen, a change in population estimate across the study area has occurred through utilising data sets other than caravan count data. For example, Bristol City is estimated to contain 25% of the overall Gypsy/Showman/Traveller population with the majority of such residents

¹⁵ Data provided by the Showmen's Guild. It is believed that the vast majority of Showmen are members of this trade association, although we did survey a 'New Traveller' Showman who was unknown to the Guild.

'hidden' in housing. This calculation is supported by evidence from the Gypsy & Traveller team (and TES) working in Bristol City who report a large housed (predominantly Irish Traveller) population who are not represented in terms of data emerging from 'caravan site' counts. In terms of both demographic and accommodation need forecasting this 'shift' in recognition is important, as it may be that a relatively high percentage of Gypsies and Travellers are resident in housing due to lack of other suitable alternative accommodation (for example, site provision). For further discussion see Chapter 7 (Gypsies in Housing). We believe that our estimates are as reliable and robust as the currently available data allows.

3.2.12 Tables 5 and 6 (below) demonstrate the spread of housed/sited interviews undertaken to support the discussion on representativeness of the achieved sample. Showmen's sites (in some cases classified as 'other') are included within this table. Table 1 (above) detailed the distribution of interviewees by 'type' of Gypsy/Traveller across each local authority area.

Table 5: Households interviewed by UA as % of estimated population (by PLASC/TES etc. formula)

	B&NES	BC	NS	SG	All UAs
Numbers of households interviewed	21	22	25	120	188
Households interviewed as percentage of estimated population	95%	19%	34%	47%	38% of estimated households

3.2.13 Considerable variation exists between the authorities in terms of percentage of population interviewed. In Bath and North East Somerset, where the Gypsy/Traveller population are overwhelming resident on relatively stable unauthorised encampments and two unauthorised developments, saturation of interviews was reached rapidly, with questionnaire returns equating to the majority of the estimated population. In Bristol City, reaching the housed population (who account for the majority of the estimated population) proved less easy, and even working with community interviewers, we were only able to reach a relatively small proportion of this group of Gypsies/Travellers. (See further under Chapter 7). Site residents (including Showmen) in Bristol were well represented in the sample within that authority. Overall housed families (in common with findings from other GTAA's across the country) were the most problematic group to reach through lack of willingness to self-identify or fear of discrimination from neighbours. In total we estimate that 38% of the population of the study area were surveyed with perhaps a further 2% contributing to focus groups or contacting the research team to provide information/raise questions, even if they declined to be formally interviewed. We calculate that 43% of Showmen living in Bristol City were interviewed and in South Gloucestershire 28% of the Showman population. Table 6 (below) identifies the number of interviews undertaken by site type within each authority.

Table 6: Sample of interviews undertaken by site type

	B&NES	BCC	NS	SG	Total
Council owned serviced site	0	4	4	37	45
Self owned site with PP	0	1**	2	27	30
Self owned site without PP	1	1**	4	15	21
Privately owned serviced site	1*	6**	5	18	30
Unauthorised encampment	17	0	4	13	34
Transit site	0	0	0	1	1
Other (e.g. showman's yard)	1	0	0	2	3
<i>Total (sites)</i>	20	12	19	113	164
Housed	1	10	6	7	24
Total (all)	21	22	25	120	188

*no pp – land owned by family member

** - Showman's site

3.2.14 The evidence against which we are able to calculate the percentage of the population by 'type' of Traveller (for example, ethnicity, occupational or 'lifestyle')¹⁶ is limited to PLASC/TES data and the crucial information provided by community interviewers and local authority and public agency staff who work closely with Gypsies and Travellers resident in the area. Based upon this supporting information, the spread of interviews (see Table 1) is broadly comparable with the identified ethnic divisions in South Gloucestershire and North Somerset (higher percentage of Romany families in North Somerset and marginally greater Irish Traveller population in South Gloucestershire) and would fit even more closely if we had elected to allocate the 'other' category into 'Romany' whenever a individual stated 'English Gypsy'; used the ethnicity of the spouse of non-ethnic interviewees to allocate to a specific category; or in a few cases based upon name, household members' declared ethnicity and other information provided in questionnaires re-allocated individuals as Irish Travellers. Similarly, a number of those individuals who classified themselves as 'other' in Bath and North East Somerset could potentially be placed in the New Traveller grouping.

3.2.15 Any re-allocation of self-identification categories was however ruled out at the beginning of the project, on the principle of autonomy of self-description amongst interviewees. Accordingly, the category of 'other' consists of 12% of the overall sample interviewed. We believe that we have managed to access the overwhelming majority of New Travellers currently resident on sites in the study area and have sampled 40% of the Showmen known to the Showmen's Guild (for whose help in contacting their members we are extremely grateful).

3.2.16 In Bristol City, where we have calculated that the Gypsy/Traveller population is largely housed, we are advised that the majority of families are of Irish Traveller origins, information which is supported by TES/PLASC data. In

¹⁶ 'Type' of Traveller is used throughout this document in the following way in reference to the categories of people included within the definition of Gypsies and Travellers under SI 2006/3190 *The Housing (Assessment of Accommodation Needs) (Meaning of Gypsies and Travellers) (England) Regulations 2006*: 'ethnic' Gypsy/Traveller (Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers); *Occupational Travellers* (Showmen); *Lifestyle Travellers* (new Travellers) *Other* (all other individuals included within SI 2006/3190)

contrast, our interviews in Bristol City have been predominantly with Romany families and we therefore believe that we are unable to provide a clear picture of the **housed** Gypsy/Traveller population in that authority with obvious implications for forecasting of preferred house to site transfers amongst Bristol residents. We consider that additional work should be undertaken with housed families in the city to explore further the ethnic origins of communities resident in the city, their support needs and accommodation preferences. We are aware that the Bristol City Gypsy and Traveller Team have recently developed enhanced linkages with Irish Traveller families in housing and would recommend that these contacts are developed further now that a relationship of trust has been established. In recognition of the fact that we have only interviewed a relatively small sample of housed families in Bristol, within the assessment tables (Section 3) we have only calculated house-to-site transfer based upon **actual** interviews undertaken, rather than grossing up the likely requirements for pitches based upon the estimated housed population. Additional work with housed families will support future reviews of the GTAA and provide more robust data on the likely house-to-site transfer needs of these populations.

RECOMMENDATION

(2) That Bristol City Council undertakes further work with housed Gypsies and Travellers to explore their support needs and accommodation preferences and to gain a more accurate picture of the diversity of Gypsy/Traveller communities in the city.

3.3 Demographics

Gender of Respondents

- 3.3.1 Respondents were (unusually in our experience) fairly evenly divided by gender, in contrast to other areas where we have worked, where females are more commonly represented in GTAA survey responses. Whilst in part the gender balance of the sample relates to the fact that all but four interviews with Showmen were undertaken with men (who are the 'head of the household' and generally literate/familiar with dealing with bureaucracy), the use of community interviewers of both genders, and the fact that interviews were undertaken at a variety of times (including evenings when men are more likely to be at home) assisted in ascertaining the views of both male and female respondents.
- 3.3.2 Twenty two respondents did not have their gender recorded on the questionnaires and the researchers were not able to 'safely' (for example, through assumptions related to a clearly gendered first name such as Susan or Michael) attribute the respondent to a particular gender. Eight of these respondents had not supplied a name and the remainder had either given an initial and surname to the interviewer, had a first name with which the authors was unfamiliar and thus felt unable to assume their gender, or used a 'gender-neutral' nick-name (commonly amongst New Travellers).

Table 7: Gender of respondents

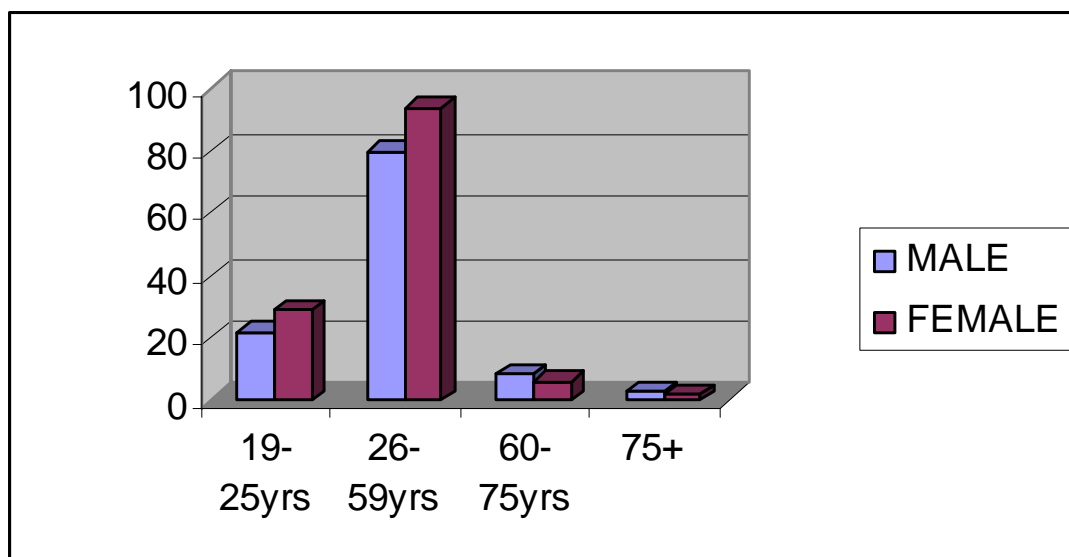
Gender	Number of respondents
Male	75
Female	91
Unknown	22
Total	188

Age Distribution

3.3.3 Respondents were asked to provide their ages and that of other household members. A relatively high number of respondents either declined to provide their own ages, or gave details for some but not all household members (number of household member are entered under a separate data-field so we can ascertain numbers included in the survey even when age-bands are not completed). The data on this aspect of the survey is therefore incomplete. However, the age distribution of individuals included in the survey – although in (perhaps overly) broad age bands for the ‘adult’ category - broadly corresponded to the demographic pattern we would expect from a range of other studies.

3.3.4 The ‘adult’ category of 26 to 59 captures the largest category of householders with a very steep decline amongst the population after the age of 60. Females outnumber males in all categories other than 60+, somewhat unusually given that females generally have a longer life expectancy than males. It is of particular interest that both respondents over the age of 75 are Showpeople (one male and one female).

Figure 1: Adults included in survey by age-band and gender (number of cases)



3.3.5 Figure 2 (below) maps the age range of children (where given) by ethnicity, demonstrating both the ‘cluster’ pattern which evidences high birthrate and young rate of marriage (short generations) and also provides some

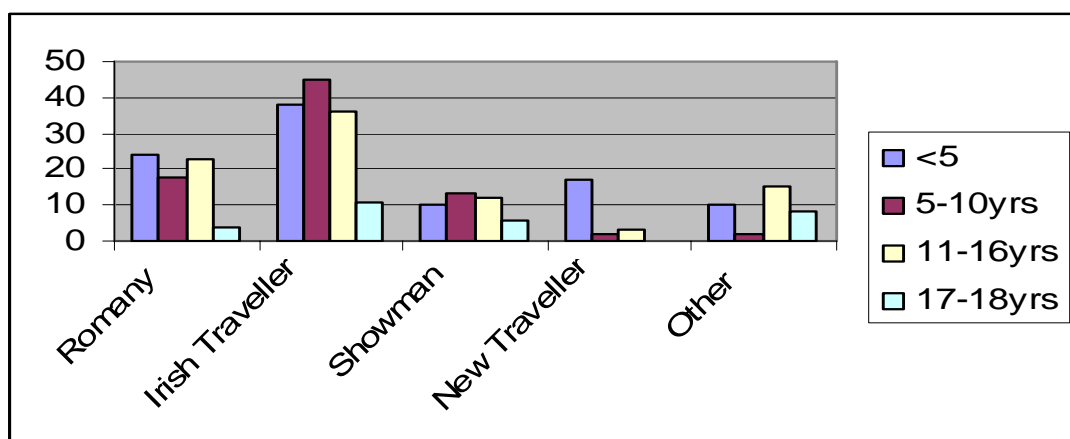
information on the future demographic pattern of Gypsies and Travellers resident in the study area.

Dependent children: future forecasting

3.3.6 As can be seen if all children resident in the locality remain living in the West of the England area there will be a significant need for additional accommodation for children of Irish Traveller background in approximately ten years time, with a further cohort of under fives of all ethnicities requiring accommodation in 15 to 20 years.

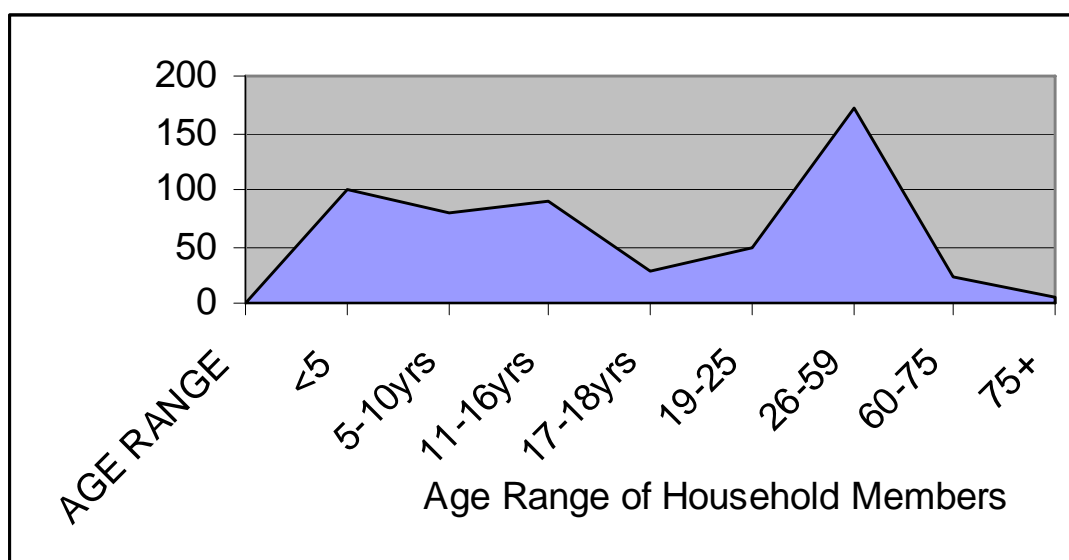
3.3.7 The 11 to 16 cohort is again largest amongst the Irish Traveller (followed by Romany Gypsy population). New Traveller children are predominantly clustered at the under five age range and further research may need to be undertaken in the future to assess the needs of this population who are at present under-represented in the teenage cohort, implying potentially that New Traveller families are younger, and/or perhaps move into housing when children reach school age. Showmen are tending to have smaller families, with a more even age distribution found amongst that community.

Figure 2: Age Range of children by Ethnicity



3.3.8 Figure 3 illustrates the population range included in the survey (all ethnicities and both genders) with the caveat that significant gaps exist in the data as 46% of respondents have not provided information on household ages. Accordingly, it is impossible to estimate if the projected need in the next fifteen years will be considerably higher than currently identified, and within which Gypsy and Traveller communities.

Figure 3: Demographic Spread of household members (64% of cases)



Dependent Children

3.3.9 Our survey found an average number of 2.1 dependent children per household, with a range which varied by ethnicity between 3.4 (Irish Traveller families) and 1.2 (Showmen and New Travellers).

Lone Parent Households

3.3.10 Nineteen respondents (10 Irish Travellers; 5 Romany Gypsies; 3 'other' and one New Traveller) reported that they were lone parents with dependent children. Sixteen of these women were caring for school age children, with twelve households consisting of mothers and children under the age of eleven. The ethnicity of the lone parent households was as follows: 55% Irish Travellers; 27% Romany; 17% 'other' and 6% New Travellers. No lone parent males were interviewed.

Older Respondents

3.3.11 At the other end of the age range, sixteen households included members who were between 60 and 75 years of age. Of these, the very oldest members of the population were all Showpeople. Most unusually we found a distribution amongst the over 60 year olds which included five Irish Travellers (31%). In other GTAAs we have not found this large a percentage of Irish Travellers of pensionable age and in the light of Baker (2005) and Parry et al (2004), and the newly published (2007) report on Irish Travellers' life expectancy¹⁷⁾ we consider that this finding is noteworthy.

¹⁷ Irish research undertaken by the Catholic Church in Dublin published in June 2007 found that 70% of the Irish Traveller population was deceased by the age of 60 and 80% by the age of 65. <http://news.independent.co.uk/europe/article2717277.ece>

3.3.12 Only three over 60 year olds lived in housing and two of those respondents lived with relatives (adult children). One person who classified themselves as 'other' lived alone in housing. The remainder of this group of respondents lived on a site (twelve cases), in many cases with relatives on the same pitch/classed as members of the same household (five cases) even if dwelling on different pitches. One individual (residing with a relative who classified themselves as a New Traveller) was resident on an unauthorised encampment when interviewed.

3.3.13 Five respondents reported they were in a single person household but it would appear (from survey data) that only one or two individuals (including the lady in housing) did not have access to family members residing in immediate proximity. Seven respondents were living with their spouses, and five of that groups were members of extended family households living on private authorised or local authority sites. In total, six of this sub-group of elderly people lived on local authority sites; six on private sites with planning permission, three in housing and one on an unauthorised encampment. The small group of over 75 year olds were all living on private Showmen's sites.

Plate 8: New Travellers on an unauthorised encampment



3.4 Showmen

- 3.4.1 Travelling Showpeople (typically known as 'Showmen') are included within the categories of 'Gypsies and Travellers' whose needs must be assessed under s225 of the 2004 Housing Act. Whilst there are a number of similarities between the needs of Showmen and other Gypsies and Travellers (a fact recognised by the DCLG who have issued a consultation on the new draft circular on planning for Travelling Showpeople¹⁸ which mirrors Circular 1/06 on planning for Gypsy sites) the differences between the communities are significant and acknowledged by all travelling groups.
- 3.4.2 Showmen are regarded as occupational category as opposed to an ethnic group, although many families have operated fairground and travelling shows for generations and continue to travel on extensive 'circuits' providing entertainments, rides and catering throughout much of the year. As discussed under 'travelling patterns' (Part Six) Showmen are the most frequent travellers amongst the respondent groups other than those families who do not have access to a residential site.

Plate 9: Stall at a fairground in Bristol



- 3.4.3 Showmen reside within a close knit community, usually inter-marrying amongst other Show families. Whilst we did interview one or two respondents from Show families who resided on Showmen's sites (usually known as

¹⁸ 2007 op. cit (above). Communities and Local Government, *Consultation on revised planning guidance in relation to Travelling Showpeople*

Yards) with their relatives but who were engaged in alternative forms of employment such as management (or who had retired and thus no longer travelled), the cohesiveness of occupation, and tendency to inherit rides or types of trade/rides from older generations was noteworthy.

- 3.4.4 Showpeople are distinct from other Gypsies and Travellers, not least by virtue of the fact that the majority of them are members of the Showmen's Guild – a trade association first set up in the late 19th century which retains good records on membership and is active in assisting members with legal advice and assistance, including on planning matters.
- 3.4.5 Showpeople are businesspeople who are familiar with dealing with legal documentation and working with planning, health and safety consultants and financial matters. As a community they retain a high degree of self-sufficiency. We were repeatedly advised that respondents did not want the local authority to provide for them, but that they required information as to where they could apply to set up Showmen's yards to provide accommodation for their families.
- 3.4.6 The accommodation needs of Showmen are considered in Section 3 (accommodation assessments) but several key points on demographics and site requirements are included within this section:
- Showpeople require generally fairly large sites with either separate storage areas for their equipment and rides, or pitches which are large enough to comfortably accommodate rides, etc, alongside living units.
 - Rides are often very large, and require to be towed on trailers which must be stored alongside touring caravans and lorries. Space for storage of rides must include adequate room for regular maintenance of rides and equipment to fulfil stringent Health and Safety requirements.
 - Most Showmen have both touring caravans (larger and different in design from those occupied by 'ethnic' Gypsies and Travellers and New Travellers); large mobile homes (often of a 'chalet' type) and frequently several cars/towing vehicles, etc per pitch. Our survey found an average of 3.7 trailers/living vehicles per household.
 - With stringent requirements for Showpeople to obtain licenses for fairs it was stressed that safety equipment, fencing, etc, was required to be transported to fairgrounds even if they were only present at a location for a few days. These storage requirements increased the size needed for a Showman's Yard.
 - The 'season' for travelling was noted as lasting for a longer period of time, with families who would (in the past) have travelled between the spring and autumn and spent winters in 'winter quarters' now travelling for longer periods of the year. Late autumn and winter engagements are predominantly related to Christmas shows and/or short-term events such as Bonfire Night fairs.

Plate 10: Fairground ride at Bristol



- Until relatively recently, during 'the season' if a fair had ended one engagement and had a perhaps a week until another show began, Showmen would remain on the site they were due to vacate until moving on to their next booking. With increased local authority regulations, insurance company requirements and very high rental costs payable on fairgrounds even when a show is not open, this is no longer possible or practical. Showpeople are often required to travel back to their yard for a few days or a week at a time (at increased expense in fuel and wear on vehicles as well as inconvenience if the next booking is in the opposite direction to their home) when engagements are not continuous.
- In common with other surveyed groups, Showmen usually live in close-knit extended family groups with elderly (retired) parents being cared for by their married children. Thirty two respondents (91%) reported that they believed that their families would remain in 'the business' in the future, commenting that it was a 'way of life' or 'tradition' for them. One respondent felt that their children would leave 'the business' because *'they can't see no future in it any more'*.
- Our survey found that the Showmen had an average of 1.2 dependent children and a household size of 3.4 people, rising to 4 per household amongst those Showpeople living in housing.

- Older (teenage) unmarried children of Showmen's families require their own trailer (or division of living quarters by gender) which is usually placed on the same pitch as that of parents.
- Married daughters will be expected to live with their husbands in his family yard, and sons will bring their wives (usually from Show families) to reside with their own birth families. In this way, given the typically short generations found within the community, pressure is continually generated on access to accommodation.

Experience of and attitudes to housing

- 3.4.7 Of the 35 respondents only two had ever lived in a house (includes both respondents currently resident in owner-occupied bungalows). One site resident on an over-crowded private site in South Gloucestershire reported that they would be willing to live in a house although their preference was for an owner-occupied private site if they could obtain planning permission. One housed respondent also stated that they would prefer to live on an authorised self-owned site. No other respondents reported a willingness to move into 'bricks and mortar' accommodation.
- 3.4.8 The typical planning permission for Showmen's Yards is for a period of three to six months. From responses to the survey it would seem that this is anachronistic and causing considerable hardship to Show families who need a secure, permanent base with the changing pattern of year-round shows referred to above (and increased likelihood that families will return to their yards between engagements).
- 3.4.9 In the past, entire families may have travelled for most of the year, but now it is more likely that some family members (for example, those involved in supporting older relatives, or who have children in school) will remain at their home base (winter quarters or Yard) for longer periods of time increasing the need for year-round planning permission. A total of 28 respondents (80%) reported that they needed year round planning permission '*all my stuff can't go to fairs at the same time*'; '*in summer we sometimes need to leave caravans at site because of weekend and one-day events that do not allow caravans*'. '*We does not manage to open everything in summer so have to store at the Yard*'; although four Showmen (11%) felt that six month planning permission was adequate for their needs '*just for the winter*'; '*only when no fairs in winter time*'. Non-respondents were all resident on owner-occupied sites or in housing.
- 3.4.10 Only three respondents declined to answer the question on duration of time required for residence at a Yard and all of those respondents were either living on 'unrestricted' Yards or in housing. Of the remaining 32 cases, four respondents said that they required accessed to a licensed site for six months of the year. The remaining 28 (80%) reported they need a license for a full twelve months of the year.

3.4.11 As a result of shortage of sites (or planning restrictions on numbers of caravans/rides on Showmen’s yards) our survey found four households who were living on unauthorised encampments (in three cases tolerated by the land-owner, although one family lived on the ‘roadside’) whilst their equipment was stored at family yards. Another showman was residing on an unauthorised development (family owned land).

3.4.12 Data from the Showmen’s Guild and our own survey found a total of 120 households in 2007 of which fifteen are believed to live in houses. Thirty five Showmen were interviewed for the survey, living in the following accommodation:

Table 8: Showmen interviewed by location and type of accommodation

Accommodation	B&NES	BCC	NS	SG
Private Serviced Site (rented)	-	5	-	17
UE	1	-	-	4
UD	1	-	-	-
Self-owned site	-	-	-	2
‘Other’ e.g. licensed Showman’s Yard	-	1	-	2
Housing	-	2	-	-
TOTAL	2	8	0	25

3.4.13 Within the study area there are a number of existing Showmen’s Yards/sites. In one case (Bristol) this includes a (currently) unlicensed private site tolerated as a result of historical circumstances/habituall user. We are advised that planning permission is currently being sought for this site which accommodates fourteen households. The remaining sites in Bristol and South Gloucestershire are all authorised Showmen’s Yards, predominantly occupied by small family groups although in one or two South Gloucestershire sites pitches are rented to Showmen by the owner-occupiers. Capacity on the sites varies between single family yards to a large site consisting of 43 families. No room for expansion exists on any licensed or authorised/tolerated site and Showmen expressed concerns about safety levels on some sites as a result of severe overcrowding. Residents of one very long-established Yard in a built up area complained that shortage of space in the surrounding vicinity has led to the development of a new housing estate on land adjoining their site with noise, pressure of space, concerns over security of equipment when the accommodation has been completed and loss of privacy. Residents are over-looked by the new houses which are very close to their yard and *‘we have to keep the blinds down all the time – especially in the girls’ bedrooms because the builders can see in – they are only a few feet away’*.

Plate 11: Showman’s Yard with mobile homes over-shadowed by adjoining building works



3.4.14 At one Yard where we undertook interviews we were informed of a death by fire which had taken place in the past five years due (in part) to overcrowding and poor fire prevention equipment at the site. As the fire took hold with great rapidity (as is common with trailer fires) it had not proved possible to reach the family in time to save their lives. Great concern was expressed by some respondents that further pressure on sites may in the future lead to similar incidents or (as is occurring) young adults being forced to live ‘in lay-bys’ unless they can find a pitch on another site.

Table 9: Showmen’s Yards by location

	B&NES	BC	NS	SG
Number of Showmen’s Yards/Sites	0	3	0	10

3.4.15 Respondents noted that ‘we can’t live near my parents because they don’t have permission for us’ or ‘we’re living on the same pitch as my parents-in-law with only a few feet between us – been like that for fourteen years’. Residents of one site noted that they knew of eight households who were living in adjoining counties or locations – sometimes on their relatives’ sites or on unauthorised developments or encampments even though ‘they were bred on this site – grew up here and would want to come back around here – but they had to go when they married because there was no room for them’.

3.4.16 In common with Gypsies and Travellers, Showmen are therefore facing intense shortage of authorised pitches and are forced to live wherever they can obtain a pitch during the period when they are not travelling for work related purposes (see further Chapter 10 on travelling patterns). We were also informed of relatives and friends of Showmen who had left their parents' site when they had grown up and married (or in one case divorced) and due to lack of accommodation, had then moved to adjoining local authority areas and obtained a temporary pitch, for example short-term rental or staying with relatives. In two cases, these temporary yards were unauthorised developments from which the person was subsequently displaced when planning permission was refused. As these individuals were currently outside of the study area and they were not themselves interviewed, they have **not** been included in the calculation of future pitch requirements for Showmen in the West of England. One respondent who left a Yard following marital breakdown is included in the pitch requirement calculation.

Connections to the West of England Area

3.4.17 The overwhelming majority of Showmen interviewed (or at least their spouses) had been born and bred in the study area. One respondent had lived at the same yard for her entire life (over 65 years) as it had been '*in the family*' for generations.

Last Residence

3.4.18 Twenty (57%) of Showmen had lived at their current yard (or house) for more than five years; eight (23%) for between one and five years; and the remaining seven (20%) for less than one year. Of those who had moved to their current location within a year, four provided previous locations and reasons for movement. One respondent had been living in the Midlands but had been forced to leave an unauthorised development and the remaining three, who had all lived (and still live in South Gloucestershire), had travelled for work (and been unable to find a pitch on their return); 'wanted a change' or as result of being forced to leave due to overcrowding.

Table 10: Reason for leaving last Site/Yard (where residence on current site greater than one year) [28 cases]

Reason for leaving	Number of respondents
Always Lived at Site	6
Evicted/failed to achieve PP	8
Married needed pitch/family reasons	4
Travelled for work – no pitch to return to/needed a change	2
Former site closed	3
No response	2
Poor conditions at previous site	2

3.4.19 The ten respondents who reported being moved on/evicted included all four individuals living on unauthorised encampments) as well as other Showmen who had lived on sites (in some cases their own) which had failed to achieve planning permission.

Satisfaction with present accommodation

3.4.20 Seventeen respondents (49%) of Showmen reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied living at their current Yard. In all cases, these families lived on private authorised or self-owned sites. Despite their stated satisfaction, nine out of seventeen of these respondents commented that the sites were *'crowded, good clean site, but no room'*; *'no room for my son to get married'*; *'very tight'*; *'lack of room'*; *'nice site but cramped'* highlighting the comments above regarding lack of space for expansion and suppressed households.

3.4.21 Five respondents (14%) reported that they were 'neutral' about their current residence; one person did not answer (housed) and the remaining twelve (34%) Showmen (one of whom lives in an owner-occupied house) stated that they were 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied' with their accommodation. Typical comments from this group included: *'the present owners aren't running this as a true Showmen's Yard/they are trying to push us out'* (five comments relating to a single site) and seven respondents referring to sites (all locations and tenures) as *'too crowded'* or *'unsuitable for a family' 'just not enough room'*. Other than at the site where residents reported experiencing difficulties with the (relatively new) owners; all complaints related to overcrowding at Showmen's Yards.

Overcrowding

Table 11: Satisfaction with accommodation: overcrowding

	Self-owned Site (with PP)	Private Rented	'Other' e.g. Yard	UE	House	TOTAL
Right Size	1	2	2	-	1	6 (17%)
Too Small	2	21	1	4	1	29 (83%)

3.4.22 Of the six respondents who reported that they had adequate space for their needs, all were living in single or two person households and were generally older, living on self-owned or private rented Yards. One Showman lived in an owner-occupied house.

3.4.23 Perhaps unsurprisingly all respondents living on unauthorised encampments reported that they were over-crowded and living in conditions which were unsuitable for their needs. Typical comments from residents of unauthorised encampments were *'smelly and dirty here'*; *'unsuitable for a family'*. The remaining respondents who reported being overcrowded were predominantly concerned (thirteen cases) about lack of external space/room *'just too crowded'* or *'lack of living space'*/needing more caravans/ *'larger van'* required (ten cases).

3.4.24 A total of seven respondents noted that their current residence was worse than where they had previously lived (three Showmen resident on unauthorised encampments and four at private sites recorded as being particularly overcrowded). Six residents of private sites (two of whom had

previously been resident on unauthorised encampments) reported that their current residence was an improvement on their previous location. The remainder either declined to answer or felt conditions were similar at both their previous and present Yards.

3.4.25 External overcrowding caused particularly acute problems for residents of rented private sites who overwhelmingly reported that they did not have adequate room to store their rides and equipment at the Yard where they lived. A total of 24 respondents, 69% of Showmen interviewed, stated that they had to store all or some of their equipment off site. Most common locations to store rides were at 'farms' (six cases); with a further fourteen respondents storing equipment with family '*at my Dad's yard*' or '*with other Showmen at their sites*'. Four respondents noted that although they could store some rides on their current sites space was at a premium so their equipment might be divided up in different locations or '*not near my home, different part of the Yard*'. In two cases respondents noted that sometimes their highly valuable equipment must (in breach of insurance regulations) '*be left on lay-by's until there is enough room [on very crowded site]*'.

Accommodation Aspirations: Showmen

3.4.26 Respondents were asked to rank their preferences for suitable accommodation for their families. Table 12 below details Showmen's answers

Table 12: Most suitable form of accommodation for your family

	Self-owned Site (with PP)	Council/ RSL owned serviced site	Private owned site (with PP): rented pitch	'Other' e.g. Showman's Yard	House	Total Responses
First Choice	30	1	2	1	1 (self-owned bungalow)	35
Second Choice	1	9	17	1	-	28
Third Choice	1	18	8	-	-	27
Total	32	28	27	2	1	

3.4.27 Although self-owned sites with planning permission remain the most favoured option for sites (reflective in part of the greater financial resources many Showmen have when compared with other Gypsy/Traveller populations) a significant interest is shown in RSL/LAs providing sites as long as they are suitable for Showpeople (for example, space to store equipment, etc). Only slightly less popular is the option of renting a pitch at a private Showman's yard. It may be that the negative experiences of some families who have rented private pitches (particularly within one authority) have led them to prefer the idea of a social landlord. A single respondent (already resident in 'bricks and mortar' accommodation) records a preference for conventional housing.

3.4.28 The most common reasons given by respondents for not being able to live in their preferred type of accommodation were as follows: inability to obtain planning permission (fourteen cases); expense (eight cases) and lack of space for rides and equipment (two cases). Nine respondents reported that they were living in their preferred type of accommodation.

Preferred site locations

3.4.29 Eight respondents did not answer this question (includes two in housing) or stated not applicable as had site. Two Showmen explicitly mentioned locations near to other Showmen's yards for reasons related to family connections (for example, Coalpit Heath and Frampton Cotterell). Three respondents wanted to live near to 'where we do now' or 'In Bristol, the City'. Chipping Sodbury was referred to as their favoured location by five respondents, again because of family connections and nine Showmen reported that they felt more sites were required in the vicinity of Yate.

Provision of Self-Owned Sites (financial and planning aspects)

3.4.30 Twenty-five Showmen (71%) reported that they would be able to self-provide a site if they were a) able to obtain planning permission and b) eligible to take out a mortgage. In addition, sixteen (45%) respondents, all of whom were living at rented private sites, reported that they (or their family) had adequate savings to purchase land if they would be able to obtain planning permission. All of these respondents had reported that an owner-occupied site was their most suitable accommodation option (see accommodation assessment for Showmen for discussion/recommendations – Chapter 4).

Plate 12: Fairground ride at Bristol



PART THREE

4. UNITARY AUTHORITY ACCOMMODATION ASSESSMENTS

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The 2006 ODPM (draft) practice guidance on production of *Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments* is not prescriptive in how assessments should be undertaken and formulas applied, but provides a framework for the approach to be taken.
- 4.1.2 In preparing this assessment we have followed the recommended methodology in the ODPM/DCLG draft guidance issued in February 2006 (para.80) which required a total of fifteen variables, but which has subsequently been refined in the 2007 University of Birmingham et al benchmark study and other existing GTAAs. Following discussions with the client we have broadly followed the methodology and numbering in the recent (2007) Leicestershire study, with explanatory comments similarly numbered. We have in addition included an element of the calculation for waiting list data (not considered in the Leicestershire study). An estimate of pitch requirement for 2011 to 2016 is included in the assessment.

4.2 Assumptions and Approaches

- 4.2.1 As required by the client we have calculated requirements for residential pitches for the period **March 2006 to March 2011** and for the following five years (**March 2011 to March 2016**).
- 4.2.2 To provide an indicative needs forecast for the period March 2011 to March 2016 we have applied **3% annual growth rate** to the combined supply and need figures, but recognise that this will be affected by change in the period 2006 to 2011, and should be reviewed at the appropriate time, particularly in the light of reallocation of need between authorities and progress with pitch provision up to 2011.
- 4.2.3 All calculations have equated a single household with one pitch. Many pitches will accommodate more than one caravan for the household's use (for example, separate trailers for teenage boys and girls and a mobile home for general living space) and pitch size (particularly between self-owned and public rented sites) may vary considerably.
- 4.2.4 The model takes account of:
- Supply of pitches at March 2006 as well as those granted permission in the following 12 months (for example, the South Liberty Lane Gypsy/Traveller site which opened 27 July 2006 in Bristol City);
 - Waiting list data (adjusted to take account of vacancies occurring on socially rented sites 2006 to 2011 but excluding households accommodated at South Liberty Lane, BCC in July 2006);
 - Net movement flows between housing and site pitches 2006-2011;

- Unauthorised development of sites without planning permission at March 2006;
- Need for residential pitches from unauthorised encampments 2006-2011;
- Temporary planning permissions which will end 2006-2011;
- New family formation 2006-2011 (including suppressed households through overcrowding, intended marriage and 3% per annum growth rate calculated from all households on existing authorised pitches and unauthorised developments);
- Unused pitches brought into use 2006-2011;
- Planning applications pending at June 2007 (not including unauthorised developments counted elsewhere);
- Known planned site developments expected to occur within one year (as of June 2007), for example, four new pitches planned for a public site in South Gloucestershire);
- Vacancies occurring on social rented sites 2006-2011.

4.2.5 The example given on page 22 of the ODPM guidance (2006) also has an entry for 'new households likely to arrive from elsewhere'. Following the Leicestershire study (2007) and the 2007 benchmarking advice we have assumed, (given the nature of the study area site provision, and especially the number of rented pitches), that a significant number of 'new households' are likely to arrive from elsewhere. However, this would be balanced by vacancies occurring on such sites by people moving on.

4.2.6 For simplicity, both elements (new households from elsewhere and private site vacancies) are omitted *unless* clear evidence/information has been supplied to indicate the **imminent** arrival of households whose accommodation needs will not be catered for elsewhere. Where agreed through negotiation with the client authorities, particular local circumstances have also been taken into account when calculating pitch requirements, for example, in Bristol an allowance was made for individuals on the waiting list for the Bristol public sites (South Liberty Lane) where it is clear from application forms and records that those households are not seeking accommodation elsewhere, that they had clear connections to the Bristol City area (or relatives on the site) and wished to be accommodated at that precise location.

4.2.7 The distinct circumstances which exist within Bristol City (as the only urban location area in the study area) namely, a large (estimated) housed population and limited pitch provision, means that we have disregarded assumptions on house-to-site transfer, as to gross up this element of the calculation based upon survey findings would potentially lead to far higher house-to-site transfer demand than is justifiable in the absence of other information. Accordingly, we have only included 'house-to-site' transfer within Bristol City where survey respondents in housing have indicated that they are resident in housing through lack of other options and would wish to live on a site. Updating/future GTAs and additional work with the housed population will assist in developing knowledge on this element of demand further.

4.2.8 To operationalise this model we apply a series of distinct information/data sets and assumptions:

- baseline information on current accommodation supply expressed as numbers of pitches on sites and households likely to transfer in and out of housing, findings from the survey which are expressed in percentages and grossed up to the whole population.
- assumptions utilised to interpret findings so that they translate into realistic estimates of pitch requirements. These assumptions have been devised from practice in other GTAA's and professional experience, and are supported by information the experiences of local Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officers and other community experts (for example, health, education, support groups, etc).

4.3 Assessment of Requirements for Residential Pitches

4.3.1 The model used to calculate residential pitch requirements throughout the study area as a whole (Table 13) is replicated and the findings disaggregated to provide assessments of need at individual unitary authority level (Appendix B).

4.3.2 When calculating pitch requirements for the period 2011 to 2016 a different approach is used, based simply upon an estimate of 3% household growth rate per annum (households resident on both authorised and unauthorised sites excluding those on unauthorised encampments whose needs are included elsewhere).

4.3.3 Following ODPM (2006) and University of Birmingham et al (2007) both the model and family growth estimates calculate requirements on a '**need where it arises**' basis. Utilising this formula identifies a predictably uneven distribution of pitch requirements, resulting from pre-existing patterns of settlement and local planning policies which reinforce trends in site location. Although the findings of pitch requirement are identified at unitary authority level, further decisions will need to be made by local authorities (either as individual councils or working in partnership) with regard to '**need where it should be met**'. Using this latter approach will take into account wider social and economic planning considerations including equity, choice and findings from the survey data which forms the core of this GTAA.

Table13: Gypsy and Traveller Residential Pitch Requirements 2006–2016

	B&NES	BCC	NS	SG	All
Current residential supply					
1. Socially rented pitches	0	12	8	34	54
2. Private site pitches	0	0	24	33	67
3. Total pitches/households	0	12	32	67	111
4. Net movement from housing to sites	1	4	5	2	12
5. Unauthorised developments	6	0	15	18	39
6. Unauthorised encampments	8	5	4	9	26
7. End of temporary permissions 2006-2011	0	0	0	0	0
8. New household formation 2006-2011	3	8	19	32	62
9. Additional identified need	1	9	5	12	27
10. Additional need 2006-2011	19	26	48	73	166
11. Pitches unused 2006	0	0	0	0	0
12. Planning applications likely to succeed in 2007/8	0	0	0	10	10
13. New socially rented pitches planned 2007/8	0	0	12	3	15
14. Vacancies on socially rented sites 2006-2011	0	2	0	12	14
15. Supply 2006-2011	0	2	12	25	39
16. Requirement for extra pitches 2006–2011	19	24	36	48	127
17. Household growth 2011-2016	3	6	13	22	44
18. Total Requirement 2006-2016	22	30	49	70	171

Row 1. From schedules of sites and other data from local authorities, checked against the six-monthly official counts and survey returns. Adjusted as follows:

- a) adding one pitch in North Somerset on a private site rented by the local authority;
- b) **including** the residential site at South Liberty Lane, Bristol, which began occupation in 27 July 2006;
- c) disregarding the BCC transit site provision at St Antony's, Kingsweston Lane (see under transit provision) at 4.4.11).

Row 2. From local authority data, but with reservations. For instance, the figure for South Gloucestershire privately-owned pitches from the authority's own figure for 'families' is, in our view, an under-count and should not be equated to pitches/households (official recommended method), because our survey revealed concealed households on such sites because of planning permission restrictions on numbers of permitted caravans planning permission. Applying our figure of 2.5 caravans per household produced a higher figure of 44 pitches on authorised private sites.

Row 3. Sum of rows 1 and 2.

Row 4. The 2006 guidance has two separate variables: 'number of households in caravans expressing a desire to live in housing' and 'in housing but with a need for site accommodation'. While our survey shows a suppressed demand from those in housing for site accommodation, a stated

preference should not be equated to real demand. Only when there is a real choice of accommodation available are Gypsies and Travellers likely to surrender existing 'bricks-and-mortar' accommodation, and, in effect, volunteer for the uncertainty, and possible criminalisation associated with a travelling life. We have applied our survey findings, which show a net demand for sites (as shown). Further research by individual local authorities may clarify the extent of need for house to site transfer.

Row 5. Based upon local authority schedules of Gypsy-owned land without planning permission, checked against recent count figures and advice from local authorities.

Row 6. Estimating residential need arising from unauthorised encampments is particularly difficult. We have derived these figures from local authority schedules, cross-checked against recent count figures, and adjusted to take account of our survey findings (for example, residential pitch requirements of residents of unauthorised encampments). We have taken account of information received from local authorities pertaining to the extent to which residents of unauthorised encampments are in transit rather than seeking permanent accommodation but again express some reservations as to the robustness of local authority data in some authorities (see notes pertaining to recording of unauthorised encampments at 4.3.6).

Row 7. The Leicestershire study includes figures for this, but our local authority data suggests none in the study area.

Row 8. This includes suppressed household formation caused by overcrowding and/or intended marriage (from survey findings), and the benchmarking study (2007) assumption of a 3% per annum household growth rate applied to existing supply and need (Rows 3 and 5). Growth rate excludes households on unauthorised encampments.

Row 9. This includes current waiting list data, and households known to be seeking accommodation and imminently expected to arrive, but not identified above.

Row 10. Sum of Rows 4 to 9.

Row 11. We assumed that there were no unused authorised pitches in the study area as at March 2006 which were available to accommodate households, for example, empty pitches in SG local authority sites appear to have been empty for some time period and may require refurbishment for which grant monies have been made available.

Row 12. Ten residential pitches are planned at a private site in South Gloucestershire and twelve residential pitches at a private site in North Somerset. It is assumed that there are no further new pitches planned.

Row 13. Four additional pitches are planned at Patchway (South Gloucestershire) and twelve residential pitches (allocated for use as social

provision via authority letting processes) will become available at a private site in North Somerset. We assume no further new pitches are planned.

Row 14. Based upon local authority information on vacancy rates.

Row 15. Sum of Rows 11 to 14.

Row 16. Row 10 minus Row 15.

Row 17. 3% annual growth applied to combined supply and need figures for 2006 to 2011 (i.e. Rows 3 and 16). This will be affected by outcomes in the period 2007 to 2011, particularly reallocation between authorities and progress with pitch provision up to 2011.

4.4 Assessment of requirement for transit provision

4.4.1 We were asked to estimate transit pitch need, although 2007 benchmarking study regards it as premature to estimate transit needs until adequate long-stay accommodation is available. Transit provision facilitates movement amongst Gypsy and Traveller communities, addresses the need for short-term stopping places and can minimise disruption that unauthorised encampments can cause. The table above (following DCLG guidance) does not include transit calculations which are set out below in Table 16.

4.4.2 Unauthorised encampments *can* be a measure of potential transit need (for example, South Gloucestershire advises us that the majority of Gypsies and Travellers on unauthorised encampments in the area are in transit and have accommodation else), but unauthorised encampments are predominantly short-stay (often because of criminal powers of eviction) and thus may recur in another location. The repeated moving on of such encampments under the 1994 Act can make it difficult to separate transit from long-stay need, but our survey found that 37% of the sample reported that they would make use of transit pitches or stopping places if they were available and/or suitable for their needs (for example, warden on site, clean, suitable amenities, etc).

4.4.3 Problems associated with assessing transit need include the fact that official counts did not separate unauthorised developments/encampments until recently and that local authority records of unauthorised encampments (see Chapter 6) vary in quality (for example, some records we examined have significant omissions relating to numbers of caravans or the duration of encampments), do not always permit correlation of data to show how many caravans were present in the study area on any given day and may present a risk of double counting some highly mobiles groups.

4.4.4 Niner (2003) reported that a figure of 2,000 to 2,500 transit pitches were needed nation-wide. An estimate which would equate to forty pitches per county. Based upon best possible evidence we do not however accept that figure for the study area although there is clear evidence (see Chapter 6) that many respondents remain committed to travelling and that across the study area a need exists for either transit or short-term 'stopping places', (an

alternative to transit sites which have been suggested by the Government as meeting the immediate need of families moving from one location to another and requiring only a very short stay: see Chapter One paragraph 1.2.5).

4.4.5 The Leicestershire GTAA (2007) recommends that estimated transit pitches (see calculation undertaken below which follows the same methodology used in that study) should be doubled to create ‘excess capacity for sites to function effectively and to allow for periodic site cleaning and repair’, with ‘some flexibility to accommodate unexpected peaks’ (at page 88). Following discussions with client authorities and information supplied pertaining to average numbers of caravans per unauthorised encampment and typical patterns of transit movement, we have **not** applied a 100% uplift for cleaning, repair and sudden peaks in demand (for example, during the summer) to our findings but instead relied upon such local data as is available in each authority.

4.4.6 CLG data has been used elsewhere by Niner and others as a basis to determine transit accommodation requirements expressed in terms of *caravan capacity* required rather than in numbers of pitches. The methodology adopted by Niner et al is:

- i) To take the mid point in the range of counts at study area level. **In the West of England data above the range is 27 – 103. This gives rise to an assumed study area level of 65 caravans as being the mid point in the range.**
- ii) To apply an allowance of 100% for excess capacity in order that sites can function effectively and to allow for periods of site cleaning and repair. **This would give rise to a caravan capacity of 130 across the study area if other local factors (such as knowledge pertaining to transit requirements as identified in the survey and local authority data on average number of caravans per unauthorised encampment) were not taken into account.**

Table 14: Caravans¹⁹ on Unauthorised Encampments 2005-2007

	B&NES ²⁰	BCC	NS	SG	All
January 2007	35	0	0	13	48
July 2006	38	3	17	45	103
January 2006	0	24	0	18	32
July 2005	0	3	0	31	34
January 2005	0	23	0	4	27

Source: CLG Caravan Count

4.4.7 An analysis was undertaken of unauthorised encampment records covering the period April 2005 to March 2006. This produces the following assessment

¹⁹ CLG Caravan Count figures do not include Show People and in some cases counts prior to July 2006 may not include New Travellers.

²⁰ Bath and North East Somerset advise that the July 2006 figure for unauthorised encampments currently published by CLG is in error and they have requested a correction. Incorporating that correction the last five Caravan Counts are shown above in respect of unauthorised encampments.

of the number of instances of encampment in that period and, by estimating caravans present on each day in the year, the lowest and highest points of the range in the number of caravans present.

Table 15: Analysis of Unauthorised Encampment Records 2005-2006

UE	Instances of encampment in the year	The range in the numbers of caravans present	
		Lowest number	Highest number
B&NES	30	10	30
BCC	27	1	42
NS	21	1	16
SG	48	1	74

Source: GTAA Study Team. The instances of encampment in B&NES shown in local authority records in this period have been doubled to reflect omission of New Travellers.

4.4.8 Some local authorities provided information on transit needs data recorded on residents of unauthorised encampments in 2006. Interviews (including pilot questionnaires administered prior to the main study in South Gloucestershire) with residents of unauthorised encampments were undertaken during the period August 2006 to June 2007. Information was also received from some local authorities on the incidence of unauthorised encampment in this period. Combining these sources of information we estimate that in this period approximately 60 families have been involved in encampments in the study area. Taking an average of 1.7 caravans per family this equates to 100 caravans.

4.4.9 Taking the data set above into consideration we would recommend that the study area should have a transit caravan capacity of 75 distributed across the study area by 2011. On the basis that the extent of travelling is unlikely to rise further in the near future we are not recommending that, beyond this figure, there be further transit provision be planned for the period 2011 to 2016. This will need to be kept under review.

4.4.10 Based on the distribution of caravans involved in authorised encampments and consideration of specific local data we would recommend the following distribution:

Table 16: Estimated Requirements for Caravan Capacity on Transit Sites

UA	2006 – 11	2011 - 16
B&NES	20	0
BCC	0 ²¹	0
NS	10	0
SG	25	0
All	55	0

4.4.11 In recommending 75 transit pitches across the West of England we take account of the fact that Bristol City already has a 20-pitch transit site, leaving the balance of provision to be found elsewhere in the study area. Chapters

²¹ Bristol City Council requires a total transit capacity of 20 caravans/pitches but already has a site with this capacity.

10 and 11 provides some evidence of respondents' general preferences for transit provision (near motorways and services, part of national network) and specific locational preferences.

4.4.12 We also note that flexible use of private sites to accommodate related temporary visitors already happens across the study area (and is greatly favoured by survey respondents). It may be that such private transit arrangements may be encouraged further through reviewing planning procedures and policies, which some respondents reported discouraged them from allowing visitors to stay for more than a few days.

RECOMMENDATIONS

(3) That location of transit provision/stopping places should be negotiated at a study area level by the authorities. Although we have disaggregated the findings/calculation of need to unitary authority level, such provision *may* best be met by supplying a mixture of transit sites/stopping places.

(4) Decisions on 'where need should be met' (as opposed to 'need where it arises') may be considered appropriate for this type of provision. If transit provision is made on a 'need where it should be met' basis then transit sites/stopping places should be relatively close to each other and near to areas identified within the survey as favoured locations for such provision.

4.5 Assessment of requirement for Travelling Showmen

4.5.1 As required by the clients, the accommodation needs of Travelling Showmen have been assessed separately from other residential need. Table 21 (below) is therefore residential need and additional to Table 13 above).

4.5.2 Data pertaining to the specific needs of Showmen (for example, storage areas, large vehicles, etc.) are specified in Chapter 3 (above). Need is disaggregated by authority area and distributed on a '**need where it arises**' basis.

4.5.3 No formal methodology or preferred formula has been identified for assessment of Showmen's needs. In many areas, GTAA's rely upon data received from the Showmen's Guild to assess pitch requirements and no face to face interviews are carried out. In undertaking interviews with 35 households (30%) of the known Showman population²² we consider that we have produced evidence of need which is more robust than if a formula only had been utilised.

²² Population Size: Calculated from Showmen's Guild Data. Site capacity/residence in BCC and SG and two households interviewed who were **not** included in Guild data (1 'New Showmen' and 1 Showman displaced from other area and staying with family member on unauthorised development).

Table 17: Show People Families as at July 2007

	B&NES
Pitches/families on sites	105
Housed Show People families	15
All resident Show People families	120

4.5.4 As required for planning purposes the figure is 'rolled back' to March 2006 (-3% + recent arrivals in authority from survey data):

Table 18: Estimated Show People Families as at March 2006

	B&NES	BCC	NS	SG	All
Pitches/families on sites	0	14	0	86	100
Housed Show People families	5	3	0	4	12
All resident Show People families	5	17	0	90	112

Table 19: Number of Households interviewed with particular circumstances [35 cases]

Household members requiring immediate accommodation	13 (37%) of sample
Number of relatives moving to be with respondent in very near future (e.g. marriage/death of parent)	8
Young Adult Children (17-18 years of age) likely to marry within 5 years and require accommodation in UA	9
Households likely to be displaced from UD	1 (assume all cases identified)
Numbers of families interviewed on UEs with (some) equipment stored on family yards: (NB: 3 currently tolerated by land-owners at location <i>not</i> licensed as Showmen's Yards: may if remain long enough be counted as UD)	4
Numbers of new pitches required by interview data	19
Number of families required to leave unsuitable site re: lack of space for equipment/rides, etc	6
Number of individuals immediately requiring pitches immediately (by 2011) as % of Showmen respondents to Survey	55%

4.5.5 Assumptions (per Niner/Bloxsom: see Leicestershire GTAA, 2007) applied to findings and grossing up (2006 to 2016):

- 40% will require pitches due to intermarriage (survey found 55%);
- 95% will require pitch in study area (survey found 100%); and
- Population growth at 3% per annum + suppressed households/overcrowding.

4.5.6 When calculating need we follow Niner/Bloxsom (Leicester GTAA) and assume that no new pitch capacity exists on existing authorised Showmen's sites in the study area, an assumption supported by survey findings and information received from the Showmen's Guild.

Table 20: Existing numbers of authorised Yards/sites in the study area (includes sites tolerated as a result of historical circumstances/habitual user)

UA	Number
B&NES	0
BCC	3
NS	0
SG	10

4.5.7 Grossing up by population (shown above at Table 18) and multiplying by Survey Requirements (Table 19) and applying the assumptions laid down at 4.5.5 enables us to estimate required pitch numbers for Showmen (Table 21).

Table 21: Pitch Requirements for Show People 2006-2016

	B&NES	BCC	NS	SG	ALL
Displacing of unauthorised development	1	0	0	0	1
Moves from unsuitable sites	0	1	0	5	6
New household growth/suppressed 2006-2011	0	7	0	37	44
Pitches required in 2006-2011	1	8²³	0	42	51
New household growth 2011-2016	0	3	0	15	18
Total Requirement in 2006-2016	1	11	0	57	69

4.6 Policy implications

4.6.1 Further authorised accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers can potentially come from the following sources:

- a) Public sites (new sites, expansion or intensification of existing) provided by local authorities or RSLs;
- b) Private sites with planning permission; and
- c) Movement into conventional housing (see further Chapter 7) for discussion on Gypsy/Traveller attitudes to housing.

4.6.2 Restrictive Green Belt and other policies have constrained the numbers of Gypsies/Travellers and Showmen resorting to the area in all West of England authorities, (despite evidence of need from survey/focus group data) and may constrain future provision. A number of respondents (particularly Showmen see Chapter 3.4) referred to relatives leaving their 'home' authority area in an attempt to access authorised site provision.

²³ The eight additional Showmen pitches needed are in addition to the current pitches at the three existing Showmen sites in the city.

Table 22: Average number of caravans (rounded), West of England, 2004-2007, by UA, site type and time of year

UA	Site	Average July 2004-January 2007		
		January	July	Jan, July
Bath & NE Somerset	Authorised Council	0	0	0
	Authorised Private	0	0	0
	Unauthorised	31	21	26
	Total	31	21	26
Bristol	Authorised Council	7	9	8
	Authorised Private	0	0	0
	Unauthorised	12	3	7
	Total	19	12	15
North Somerset	Authorised Council	15	17	16
	Authorised Private	51	45	48
	Unauthorised	9	29	19
	Total	75	91	83
South Gloucestershire	Authorised Council	86	70	78
	Authorised Private	111	97	105
	Unauthorised	44	69	57
	Total	241	236	240
All UA total	Authorised Council	108	96	102
	Authorised Private	162	145	154
	Unauthorised	97	121	109
	Total	367	362	365

Source: Derived from official counts

Table 23: Proportional district distribution of selected variables

UA	% land area	% general pop	% G/T pop	% G/T caravans
B&NES	28.3	17.2	5	8
BCC	8.4	38.7	25	5
NS	37.8	19.2	16	22
SG	25.4	25.0	55	65
Totals (rounded)	100	100	100	100

4.6.3 A simple comparison of the respective land areas of the four authorities reveals Bath and North East Somerset occupies 28.3%, Bristol City 8.4%, North Somerset 37.8%, and South Gloucestershire at 25.4%. Bristol City is mostly developed, South Gloucestershire mostly Green Belt, while the other two have some Green Belt areas. It is not part of our brief to review local plan policies, but, if private sites are to make a significant contribution, then policy criteria for this form of development will need to reflect these local circumstances.

4.6.4 Our needs assessment does not distinguish between future private and public provision, which again involves policy and resource decisions outside of our control. According to the official (DCLG) counts, the ratio of public/ private authorised caravans in England was 54:46; whilst in the South-West region this equated to 65:35. In the West of England study area the public/private, division stands at 19:81 indicating that the major growth in public supply is required to bring the authorities considered in this GTAA nearer to both the

Regional and National average. While national and regional proportions should not be taken as a target, the West of England area has a very low proportion of council/social site provision.

4.6.5 Some Gypsies/Travellers currently in public housing would prefer to be in caravans; while others in caravans would prefer to be in housing. Table 24 below details the number of respondents living in housing who expressed a desire to live on sites and vice versa.

Table 24: Survey respondents who expressed a wish to transfer from house to site (and vice versa)

	B&NES	BCC	NS	SG	TOTAL
House to Site Transfer	1	6	2	2	11
Site to House Transfer	2	1	4	4	11
Residence on Authorised Site (desire to move to house)	0	1	2	3	6
Residence at UE/UD (desire to move to house)	2	0	2	1	5

4.6.6 As can be seen the figures are essentially even, but in considering this data it is important to consider the following caveats:

- Based upon other GTAAS (and follow-up studies) it may be difficult to determine this relative demand, and expressed preferences may not convert into action. Five out of eleven (45%) of sited respondents who stated they would move into conventional accommodation were resident at unauthorised sites and may have felt that their other accommodation options were constrained. Of these five respondents, four identified their first preference for accommodation as being able to live on a self-owned site followed by public site. Amongst the remaining six out of eleven respondents (all resident on rented authorised sites) who stated that they would move into a house if they had an opportunity, four reported that they would prefer an owner-occupied site, followed by rental of a pitch on local authority or privately owned sites (responses varied according to their current form of accommodation). Thus only three out of the eleven sited respondents (27%) identified residence in a house as their primary choice of accommodation.

4.6.7 Accordingly we recommend that councils and RSLs should plan for a mixture of both sited and housed provision to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers (perhaps exploring with site residents their views on ‘group housing’)²⁴, and when planning for new provision should recognise the ‘best value’ benefits afforded by provision of caravan pitches which are cheaper to provide than social housing units. Until, however, the shortfall of accommodation for those currently in caravans is met, it would be premature

²⁴ Group Housing is defined as “residential housing developments with additional facilities and amenities (such as space for trailers and working areas) specifically designed to accommodate extended families of the Traveller Community on a permanent basis. See further: Northern Ireland Housing Executive Press Release 13/08/07 <http://www.nihe.gov.uk/news/news.asp?id=232>

to plan for a further transfer out of housing. Although in our assessment of need (above) we have identified a certain percentage of households who expressed a very clear desire to transfer from housing to site (and vice versa), this finding may relate in part to an increased tendency for households who are unhappy in 'bricks and mortar' accommodation to remain in contact with local authority officers and service providers, which in turn ensures that their preferences for sited accommodation are noted. We consider that it would be premature to apply assumptions pertaining to overall percentages of housed Gypsy/Traveller community members who would wish to live on sites (across the entire study area), until further work had been undertaken to identify particular needs and preferences.

- 4.6.8 With regard to pitch provision, larger pitch sizes on long-stay sites would be consistent with the community's preferences for extended family living. In general, we would recommend that pitches should accommodate three caravans, including one mobile home, rather than the two recommended in official guidance). Pitches of this size (such as are provided on South Gloucestershire public sites) allow some accommodation for visitors (which could, subject to relevant permission and suitable management, count as transit provision for relatives/friends of the resident. DCLG draft guidance on site design is out to consultation²⁵ and it is hoped that a summary of responses to this document may provide further discussion on the provision of (suitable) transit pitches alongside residential accommodation. See further Chapter 11: Transit sites).
- 4.6.9 We recognise that the site needs/preferences of the four main categories of respondents surveyed in this GTAA (English Gypsies, Irish Travellers, New Travellers and Showmen) may vary (see further under Chapter 8: accommodation preferences). Moreover, some individuals may be reluctant to share sites with other 'types' of Gypsy/Traveller for matters pertaining to culture and/or use of site amenities (for example, storage requirements may vary between communities). Accordingly, we recommend that any future public site provision be planned in consultation with the different Gypsy/Traveller communities and utilises the expertise and diverse community contacts of Forum members.

²⁵ DCLG (2007) Draft Guidance on the design of sites for Gypsies and Travellers - A Consultation Paper London: DCLG [WWW] Available from http://www.communities.gov.uk/pub/560/DraftGuidanceonthedesignofsitesforGypsiesandTravellersAConsultationPaper_id1510560.pdf [Accessed 07/08/07] Consultation period: 16/05/07 to 22/08/07

PART FOUR

5. EXISTING ACCOMMODATION PROVISION

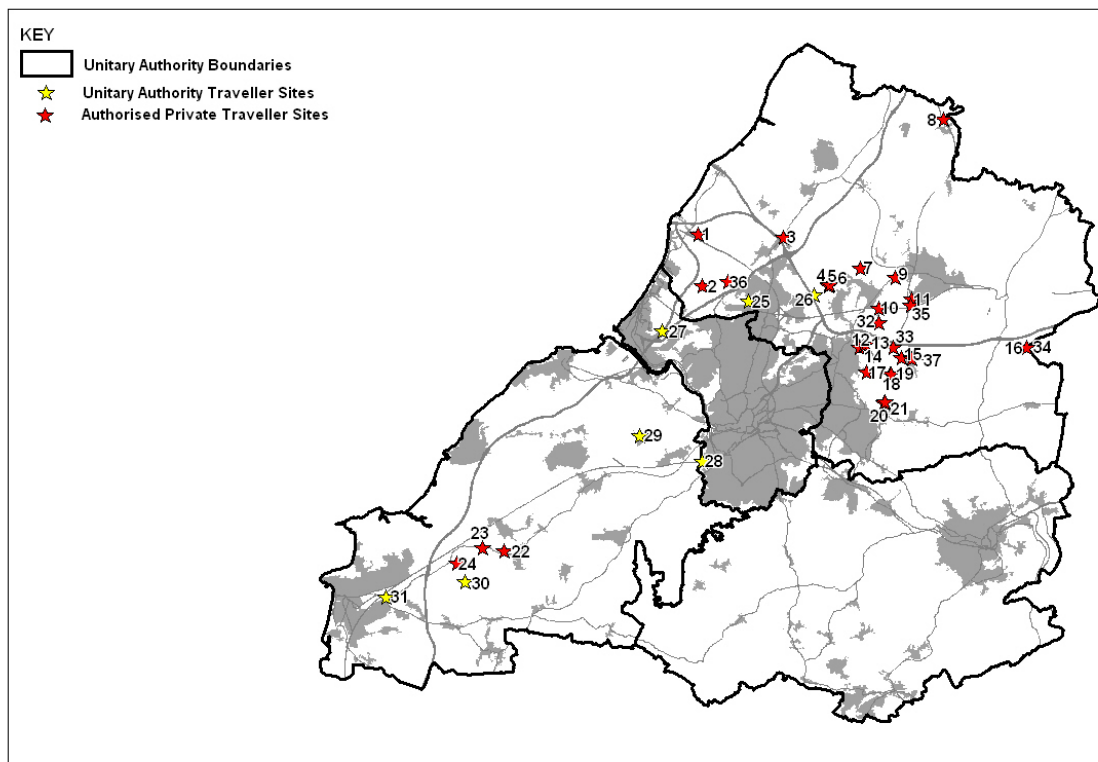
5.1 Evidence from official caravan counts

5.1.1 Official six-monthly caravan counts distinguish between three types of site categories: council/public (authorised), private authorised, and unauthorised. Unauthorised sites are further sub-divided between 'tolerated' and not tolerated sites; and whether or not they are on Gypsy owned land (unauthorised development) or not (unauthorised encampment). Caravan count data is available from 1979 and provides a useful longitudinal study of accommodation and travel patterns. The count data for the study area has been analysed and presented in full at Chapter 10.

5.2 Public Gypsy sites

5.2.1 The provision of public sites has been slow across the study area, with the Patchway and Weston sites (South Gloucestershire) the only ones in the area until the 1990s. Bath and North East Somerset has never provided a site, and the three North Somerset sites are small, family occupied sites. One private site exists in North Somerset (see 5.3.2) with limited numbers of publicly rented pitches). Bristol City owns a single residential site.

Figure 4: Location of sites



Source: Laura Grady, *West of England* (06/08/07)

Table 25: Public Gypsy sites in West of England study area (2007)

UA	Site location	Pitches (caravan capacity)	Date opened (date upgraded)
BCC	Kingsweston transit site	20	2000
	South Liberty Lane site, Bristol	12	2006
NS	Willowmead, Weston-super-Mare	10	1962 (upgrade 1998)
	Box Bush Lane, Weston	2	1997
	Clevedon Road, Falland	2	1995 (2000)
SG	Highwood Park, Patchway	17 (50)	1980 (1994)
	Northwood Park, Winterbourne South	17 (51)	1992
Total		107	

Source: Official returns

5.2.2 South Gloucestershire provides large pitches on its public sites (each pitch is stated to have a caravan capacity of three, compared with the usual two), and is refurbishing its provision after receipt of a substantial Government grant. An additional four pitches are planned for Highwood Park. If three caravans per pitch are a feasible number, the official bi-annual counts suggest either a significant under-count or under-occupation at the date of the survey.

Plate 13: Large pitch on public site in South Gloucestershire



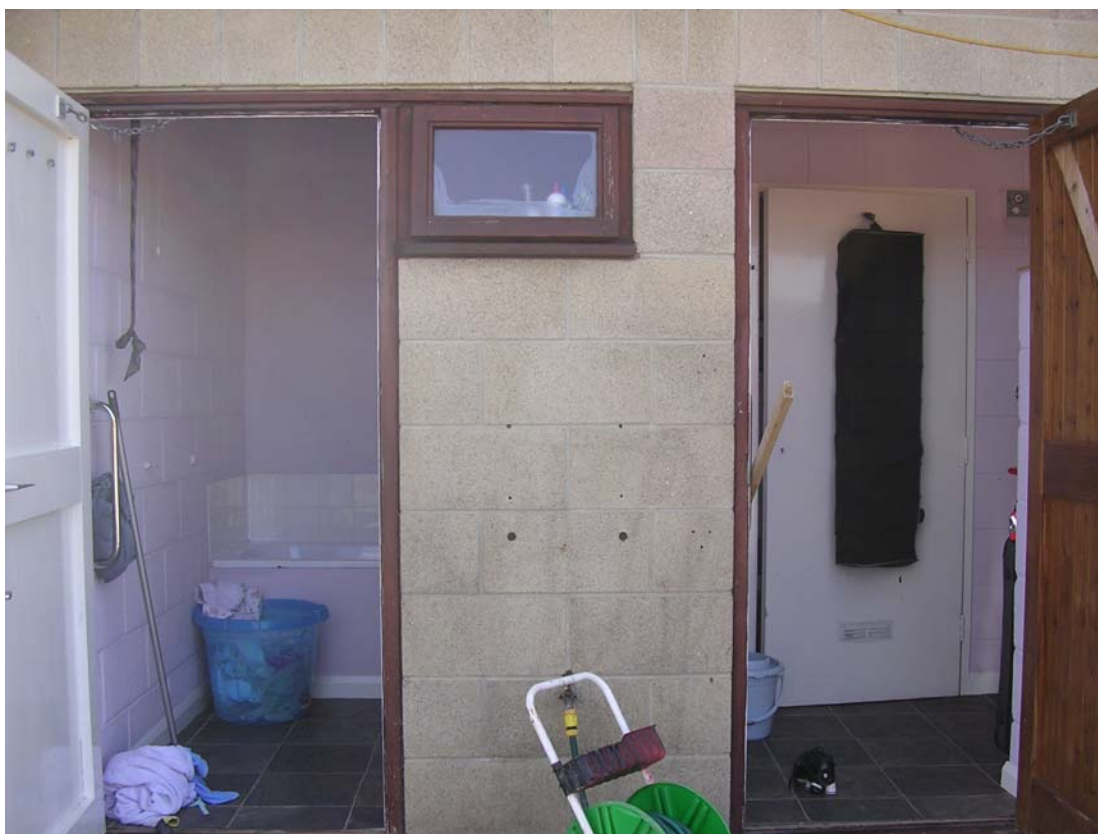
5.3 Waiting List Data

5.3.1 Waiting lists for council sites are sometimes used as an indicator of need, but in our experience these are not reliable, and may contribute to double-counting between authorities. Turnover of pitches anyway is low with Bristol

City reporting an expected vacancy rate of perhaps two pitches between 2006 and 2011 and South Gloucestershire averaging 7% turnover across both sites. When assessing 'need' in the study area, and after discussions with the client local authorities, based upon the best knowledge of their Gypsy and Traveller teams, we have included a percentage of applicants for pitches in Bristol. Bristol City keep extensive records on local connections of waiting list applicants and in any event, the Gypsy and Traveller team are aware of the needs of relatives of site residents already living at South Liberty Lane site.

- 5.3.2 North Somerset keeps no waiting list and advises us that most families are aware that it is not worth applying for a pitch as they are so rarely available. They state that there are no vacancies on public sites in a usual year. We understand that perhaps twelve families are on an 'unofficial' waiting list for pitches at Willowmead which is a privately owned site providing some accommodation on behalf of the local authority. We are advised that planning application has been approved subject to signing of a S106 agreement for a further twelve pitches at this site (included in North Somerset Needs Assessment). It is expected that these pitches (or a proportion of them) will become tenanted through public site allocation processes.

Plate 14: Utility buildings (soon to be upgraded) on a public site in South Gloucestershire



- 5.3.3 South Gloucestershire holds information from 'normal housing applications for pitches', and states that all unauthorised encampment residents are asked if they are seeking accommodation in the area. If they are, they are advised to complete a waiting list form. Families who do complete the forms are fairly few and this is indicative of low need for permanent accommodation amongst

those involved in unauthorised encampments in South Gloucestershire. At present we are advised that approximately seven families (both on waiting lists and who have presented as homeless) are awaiting a pitch. Data provided by South Gloucestershire shows that Highwood Park has one vacancy per year, Northwood Park four to five per year, and a rate of 7% per annum turnover on pitches is claimed. Several pitches on these sites are currently vacant and have been for several weeks although it is unclear if this implies that vacancies exist at the two public sites, or that refurbishments are required to those pitches before they can be re-let.

5.3.4 For Bristol City, South Liberty Lane was occupied in July 2006, and has a waiting list of (at present) twelve families, not all of whom have local connections and some of whom can be assumed (based on their geographical location) to be applying for pitches elsewhere. No waiting list is kept for St Anthony's Park (it being a transit site). Bristol City analysed the 40 applications for South Liberty Lane, and found 14 with health problems (two of them in housing), and 13 in receipt of benefits, indicating that these applicants would be unlikely to be able to self-provide accommodation even if able to obtain planning permission. Economic and health profiles of applicants for social accommodation is unavailable within the other authorities but is likely to be similar, demonstrating an on-going need for public site provision.

5.3.5 We feel that it is important to emphasise that waiting lists should be retained across the authority (with information sharing of this information between authorities where permitted under the Data Protection Acts). Gypsies and Travellers should be actively encouraged to place their names on such a list (even where public provision is not yet available, for example Bath and North East Somerset). Clear record keeping will both ensure that families are not duplicated as being 'in need' across the study area, and moreover that local authorities who retain appropriate records are not required to provide additional pitches which may potentially be required in authorities other than their own. We understand that in some authorities separate records are kept of 'homelessness' applications and waiting lists for Gypsy and Traveller sites and would recommend that a single list is retained which combines this data (as is undertaken in South Gloucestershire). Appropriate mapping of the needs of these populations (which will be assisted by the inclusion of Gypsy/Traveller as a Census category from 2011) will be critically important in refreshing future GTAA's and ensuring equality of opportunity to other services.

RECOMMENDATION

- (5) That all local authorities retain and regularly update their waiting lists for public provision. That a consistent West of England wide policy is adopted to ensure that families are entered onto a waiting list and that information sharing of waiting list data occurs between authorities subject to Data Protection Act requirements.**

5.4 Condition of Sites

- 5.4.1 Bristol City's public site is modern and in good condition. All of South Gloucestershire's public provision is undergoing refurbishment to bring sites up to modern standards. North Somerset plans to refurbish two of its sites (thirteen out of fifteen caravan capacity). No local authority sites have closed in the last five years. Satisfaction with site provision is discussed in Chapter 8 (Accommodation Preferences) and some further qualitative information may be found within the focus group data in Appendix C.

Plate 15: Private site in North Somerset



5.5 Private authorised sites

- 5.5.1 The number of such sites (mostly owner-occupied, with planning permissions granted on appeal) has grown in England, from 14% to 25% of total officially counted caravan numbers in 25 years. Private sites often accommodate small groups (for example, single or extended families). Gypsies have gradually, and only reluctantly, been accorded special policy consideration in the planning system, with most local plans now having specific criterion-based planning policies for them. Research by Williams (1999) found that councils approve as few as 5% of planning applications for private Gypsy sites, with about 30-35% subsequently succeeding on appeal.

Table 26: Private authorised Gypsy sites in West of England (2006)

UA	Number of Private Sites
B&NES	0
BCC	0
NS	5
SG	22

Source: LA data

5.5.2 As can be seen, in the study area there are no such sites in Bristol City or Bath and North East Somerset, but North Somerset and South Gloucestershire have significant numbers, accounting for over 40% of their caravan totals. Most of the South Gloucestershire and North Somerset sites are small or single-family sites. A high percentage of private sites within the study area have been granted on appeal. And the West of England local authority baseline survey recorded the following cases in the past five years:

Table 27: Private authorised Gypsy site applications/appeals in West of England (2001-6)

UA	B&NES	BCC	NS	SG
Applications	2	0	5	20
Successful	0	0	1	9
Appeals	2	0	4	7
Legal challenge	2	0	0	2

Source: LA data

Plate 16: Private site



5.5.3 Residents of private sites are generally happy with their accommodation (see Chapter 8), particularly when the site is self-owned. This form of tenure remains the favoured option for the majority of respondents as discussed in Chapter 8 (Accommodation Preferences), however the problem of obtaining

planning permission in the study area was the source of considerable concern to interviewees. At the time of writing, we were advised of several appeals against refusal of planning permission occurring in both of the local authorities which include private sites. Where appropriate (for example, where permission is being recommended by officers and a good likelihood exists that this will be granted other than on appeal) projected pitch numbers are included in the authority assessment tables (Chapter 4 and Appendix B).

6. UNAUTHORISED DEVELOPMENTS AND ENCAMPMENTS

6.1 Homelessness

6.1.1 Housing legislation defines the occupier of a caravan (or 'moveable structure') as legally homeless if there is nowhere that he or she can legally place it and reside in it, yet local authorities are not obliged to make equivalent accommodation available. According to the DCLG homelessness code of guidance Gypsies/Travellers should be considered on the same basis as any other applicant, and can be offered 'some other suitable form of housing', while recognising that they may not want conventional housing.

6.1.2 Statistics of homelessness applications do not differentiate Gypsy/Traveller applicants from others, and few seem to apply to the service. Where this does take place, it is regarded very much as a 'last resort'. As our survey data shows (Chapter 15), families who do contact homelessness services express dissatisfaction with the service offered and lack of awareness about their specific needs.

6.2 Evidence from official caravan counts

6.2.1 Unauthorised caravans in England now number about 2,500, about a quarter of six-monthly count totals. The official counts now distinguish between:

- Unauthorised developments of caravans on Gypsy-owned land without planning permission, which is often subject to local authority enforcement action (although some sites are 'tolerated'); and
- 'Unauthorised encampments' of caravans on highway or other land. These may be subject to police action under the 1994 Act, council action through highway powers, or civil action, and are overwhelmingly of short duration (one week or less) because of these powers. Bi-annual caravan counts generally undercount roadside caravans (which have marked seasonal peaks) resulting both from the problems associated with 'snap-shot' methodologies and access to (or poor recording) of such encampments. New Travellers are more likely to be on unauthorised encampments rather than having their own land and until 2006, this 'type' of Traveller was often not recorded on official 'caravan count' returns anyway. In the West of England study area only one New Traveller we interviewed was accommodated at an authorised site.

6.2.2 Longitudinal analysis of the official count data for the study areas is provided at Chapter 10.

Plate 17: Unauthorised development



6.2.3 In the study area caravans on unauthorised sites (both unauthorised encampments and unauthorised developments) comprise over a third of total caravan numbers from official counts with a particular concentration in South Gloucestershire. Undertaking a time-sequence analysis (local authority provided longitudinal data and DCLG returns), shows that South Gloucestershire has the most unauthorised developments (Gypsy-owned land) averaging fourteen sites, and four unauthorised encampments. Bristol City has no unauthorised developments, reflecting the shortage of suitable land, but fourteen caravans on unauthorised encampments calculated as a mean of unauthorised encampment records. Bath and North East Somerset has families on two unauthorised developments but an average of eleven unauthorised caravans (albeit datasets excluded New Travellers until relatively recently and errors in their returns to the DCLG (leading to an undercount) were reported by Bath and North East Somerset in 2006²⁶. DCLG and local authority baselines figures (analysed below) show that North Somerset has an average of eight caravans on unauthorised developments but no unauthorised encampments.

²⁶ Bath and North East Somerset advise that the July 2006 figure for unauthorised encampments currently published by CLG is in error and they have requested a correction. Incorporating that correction the last five Caravan Counts are shown above in respect of unauthorised encampments.

Table 28: Caravans on unauthorised Gypsy site developments in West of England study area 1996-2006

	Jul 01	Jan 02	Jul 02	Jan 03	Jul 03	Jan 04	Jul 04	Jan 05	Jul 05	Jan 06
B&NES				0	0	0	10	7	6	11
BCC	12	2	7	8	30	5	3	23	3	14
NS	N/K	N/K	N/K	4	24	11	18	20	20	20
SG				36	73	54	63	38	70	45

Source: LA baseline data

Table 29: Caravans on Unauthorised encampments (2005-2007)

	B&NES	BCC	NS	SG	All
January 2007	35	0	0	13	48
July 2006	0	3	17	45	65
January 06	0	24	0	18	32
July 2005	0	3	0	31	34
January 2005	0	23	0	4	27

Source: CLG Caravan Count

Plate 18: Roadside Unauthorised Encampment



6.2.4 Bi-annual count figures do not include Show People, and do not reliably include New Travellers who were not required to be included in counts until 2006. Although this data set has significant limitations (most particularly because it includes data gathered on only two dates in the year) it is used as a proxy in the absence of better information.

6.2.5 Additional to the count figures, all study area authorities have records for unauthorised encampments, often going back over some years (see below), the main occurrences of such encampments are in the summer months (April to October). The data quality is patchy (for example, length of stay and category of occupiers is not comprehensively recorded), but it is as comprehensive a record as is available, in the absence of separate police records. The reasons for fluctuations in numbers of encampments between years (ranging from 15 in 2003 to 48 in 2001) are assumed to relate to increased planning permissions elsewhere.

6.3 Transit sites

6.3.1 Even if every Gypsy/Traveller family in the country had their own long-stay or 'settled' base, there would still be a need for transit sites for those who are travelling, particularly in the summer months from April to October. If sites existed, police could refer unauthorised encampments to them, minimising disruption to both travelling families and local residents. Caravan count statistics for England show that authorities with transit provision have a lower incidence of unauthorised encampment and this is borne out by evidence from Bristol City in changes in unauthorised encampments since the provision of a transit site. There is, however, little consensus on how transit sites should be provided and what facilities offered. They can be particularly difficult to manage, a point acknowledged by respondents to our survey (Chapter 11) who were often reluctant to use such facilities.

Plates 19 and 20: Private land under development as site (includes planned transit area) in South Gloucestershire



6.3.2 In the study area the only council transit provision is at the St Anthony's Park Transit Gypsy Site at Avonmouth. We are advised that a planning application is being made for a private site in South Gloucestershire which would include

ten transit pitches and that another site within that authority (currently no restrictions on caravan numbers at that particular location due to its particular historical status) is used on occasion as a transit site.

6.3.3 The Bristol site is allocated as a 'site for Gypsy & Other Travelling People' in Policy H12 of the Proposed Alterations to the Bristol Local Plan on land previously identified for South West extension to the Avonmouth sewage treatment works. Wessex Water objected to this policy designation in 2003 (environmental constraints on the extension). The permission for the transit site states: 'The applicant will be required to reassess the suitability of the continued use of the land as a transit gypsy and caravan facility should a planning application be submitted by Wessex Water to expand the Avonmouth Sewage Works to the south of their site'. New considerations are the location of the transit site within the flood plain and Air Quality Management Areas. A replacement site is, therefore, desirable, as a study-wide shortage of transit accommodation adds to unauthorised encampment.

6.3.4 Bristol City Council was specifically referred to in the 'Final Regulatory Impact Assessment' of the proposed change to the definition of the term 'gypsies and travellers' for purposes of the Housing Act 2004 (published in January 2007 by DCLG). That report stated (para. 40) that:

'Bristol City Council estimated that it spent around £200,000 per annum in evicting Gypsies and Travellers from unauthorised sites, but following the provision of a transit site in the area this reduced to an average of around £5,000 per year. The transit site cost around £425,000 to build. As such, with a saving of over £190,000 per year in eviction costs, the cost of developing the transit site has already paid for itself.'

6.3.5 An assessment of transit pitch requirement is provided in Chapter 4. Across the study area we calculate that approximately 60 households/families, travelling with 100 caravans are included in the majority of unauthorised encampments. As we are advised that many families in the study area are actually 'in transit' rather than homeless and seeking residential accommodation we would propose that the client authorities consider making provision of emergency stopping places with facilities suitable for short stays. In addition to the transit provision referred to above, St Anthony's Park transit site (BCC) has an overspill area which has a capacity of up to 20 caravans (operating in the summer months only).

7. GYPSIES IN HOUSING

7.1 Accessing Housed Gypsies

- 7.1.1 Official statistics are lacking on this group of Gypsies/Travellers. RSLs do not generally identify the proportion of their tenants who are Gypsies/Travellers, whether such tenants would prefer to reside on a caravan site (if such were available), and the support needed for newly-housed Gypsies/Travellers to maintain a tenancy. Housing strategies do not generally mention Gypsies and Travellers in housing, and there is little published information on movement into (and out of) housing. Part of the brief for this research study consisted of asking whether Gypsies and Travellers had experience of homelessness services (see Chapter 15) and their support needs. We note good practice in South Gloucestershire where the Traveller Unit liaises with tenancy support units and are aware that Bristol City Council Gypsy and Traveller Unit officers are also active in retaining contact with and providing support to newly housed Gypsies and Travellers who are known to their service.
- 7.1.2 As noted elsewhere in this report, although we have interviewed twenty four housed respondents (two Showmen, six 'other', ten Romany Gypsies, one New Traveller and five Irish Travellers) across all authorities, we believe that further work should be undertaken with this specific group to explore their accommodation preferences in more depth. The focus group data (Appendix C) sheds further light on the experiences of families in housing.
- 7.1.3 Bristol is the most likely to authority to experience a surge in demand for house to site transfer if pitches become available; there is need for further work to engage with both recently housed families and those who have been in 'bricks and mortar' for longer periods of time. Members of the research team (ongoing research Greenfields and Smith) are aware that for many housed families, isolation and depression are significant problems, as are difficulties in budgeting and dealing with paperwork associated with residence in conventional accommodation. Particularly worryingly, experiences of racist abuse and discrimination from neighbours are relatively common with many respondents believing that it is not worth reporting such as incidents '*as they [public agencies/police] won't do anything anyway*' (see further Chapter 16).
- 7.1.3 ODPM/DCLG guidance recommends that GTAAs should include estimates of the number of households in site accommodation expressing a desire to live in housing, and those in housing but with a need for site accommodation. Niner's 2003 study assumed that, of Gypsies in housing, 1 to 5% wanted a pitch rather than a house, but there is (as yet) little published evidence to support the application of this figure, with surveys often reporting far higher proportions of respondents recording a desire to live on a site.
- 7.1.4 The 2007 benchmarking study found on this issue that:
'Ignoring net movement between sites and houses risks ignoring a major element in pitch requirements in some places and thus under-estimating need. However, there may also be areas where the net flow of movement might be towards houses in which case ignoring it could

lead to an over-estimate. The consensus in GTAAs so far is that net movement will be to sites.'

- 7.1.5 The report went on to say that: 'If the issue is not dealt with at all (in GTAAs) it might be fair to regard resulting pitch requirements as likely to be an under-estimate.' Accordingly we have applied 5% transfer where no better information is available (for example, waiting list information from housed families where pitch availability may exist in a foreseeable time period). In Bristol City and South Gloucestershire where data exists on need from those families in housing (and where this varies from the Niner 5%) we have consulted with the client authorities and applied such a figure in our calculations. Bristol City, for example, report that they have a significant population of housed Irish Travellers (information supported by TES data). Although few interviews were undertaken with that group during the study period (in part due to local circumstances then existing), we are aware that the Bristol City Gypsy Team are developing enhanced links with the housed community which it is believed will prove beneficial to expanding the local authority knowledge base on the needs of this group. South Gloucestershire (see above) reports that they retain close links with newly housed families and indicated that marriages between Gypsies/Travellers and 'non ethnic' partners frequently result in transfer into housing, with tenancies remaining relatively stable.
- 7.1.6 Research (Davies, 1987) found that approximately 20% of Traveller families in housed accommodation were unable to settle and soon returned to their traditional way of life, and other reports have put the tenancy failure rate as high as 50%, but in recent years, with the increased restrictions on travelling since the 1994 Act, returning to travelling may simply not be a practical option.
- 7.1.7 Best value thinking suggests that, if someone is accommodated in public housing who would prefer to be in a caravan, transfer into caravans would be a potential saving of public funds (a council caravan pitch has been estimated to cost half or less that of a council house), but our research elsewhere suggests that housed Gypsies/Travellers would only move out of housing if appropriate sites and support mechanisms were available. Calculation of likely house to pitch transfer for young people (future population growth) may prove particularly problematic, as we found elsewhere that young Romanies and Travellers who had predominantly grown up in housing and only had limited experience of 'site life' expressed a desire to live on a site, but in practice were unsure of whether such accommodation would prove suitable.
- 7.1.8 Our survey in the West of England found that nineteen respondents (79% of housed respondents) had lived on sites in the past, with the majority having made a transfer into housing in the previous few years. Of these, eleven (58% of those who had lived in caravans) did not want to transfer back from housing onto a site: *'I like living in my house now'; 'only if it was a private site and only with my family around'*. All four respondents of Gypsy/Traveller heritage who had never lived in caravans reported an interest in transferring onto a site. Further work would be required to work with such families if successful transfers were to be made.

7.1.9 In addition to the twenty-four housed Gypsies/Travellers our survey located, the West of England baseline study (2006) provided some information on this aspect. South Gloucestershire recorded fifteen Gypsy/Traveller households registered for housing (we are advised that this figure is currently ‘around seven’). Households presenting as homeless in 2004/2005 were three each in South Gloucestershire and North Somerset (unknown in the other two councils). Three of the councils (Bristol City, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire) estimated that they had 10 to 100 Gypsy/Traveller households in social rented housing, but no more accurate figures are presently available. We have undertaken an estimate of housed families at Part 2 above and triangulated this against TES data and other sources (see Appendix D) to estimate the housed population of the study area. In the baseline survey South Gloucestershire reported an increase in the numbers moving into social rented housing and we would posit that this either reflects concerns over condition on sites (in the light of a relatively high turnover of pitches in that authority) or continued intermarriage with settled (in some cases non-Gypsy/Traveller) individuals.

7.1.10 We estimate that approximately 160 Gypsy and Travellers families live in the study area, with the overwhelming majority (perhaps 50%) resident in Bristol City. Our survey will therefore have reached approximately 20% of the estimated housed population. Table 30 presents the proportion of interviewees to estimated housed population. Percentages are rounded.

Table 30: Interviews undertaken by UA as percentage of estimated housed Gypsy/Traveller population

UA	B&NES	BCC	NS	SG	TOTAL
Estimated Population	3	86	35	38	162 (100%)
Interviews undertaken	1 (33%)	10 (12%) ²⁷	6 (17%)	7 (18%)	24

7.2 Tenure of Accommodation

7.2.1 Of the twenty-four households interviewed, seven were owner-occupiers of houses (including both Showmen). Unusually in our experience, no owner-occupiers occupied bungalows which are often the favoured accommodation for Gypsies/Travellers. Four respondents lived in local authority flats (all single person households); two were in privately rented housing; one in a housing association property (RSL), and the remaining respondents were all resident in local authority housing.

²⁷ Interviews were undertaken with two Showmen families in BCC. Removing these households from the equation equates to 10% of housed Gypsy/Traveller families interviewed within that authority.

Tables 31: Duration of Residence

Duration of Residence/ Accommodation Type	<1 month	1-6 months	7-12 months	1-5 yrs	5 yrs+
Owner-occupied				2	5
Private Rented		1		1	
RSL/LA (house)	1	1	2	4	3
LA (flat)			1	2	1
TOTAL	1	2	3	9	9

7.2.2 Interviewers in owner-occupied tenure (perhaps unsurprisingly) had lived in conventional accommodation for longer periods than other respondents, as it is unlikely that an individual would move directly into housing and purchase a property without considering if it was suitable for their lifestyle. The sample consists of relatively long-term settled Gypsies/Travellers, with only three individuals reporting that they had not lived in housing at any point in their lives prior to their current residence.

7.3 Satisfaction with Accommodation

7.3.1 Satisfaction levels with accommodation were relatively high with eleven out of twenty-four respondents (46%) reporting that they had moved from a caravan to a house and *'liked living in a house'*. These eleven respondents were resident in all forms of tenure including flats and of all ethnicities/'types' of Gypsy/Traveller.

7.3.2 Typical comments associated with satisfaction were as follows: *'I like the neighbourhood and near family and friends'; 'More privacy – in caravans you have no privacy. Easily go away – lock the door and go. Reliable post/mail – it's secure'* (respondent who had lived on UEs); *'because it is a place to live with my kids'* (previously on UEs); *'because I like my comforts and I wouldn't like to live on a site with strangers'*. Access to services was particularly appreciated by families who had been insecurely sited in the past: *'It is warm, got loads of space and it's a quiet area and my children's school is just down the road'*

7.3.3 Four other respondents whilst indicating their general satisfaction with their property were more ambivalent about the benefits of residence in housing and regretted the loss of their former lifestyles: *'I like my house but if it would be safe to travel in the summer and spend winter in the house [would prefer to live there]'; 'Having the services and Drs near by. Good, but my children are not learning about their culture properly'. 'Well I am satisfied, but I don't really like living in a house. I don't like the location where I am'*.

7.3.4 Four of the remaining thirteen respondents stated that the question was not applicable to them as they *'needed somewhere bigger'* or *'had family reasons – so no choice'* other than to live in housing.

7.3.5 Nine others respondents (38%) said that they were either 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied' living in housing. Reasons given for dissatisfaction included living in unsafe neighbourhoods and experiences of racist abuse from neighbours

(see further Chapter 16) *'Cannot bring my children up safely, segregated by other people on the estate, vandalism and violence and drugs are a large problem on the estate where I live'* unhappiness over the condition of socially rented properties *'it's draughty and the bathroom is damp'* and regulations which impact on how they are used to living (for example, no caravans, no pets) which have negative consequences for continuation of cultural behaviours: *'I have problems with the neighbours and I would like to keep animals [can't under terms of tenancy]'; 'I want somewhere to keep my trailer – and a sunny garden to sit in'.*

- 7.3.6 Duration of residence in housing did not appear to impact on satisfaction or dissatisfaction levels of respondents although it was of concern that five people who reported being 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied' with their accommodation had lived in 'bricks and mortar' for more than one year, and four had been living in housing for over five years. Thirteen respondents reported that their current accommodation was 'better' than where they had lived before.
- 7.3.7 Whilst the greatest degree of unhappiness was expressed by residents of social housing, three owner-occupiers (including a Show family) also reported that they were unhappy in housing *'We are worried that when we leave to travel with our business, the property is left to the mercy of the world, as various things happen'*. Varying degrees of harassment of housed Gypsies/Travellers/Showmen are reported by respondents in all forms of housing tenure and in all unauthorised encampments. A correlation appears to occur between satisfaction levels of housed respondents and their geographical closeness to relatives, friends and other Gypsy/Travellers, even when (ten cases) respondents stated that they would not move back onto a site.
- 7.3.8 In total, nineteen respondents had lived on sites in the past. Two respondents had moved into housing after being displaced from unauthorised developments which failed to obtain planning permission and two had been resident on unauthorised encampments immediately prior to being housed. Two Showmen had lived at their own Yards (housing built on their own land after gaining planning permission) and a total of five individuals had rented pitches on private sites, leaving either because of 'personal reasons', 'poor conditions' or 'site closed down'. The remaining respondents had either lived on local authority sites (*'too crowded needed somewhere bigger for the children'*) or had previously rented housing before moving into their current accommodation. The remaining five respondents had lived their entire lives in housing albeit with time periods spent travelling with relatives.

7.4 Size of Accommodation

- 7.4.1 Seventeen respondents (all tenures) reported that they felt their home 'was about right' in terms of size (household sizes 1 to 7+ with a mean in the range of 4 to 6 people) whilst seven people, four living in RSL/LA accommodation (three in flats) and three owner-occupiers reported being over-crowded or feeling that they did not have enough space (household size: 1 to 7+ with a

mean of 4 to 6 persons). Five of these respondents reported that they had inadequate bedrooms for their families and two that there was not enough outside or 'living' space.

7.5 Ability to keep caravans/living vehicles

7.5.1 A number of respondents in public housing reported that '*I'd like to keep my trailer here*', noting the impact on their traditional lifestyle of having moved into housing. Restrictions on storage of caravans in the curtilage of housing (particularly for those living in flats) led for some respondents to a sense of frustration and dislocation from their culture '*You can't just get up and go*'. Of the sixteen respondents who reported that they were '*not allowed*' to keep a trailer at their current home, four (25%) stated that they stored a caravan elsewhere – in some cases referring to the expense and difficulty of so doing. Amongst individuals who could retain caravans/living vehicles (eight cases) two (25%) reported not possessing a caravan. One of these respondents was an owner-occupier who was '*very satisfied*' with their accommodation, and the other (formerly resident on an unauthorised encampment and now in local authority housing) was '*very dissatisfied*' citing loneliness, isolation and '*feeling trapped*' in their house.

7.5.2 Accommodation preferences and former place of residence of housed respondents are considered elsewhere in this report (aggregated with data from all respondents). Housed respondents were predominantly resident in an authority where they had close family connections and had lived for some considerable period of time.

7.6 Likes and Dislikes about living in Housing

7.6.1 In addition to be asking about general satisfaction with their accommodation, respondents were asked what was 'good' about living in housing and what was 'bad'. Examples of responses are given below.

Table 32: Positive and negative aspects of living in housing

Positive Aspects of Living in Housing	Negative Aspects of Living in Housing
<p><i>'Running water, flushing toilet, central heating'</i> <i>'lots of comfort'</i> <i>'plenty of space'</i> <i>'Electric, bath, amenities, close to shops'</i> <i>'in the winter it is warm and you don't have to go out in the wind and rain much'</i></p>	<p><i>'No privacy, neighbour politics, brick dust,, feeling like we are not going anywhere'</i> <i>'horrible noisy neighbours'</i> <i>'drugs and problems on the estates'</i> <i>'I am not living amongst my people – they are all Gorgas around me'</i> <i>'Everything – I'm not living how I was brung up'</i> <i>'Feel trapped. I like open space, I get itchy feet would like to shift in a trailer'</i> <i>'You has to leave your family'</i> <i>'Can't go travelling'</i></p>

7.6.2 Overall, in common with other GTAA's and emerging findings from work in progress (Greenfields and Smith, 2007) we would recommend that future work with Gypsies and Travellers in housing (particularly those who are newly

accommodated) explores ways of ensuring that not only practical support (for example, form filling, etc) is provided but that tenants do not become isolated from their wider communities, with negative impacts on social networks and mental health (see Chapter 13).

RECOMMENDATION

(6) That tenancy support is put in place for Gypsies and Travellers in housing, in particular when they are newly accommodated. The development of peer mentoring networks linking longer-term housed Gypsies and Travellers may assist with the transition into 'bricks and mortar' and provide mutual support networks which combat isolation.

- 7.6.3 Examples of good practice in working with housed Gypsies and Travellers include social groups aimed at newly housed women such as those run by Friends, Families and Travellers in Brighton where women engage in developing literacy skills alongside healthy cooking and first aid lessons; and the Gypsy-run youth and community groups underway in Sittingbourne and Canterbury which attract adults of both genders (and all ages) who congregate and re-establish social networks whilst teenagers attend a youth club.
- 7.6.4 Some forum members who worked on this study (and focus group participants) expressed an interest in developing further community networking groups, commenting on the positive aspects of meeting other Gypsies/Travellers in a similar situation to themselves. Developing community projects and groups of this type would mitigate the impacts of social exclusion and isolation for housed individuals (particularly those in single-person households) and potentially assist in retention of tenancies for people in need of peer-mentoring and support. It would be helpful if Forum members could work with relevant local and health authorities to explore ways of facilitating these groups.

PART FIVE

8. ACCOMMODATION PREFERENCES

8.1 Collating data on needs and preference

- 8.1.1 Local accommodation assessments usually attempt to differentiate between 'need' and 'aspiration'. District/authority or 'bottom-up' assessments in particular tend to focus more on Gypsies and Travellers 'residing in' rather than 'resorting to' an area. In the study area, restrictive Green Belt policies have largely constrained the numbers of Travellers resorting to the area, minimised the possibility of obtaining planning permission for a private site, and potentially created 'massing' of sites as an artefact of planning policies rather than reflective of the desires of local Gypsy and Traveller residents.
- 8.1.2 In order for future accommodation provision to be acceptable (and effectively utilised), it is important that in terms of design, tenure and broad location it meets the identified needs of local Gypsies and Travellers. One element of the study brief was to explore the accommodation aspirations of survey respondents and so far as possible ascertain whether or not they could afford to self-provide private sites if planning permission was granted.
- 8.1.3 Accordingly, within the survey questionnaire, questions were asked pertaining to accommodation needs and aspirations, in particular desire for (and likely use of) both permanent and transit accommodation, and what sort of sites would prove most appropriate for the respondent and their family. Use of transit provision (and respondents' attitudes to appropriate locations for such provision) is considered elsewhere in this report (Chapter 11).
- 8.1.4 Focus group data on accommodation aspiration (both findings from the 'new' focus groups undertaken for this study and presented at Appendix C) and the North Somerset focus group in January 2006 demonstrated an ambivalent attitude towards the ability (or willingness) of local authorities to assist with planning applications, even when the individual council was regarded in a broadly positive light with regard to relationships with Gypsies and Travellers. The 2006 North Somerset focus group recorded that *'you show an interest in our needs, and try to help where possible'; 'you are low key and let us get on with our lives'; 'You respect us and our way of life'*, yet equally, (new data from GTAA focus groups) a certain cynicism exists amongst residents of all authority areas pertaining to planning matters *'it's difficult to go to another area to try to get a base to be able to stop, so we thought when that piece of land came up for sale it was an ideal situation to be close to the one that was already authorised. I said I didn't think I would have so many problems trying to get another piece of ground right next to it passed by the planning'* (North Somerset focus group). *'What I'd like to point to the council is, if they got planning permission for the Travellers who have got the money to buy their own property it will save the council a lot more money from building these Travelling sites in the long run'* (Bristol City focus group). In South Gloucestershire, the authority with the largest number of pitches (both private and public as well as on unauthorised developments), respondents were particularly aware of the pressure on land use and the restrictions which existed as a result of Green Belt and other policies *'if we had a little bit of land*

- *it's so hard to get it passed, the government don't want it passed*'.

Participants in that focus group were also keen to discuss the expense of land in areas which were likely to be passed for planning permission – noting that the restrictive policies increased the expense of purchase of suitable sites *'Even for people buying their own place you have to have funds for it, a lot of people can't afford it'* (South Gloucester focus group).

Plate 21: Private site in South Gloucestershire



8.1.5 Within the 2006 North Somerset focus group, the unanimous accommodation preference was for self-owned sites, with emergency stopping places and transit sites the least important. Many participants at that event stated that they wanted to be allowed to have a campfire on site (precluded at the majority of public sites), as this was part of their cultural heritage and provided, a place to socialise with each other, a focal point for their community. The theme of loss of heritage practices and restrictions brought about by both residence on public sites and restrictive planning policies were echoed again and again in survey and focus group data amongst both housed and sited respondents: *'if we're having a wedding, Travellers come from all over Britain, they come but they can't because they can't stay as we have nowhere to put them.....you can't say come to my bit of ground [planning restrictions]*. *'It's very hard these days to go travelling – you need a place to go. Can't stay at the side of the road like years ago, its all changed*'. *'It's not possible to go travelling now – so we stay at home*'.

8.1.6 In the following tables housed and sited respondents preferences are aggregated. Data pertaining to the needs and preferences of Showmen are

considered elsewhere (Part 2), in particular their need for large sites with storage space for equipment and year round licenses. Attitudes to transit provision (all groups, including Showmen) are discussed at Chapter 11, which lays out preferences for transit site/stopping place location and information on likely use of such facilities).

8.2 Previous Residence prior to place of interview/duration of residence at current location

8.2.1 Table 33 below presents information on respondents' location prior to residence in their current accommodation. As can be seen, many Gypsies and Travellers interviewed for this study exhibit strong local connections, with the majority having resided at their present location for a considerable period of time. Duration of residence at sites (other than unauthorised encampments or developments where external factors often lead to 'moving on') is relatively long, indicating low turn-over both of sale/rental pitches and increased pressure on household to leave the locality on marriage, to 'suppress' households through doubling up, to move into housing (as did a number of respondents) to the survey or to move to an unauthorised encampment or development.

Table 33: Duration of residence at present location, by UA area

Current UA in which resident		B&NES	BCC	NS	SG	
Duration of residence at current location	< 1wk	1 wk-1 mnth	1-6 mnths	7-12 mnths	1-5 yrs	5 yrs +
	5 (SG)	4 (SG)	15 (SG)	4 (SG)	64 (SG)	27 (SG)
	3 (NS)	2 (BCC)	10 (B&NES)	4 (BCC)	13 (NS)	9 (BCC)
		2 (B&NES)	3 (BCC)	2 (B&NES)	4 (BCC)	7 (NS)
		1 (NS)	1 (NS)		6 (B&NES)	1(B&NES)
Duration of residence at previous location (if at current location < 1 yr)	< 1 wk	< 1 mnth	1-6 mnths	7-12 mnths	U/K or N/R	
	14	14	8	7	13	

8.2.2 We explored respondents' previous place of residence if they had been living at their current location/accommodation for less than one year. Although a relatively high rate of local connections/travel can be seen within the sample, 31% of respondents who had resided at their current location for less than one year had come from locations outside of the study area, albeit that Devon, Mendips and Wales (all within reasonably easy travel) were the former locations at which six (12%) of this sample had previously lived.

Table 34: Location/UA resided in prior to current accommodation (respondents at current site/house < 1 yr) [52 cases]

B&NES	BCC	NS	SG	N/R	Non- West of England
1	11	4	5	15	16

8.2.3 The other, non West-of-England locations were: ‘all over’ - four; Wales - four; Berkshire - two; Devon, London, Newcastle, Mendip, Brighton, and Guildford (one mention each).

8.2.4 On asking respondents ‘why’ they had left their former location (if resident at current site/house for less than one year, the following pattern emerges.

- **Resident at current location less than a month:** evictions - sixteen; ‘felt like a change’ - two; ‘other’ (unspecified) - three; family reasons - four.
- **Resident at current location 1 to 6 months:** ‘felt like a change’ – one; ‘other’ (unspecified) - three; family reasons - two; evicted - two.
- **Resident at location 7 to 12 months:** ‘other’ (unspecified) - three; family reasons - two, ‘bad conditions on private site’ - one; ‘evicted’ - three.

8.2.5 A pattern emerges whereby respondents who are more likely to establish a secure base (access to public or private pitch/visiting relatives, etc) may have left their former location following crisis, for example, ‘eviction’ but they are then reasonably likely to obtain (relatively) stable accommodation. The higher proportion of respondents reporting that they left their former location because of eviction are living at unauthorised encampments (see Table 35 below) and have lived at their current site for shorter periods of time, thus being ‘churned’ repeatedly, often between authorities or within the same authority. The majority of such respondents are New Travellers but a small number of Travellers of Irish Heritage and Romany Gypsies are included in these figures.

8.2.6 If we remove both respondents who are resident in housing and Showmen (considered elsewhere) from this equation. We can see that respondents who have moved to their current site most recently are of the following ethnicities and resident at the following types of accommodation provision:

Table 35: Current site type (by ethnicity) duration of residence < 1 year

	UE	UD	Public site	Private site (with PP)
IHT	3	2	11 (1 =transit)	-
RG	6	1	3	2
NT	14	-	-	-
‘Other’	2	-	-	-

Key: HT – Irish Heritage Traveller; RG - Romany Gypsy; NT – New Traveller

8.2.7 Irish Travellers are most likely of any recently accommodated group to have moved into publicly provided sites in the previous year. Although we do not

have information on current allocation procedures on public sites we would suggest that this pattern is reflective of Travellers of Irish Heritage's greater 'need' in terms of factors which facilitate access to public provision, for example, lack of availability of private provision (planning permission and financial aspects) or other alternative accommodation (potentially less relatives on privately owned sites who may be able to accommodate households on a temporary basis), higher number of dependent children and/or greater health problems.

8.2.8 New Travellers are disproportionately represented on unauthorised encampments and this relates to their (usual) inability/unwillingness to access public site provision. One (self-identified) New Traveller in North Somerset was accommodated on a public site, but in that case the individual in question was related to other site residents through 'ethnic' Gypsy/Traveller ancestry. New Travellers (see 8.3.3) are often reluctant to consider residence on public sites, even if they were eligible for provision. Many respondents to the survey who were of that community were single people (although some had dependent children and/or partners) and thus unlikely to be 'high priority' to be offered accommodation on public sites unless they had significant health problems. Even then several New Travellers reported that they felt they would be '*uncomfortable*' or '*not welcome*' if they were to live amongst 'ethnic' Gypsies and Travellers.

8.2.9 Housed respondents who report that they have been resident at their current accommodation for less than one year all reported moving into housing for 'family/personal reasons' (in some cases connected with poor health).

8.3 Accommodation Preferences

8.3.1. The data shown in Table 36 below has been included in the calculations for pitch requirements by authority. Respondents were asked what sort of accommodation they felt would be suitable for them and their relatives who either wished to live with them or seek their own accommodation (for example, suppressed households, family members expected to join the household).

8.3.2 The questionnaire asked respondents to rank their answers from 1 to 3 in order of preference. To some extent responses to this question are 'aspirational' and may not be reflective of actual ability to (for example) self-fund a site, but data is reflective of the extent of need/aspiration for owner-occupation which could potentially be addressed if innovative approaches to 'choice' became available to Gypsies and Travellers in a manner familiar to housed individuals (for example, part-rent/part-buy pitches provided by RSLs; easier availability of flexible mortgages, etc).

Table 36: Preference for family/household accommodation (respondents living on sites)

	Public Site	Self-owned site with PP	Self-owned site (no PP)	Private rented site	UE	Transit	House	Other
First Choice (4/164 n/r)	43	101	-	6	2	3	-	2 (Green Lanes)
Second Choice (50/164 n/r)	14	42	-	38	10	3	4	3 (Green Lane)
Third Choice (63/164 nr)	26	3	-	46	10	5	4	4 (Green Lanes or Stopping Places)
Assumed preference – other household members seeking accommodation/joining respondent								
First	10	38	-	1	1	-	-	1
Second	8	12	-	1	14	2	-	-
Third	9	3	-	3	9	6	3	1

8.3.3 An overwhelming preference can be seen for self-owned private sites. Perhaps more interesting is the general resistance to moving into housing (as first choice of accommodation) with families who realistically state that public site provision is most appropriate for them (often because they do not appear to have the resources to purchase land) ranking private rented pitches followed by self-owned sites above conventional 'bricks and mortar accommodation'. No respondents reported that they would select residence on an unauthorised development as their first choice, indicating a clear awareness of the expense, stress and difficulty inherent in obtaining planning permission. A core of New Travellers reiterated that residence on an unauthorised encampment (or 'other' generally traditional stopping place/field or Green Lane) was their preferred form of accommodation. Housing was regarded as a 'fall-back' choice compared to site accommodation by **all** respondents, and although four out of eight respondents stated that they would prefer a bungalow, (preferably owner-occupied) if unable to access a site; the remainder indicated that they would consider LA/RSL housing. In all cases housing was selected as a second or third choice of accommodation indicating little appetite for transfer into such properties.

8.3.4 Assumed preferences of household members seeking their own accommodation were broadly compatible with those of the respondent. The peak in suggested residence on unauthorised encampments and also transit provision (after owner-occupied and rented pitches) is somewhat surprisingly equally divided between Romany Gypsies, Showmen and 'others' as well as some New Travellers who reported that they would have friends or family members coming to live with them at sites in the near future – in a number of cases only remaining resident for a few months at a time before moving on

elsewhere. We would tentatively suggest that where respondents are clear that their relatives are in imminent need of accommodation/formation of their own households, preferences are ranked to demonstrate that if the persons involved are unable to access an authorised site, they would be prepared to live at an unauthorised encampment rather than move into housing.

Table 37: Preference for family/household accommodation (respondents living in housing)

	Public Site	Self-owned site with PP	Private rented site	UE	Owner - occupied House/Bungalow	LA/RS L House	Transit	Private rented house/bungalow
First Choice (2/24 n/r)	2	12	1	1	5	1	-	-
Second Choice (12/24 n/r)	1	1	1	-	5	3	1	-
Third Choice (13/24 nr)	3	-	1	-	-	3	1 (other)	3
Assumed preference – other household members seeking accommodation/joining respondent								
First	3	4	1	-	7	-	-	-
Second	2	1	-	-	5	2	-	-
Third	2	-	-	1	-	2	1 + (other)	-

8.3.5 Housed respondents again showed a clear preference for residence on self-owned sites, although five out of seven owner-occupiers in the survey were resident in their preferred type of accommodation. As with the site tenants, a pragmatism exists in terms of affordability/practicality of obtaining a self-owned site with respondents switching their ranking from private/self-owned site provision to owned and then rented housing. The only category of any group of respondents where we see a higher preference ranking for housing than sites is in assumed preferences for household members seeking their own accommodation. These housing preferences relate predominantly to young adult children who have grown up in housing and/or elderly relatives coming to live with or near the respondent.

8.4 Affordability of Site Provision

8.4.1 Forty respondents (48% of those answered this question) reported that they would have adequate savings or money to purchase land or a home. Several of these respondents noted that they could only afford a site if they shared the cost with family members. One respondent (currently living on a family owned private site) noted that they had adequate income to buy a bungalow. A number of respondents did not answer this question. By far the largest category of respondents able to afford to self-provide a site were Showmen, an occupational group who are well organised through membership of the Showmen's Guild, used to dealing with financial and legal institutions and

often run successful businesses enabling them to fund the purchase and development of Showmen's Yards.

Table 38: Ability to afford the purchase of land (savings/earnings) to develop a Private Site

	Number of Respondents	% of sample
Showman	15/35	43%
Romany Gypsy	13/58 + 1 'depends how expensive'	24%
Irish Traveller	7/49	14%
Other	3/23	13%
New Traveller	2/22	9%

8.5 Interest in obtaining a mortgage to purchase land for a site

8.5.1 This question excited considerable interest amongst respondents of all ethnicities, albeit that several added the caveat that they would need to know they would definitely gain planning permission before taking on a mortgage. 75 respondents (25 of whom are Showmen) reported that they would self provide their own site if such an arrangement was possible. During the Forum meeting when findings of the report were discussed, interest was expressed in exploring a range of options to assist households in the self-provision of sites or other ways of extending accommodation ownership amongst Gypsies and Travellers. The methods by which RSLs assist households to make first purchases (for example, shared ownership) would in theory be adaptable to suit the needs of Gypsies and Travellers if planning, RSL and financial agencies were to work together to explore suitable options.

8.5.2 Focus groups participants (Irish Traveller women) noted that such options are already available in Ireland: *'In Ireland you go to the council and they give you a mortgage and you can buy your own place. It would be lovely if it happened here in England'*. Although we are unaware of the exact scheme referred to, given the similarities between Ireland and Britain, policy and knowledge transfer may prove a suitable mechanism for further development of such schemes here.

Table 39: individuals who would be interested in applying for a mortgage to purchase land for self-provided sites

'Type' of Gypsy/Traveller	No of respondents	Sited	Housed
RG	17 (29%)	11	6
IT	5 (10%)	5	-
Showmen	25 (71%)	25	-
NT	15 (68%)	14	1
Other	13 (59%)	7	6
Total	75 (46%)	62 (37% of sited sample)	13 (54% of housed sample)

8.5.3 As can be seen, a keen level of interest exists with regard to this option. In contrast to Showmen, relatively low levels of Romany Gypsies (and a very low percentage of Irish Travellers) felt that a mortgage on land would be viable

option for them to consider. Whilst the inability to consider this option may well be reflective of rational decision making based upon personal financial situation and employment prospects, groups of family members may potentially be in a position where such land development could be undertaken (as is already common with private sites) if flexible loan arrangements were provided. The readiness of New Travellers to consider mortgages may relate both to access to other financial resources (for example, loans from housed family members such as parents – see further Webster and Millar, 2002), greater familiarity with mortgage and banking processes or awareness that without self-provision of sites, their access to sites and continued residence at unauthorised encampments exposed to the vagaries of eviction, is unlikely to improve significantly in the near future.

Plate 22: Private site in South Gloucestershire



RECOMMENDATIONS

- (7) That innovative options are explored with RSLs/financial institutions, or through the Treasury, to consider affordable financing of self-provided Gypsy/Traveller/Showmen's sites (or part-ownership of sites/pitches) once suitable locations for sites have been identified.**
- (8) Publicity on consultations on such schemes to be developed in partnership with the local Gypsy/Traveller/Showman Forum.**

8.6 Preferred location for new accommodation

8.6.1 Respondents were asked where they would want to live. In addition to this question a number of respondents added that more sites were needed 'anywhere' (and see further discussion on transit locations). Whilst a relatively high number of respondents failed to answer this question or stated '*not applicable*'/'*where I am now*', a number of answers were given. In allocating pitch requirements to each authority we have selected the respondents' first response. Where clear indications exist that the interviewee does not wish to remain in the area stating for example, '*South Wales*', '*Spain*', their preferences have not been allocated when undertaking a calculation for future pitch requirements. Indeed, a number of such respondents are either in transit or are New Travellers who do not express a desire for a permanent pitch and simply identify an area such as 'the South West' when asked where they would prefer to live.

Plate 23: Private unauthorised development



8.6.2 Most common responses are provided below:

- Bath – 5;
- Bristol City – 6;
- Bristol Area (for example, either South Gloucestershire or Bristol City) - 6;
- North Somerset - 10 (Conglesbury – 1; Weston-Super-Mare - 2);
- South Gloucestershire – 46 (in some cases specific locations are stated, for example, Yate: - 6 mentions; Chipping Sodbury - 5; Aust - 3);

Other areas in the South West of England:

- Devon – 2;
- Somerset (Cheddar, Glastonbury, Bridgewater) – 4;
- South Wales – 4;
- South West (unspecified) - 4; and
- Swindon – 1.

8.6.3 A further twelve respondents simply stated '*anywhere we can get planning permission*' or '*any site will do*'. Allocation of these particular respondents is more difficult but where they have remained at a single location for longer than one year (for example on unauthorised developments they have been allocated to that specific authority. Where they have moved into a locality relatively recently, do not express any particular wish to remain in the location and (for example) state that their preference would be for a 'Green Lane' or unauthorised encampment we do not include them in residential pitch requirements but in transit provision calculations.

8.6.4 As more pitches become available across the South West regional area it is likely that individuals with no strong geographical connections to an area and/or no desire to remain at a particular location will be accommodated on transit pitches or access sites associated with employment opportunities (for example during the daffodil picking season in Cornwall). The situation pertaining to need for such groups and individuals will, however, need to be kept under review.

9. OVERCROWDING

9.1 Definition problems for Gypsies/Travellers/Showmen

9.1.1. While we are not aware of an official definition of over-crowding where the unit of accommodation is a caravan, the 1965 Gypsy census study equated a caravan to a room, and estimated that 65% of Gypsies were living in overcrowded conditions with more than two people per caravan (compared with less than 3% of the settled population in the 1961 census). Overcrowding may also be measured by 'doubling-up', where more than one family is sharing a pitch. Caravans may vary in size (and legally since the 1968 Act be up to 1,200 square feet for a twin-unit mobile home), and have more than one room, which would reduce overcrowding, but our survey did not measure the dimensions of individual caravans.

9.1.2 We consider (see under Accommodation Assessment, Chapter 4 above) that an overlap may occur between newly forming (or suppressed) household and those who are overcrowded. With an average household size of 3.9 individuals, overcrowding is not extreme in many cases. Respondents were asked if they considered that they had enough, not enough or more space than required in their current home. In total 64 respondents (53% of those asked this question) reported that they did not have enough space. Showmen were most likely to report that they did not have adequate room (generally referring to outside storage space but in some cases, lack of room in accommodation) followed by New Travellers resident in single caravan/living vehicle units who tended to feel that the few tolerated encampments in Bath and North East Somerset were overcrowded and dangerous.

Plates 24 and 25: Unauthorised encampments in Bath and North East Somerset



9.1.3 Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers (nine cases each) and 'other' families were more likely to refer to lack of 'internal' space, particularly when they had large numbers of dependent children (in some cases more than seven). Account has been taken of overcrowding (identified within the survey and triangulated against household size, type of accommodation and numbers of caravans/vehicles if resident on a site) in the formula applied when calculating pitch requirements at study area and authority level.

PART SIX

10. TRAVELLING PATTERNS

10.1 Evidence from official caravan counts

10.1.1 As we have noted elsewhere, on a national basis these datasets have limitations pertaining to both time frame and methods of undertaking counts. They have also (on both a national and local basis) been subjected to criticism for under-counting Gypsies and Travellers in a given area on 'count days'. In order to most effectively utilise the time of busy Gypsy and Traveller Teams who are often over-stretched on the bi-annual count dates, especially if they have large geographical areas to cover, we make the following proposal which we consider has the benefit of utilising skills developed during the GTAA process and increasing partnership working/agreement between Gypsy and Traveller community members and local authorities:

RECOMMENDATION

(9) That trained community interviewers/Forum members who have engaged in the GTAA are employed to undertake the bi-annual caravan count in the study area on behalf of (and supervised by) authority officers.

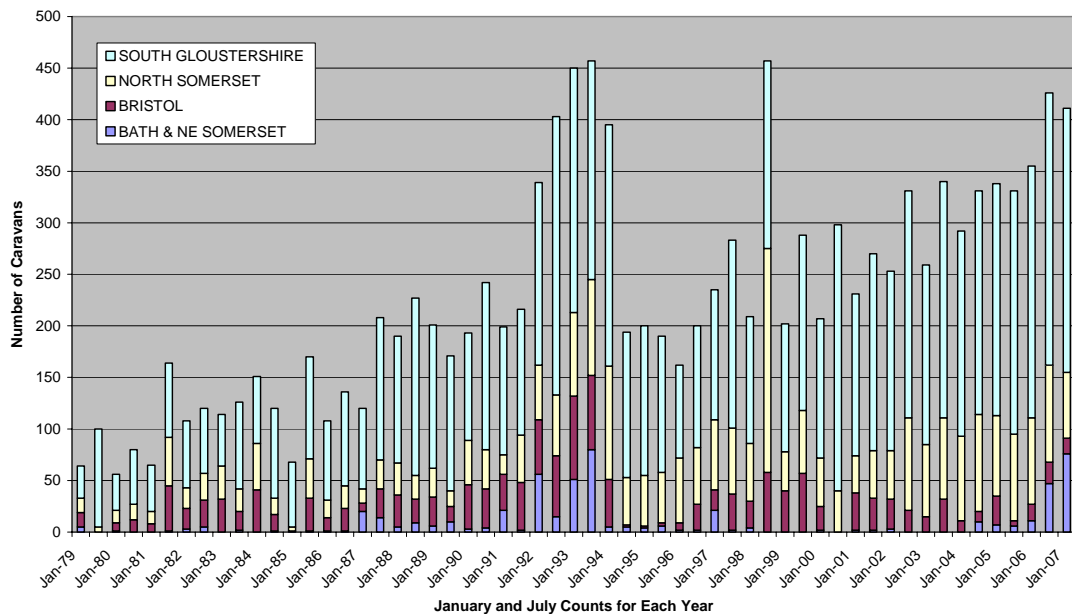
10.1.2 Official six-monthly counts distinguish three site categories (council or public authorised, private authorised, and unauthorised, the latter subdivided), and Figures 5 to 9 (below) present six-monthly caravan count data for the period since 1979, providing valuable evidence on long-term trends. The base data is not regarded as consistently accurate, and has been cross-checked for the purposes of the accommodation assessment. The figures show some striking variations, with total numbers generally below 200 until 1993 (and occasionally as low as 50). In July 1992, a time of severe economic recession, the numbers suddenly jumped to nearly 350 (which we believe was reflective in part, of individuals seeking employment in areas other than where they resided). The counts (both January and July) have exceeded 250 for a total of 21 counts, only falling below 200 for 10 counts. The highest increases were experienced in South Gloucestershire, followed by North Somerset. If the numbers are disaggregated by site type, we see an increase in private authorised caravans (reflecting the increased provision through planning permissions granted since the mid-1990s), and increased numbers of unauthorised caravans (both unauthorised developments and encampments).

10.1.3 We examined the extent of summer travelling, and present the official count variations between January and July each year in Table 40 and Figures 7 to 9. The year 1994 (when the CJPOA was passed) had a marked effect, with 50 fewer caravans in July than January (probably reflecting less travelling that year), but in ten of the last eleven years the July figures have exceeded the January by ten caravans or more over the whole study area, a significant difference from previous years. These reveal that on average over the past 27 years there were 40 more caravans present in the study area in July than January. This represented 19% more caravans (compared with variations in

Dorset of 35% and the Cambridge sub-region of 9%). This we interpret as supporting a requirement for more transit accommodation (see 4.4).

10.1.4 The highest district figures for July/January variations were overwhelmingly in South Gloucestershire, with Bath and North East Somerset usually demonstrating a low variation (indicative of a largely 'stable' New Traveller population resident in the area), and Bristol City and North Somerset showing the greatest swings. For example, during the period of writing (just prior to the July 2007 count data) North Somerset experienced a large number of caravans at unauthorised encampments en route to a cultural gathering. If such groups appear relatively regularly, to some extent this may explain caravan peaks as they transit through the study area and relatives join them at various locations to travel together. In contrast, Bristol City is constrained by its small land area, mostly developed, creating limited opportunities for July encampments to show significant increases over January.

Figure 5: Total caravan numbers, January and July each year, 1979-2007 by West of England authorities



Source: Derived from official counts

10.1.4 Figures 6 to 8 break these January/July variations down by site type, and show (as expected) that unauthorised encampments were the main contributor to increase (again suggesting demand for transit accommodation and/or stopping places). Pre-1994, however, private authorised sites contributed more to July increases over January, which suggests to us that formerly such sites were willing to accept extra caravans or short term visitors in the summer, but after the CJPOA were less willing to do so (perhaps because of fears of planning enforcement action). Caravan numbers on council sites have tended to fall in July over January because residents still tend to go away travelling, (often once school holidays have begun) returning later in the summer, but keep their pitches (which therefore remain vacant).

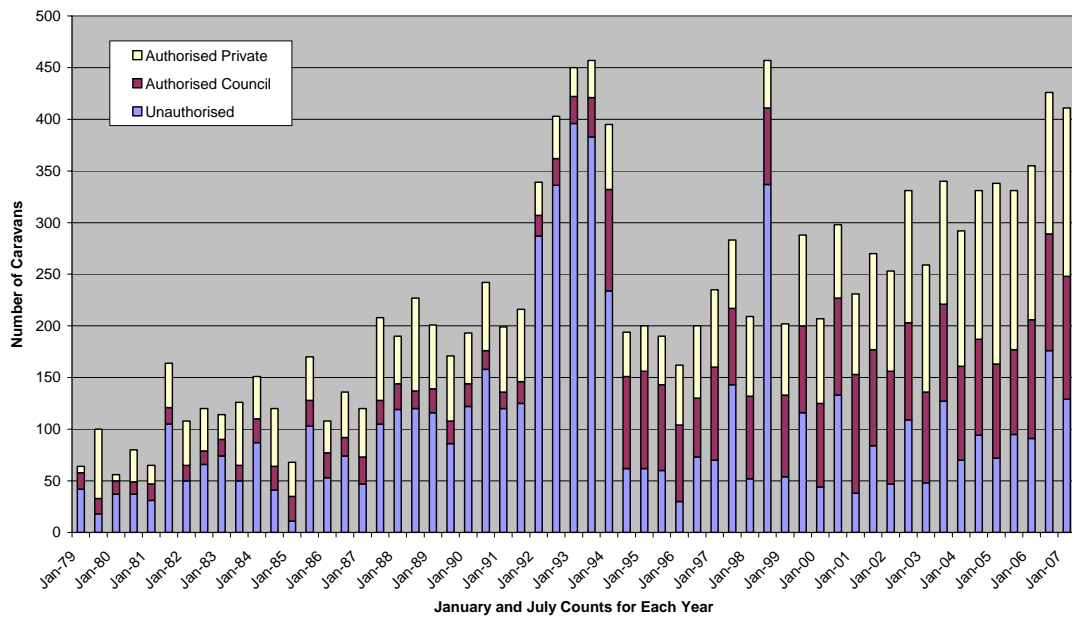
Table 40: Change in caravan numbers in the West of England authorities between January and July each year, from 1979-2006

Changes	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06
BNES	-5	-1	1	2	2	1	0	0	-6	4	4	1	-19	-41	29	0	2	0	-19	-4	0	-2	0	-3	0	10	-1	36
BC	-14	4	36	6	-14	-25	32	9	20	-8	-13	-5	11	6	-9	-44	1	18	15	32	17	-23	-5	-8	17	-1	-23	5
NS	-9	3	35	6	-10	-29	34	5	14	-8	-13	-5	27	6	12	-64	0	-8	-4	161	23	-7	10	43	9	12	6	10
SG	64	18	27	-2	34	22	36	14	60	49	-8	58	-2	93	-25	-93	-13	28	56	59	46	123	34	46	55	18	11	20
Average	9	6	25	3	3	-8	26	7	22	9	-8	12	4	16	2	-50	-3	10	12	62	22	23	10	20	20	10	-2	18

Source: Derived from official counts

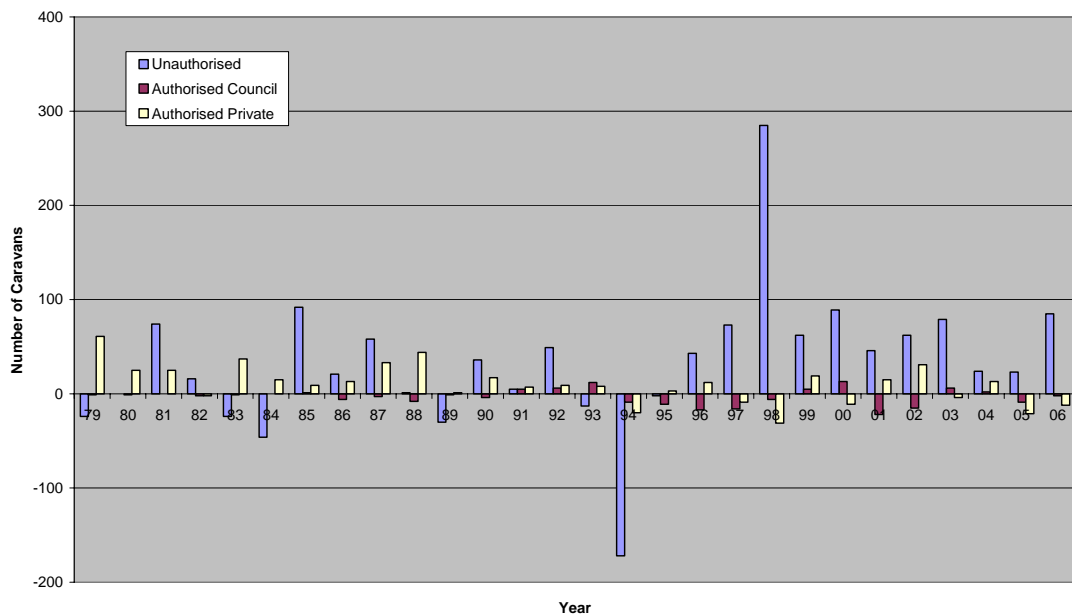
Note: Changes of 10 or more caravans are shown in **bold (increase)** or *italic (decrease)*. Averages are rounded the nearest whole number.

Figure 6: Caravan numbers by type of site, 1979-2007, West of England authorities



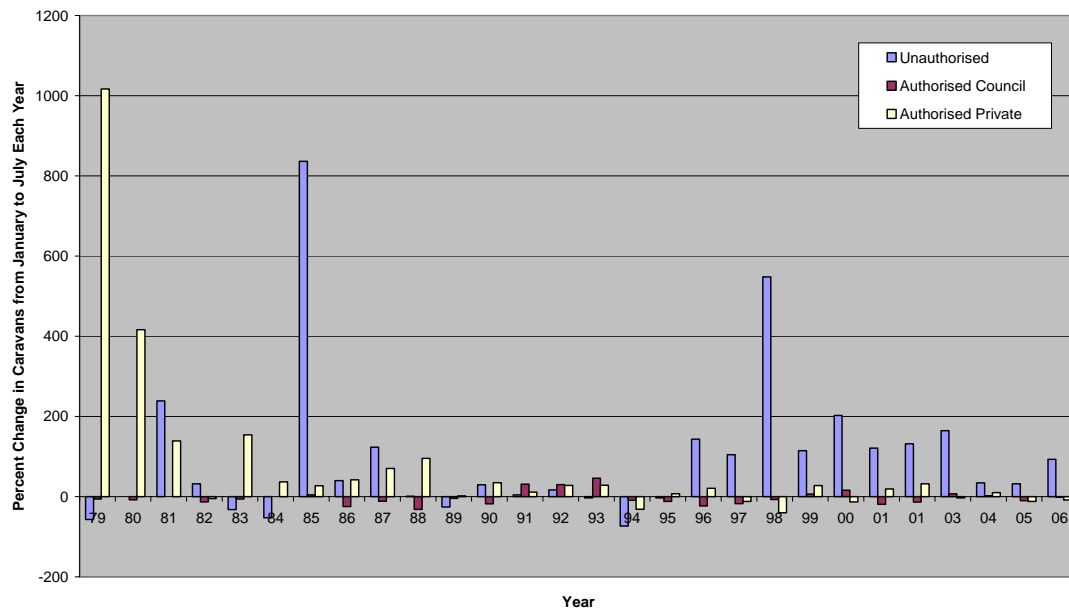
Source: Derived from official counts

Figure 7: January/July fluctuations in caravan numbers by type of site, West of England authorities 1979-2006



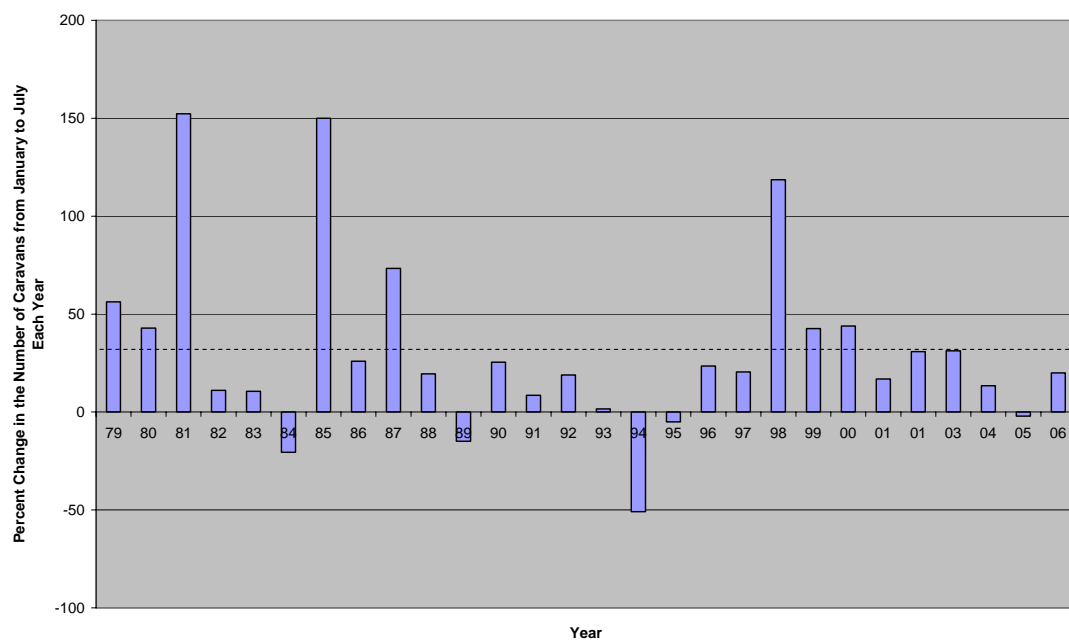
Source: Derived from official counts

Figure 8: Percentage variation in caravan numbers January/July by type of site, West of England authorities, 1979-2006



Source: Derived from official counts

Figure 9: January/July fluctuation in total caravan numbers, West of England authorities, 1979-2006



Source: Derived from official counts

Note: Overall average change (+31%) in caravans, shown by dotted line

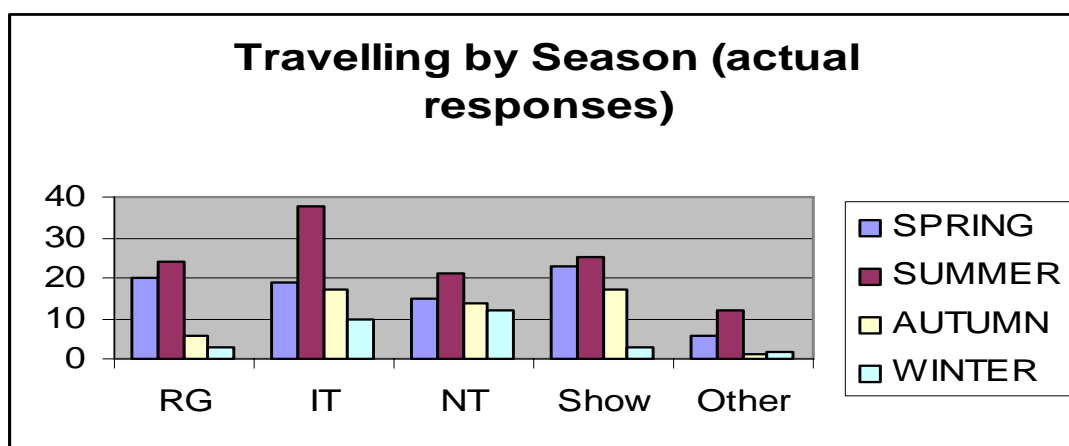
10.2 Geographical travel patterns

10.2.1 Our survey found it difficult to establish the likely level of need of Gypsies/Travellers 'resorting to' rather than 'residing in' the study area, in part as a consequence of limited transit provision in the West of England.

However, different authorities retain varying levels of data which may be of assistance in assessing size of transit and permanently resident populations. South Gloucestershire, for example, states that (based upon their own assessment undertaken with every 'roadside' family reported in the authority) the overwhelming majority of individuals on unauthorised encampments in South Gloucestershire are passing through the area and have access to accommodation elsewhere. We are informed that 'roadside' families in South Gloucestershire are asked to register for a site waiting list (or may be registered as homeless and in priority need) if they require accommodation. In Bristol, families in transit are informed of the existence of St Anthony's park transit site, although (as in one encampment which took place in July 2007) the group may chose to move on (in July into North Somerset) rather than access the transit provision which is in a poor location near to a motorway and waste depot. Neither North Somerset, South Gloucestershire or Bath and North East Somerset have transit accommodation so households resorting to the area are likely to stay with family members where this is feasible, (for example, if they are resident on a private site); or pass through the locality rapidly with only a short stay in the authority. Information available to us from logs of unauthorised encampments indicate in the main that these move on extremely quickly. We are advised (survey data and focus groups) that this is a result of stringent policing and enforcement policies (or negotiations undertaken which 'encourage' unauthorised encampments to move on). However, Bath and North East Somerset does have two relatively long term, 'tolerated' unauthorised encampments of New Travellers where visitors 'resorting to' the area appear to stay.

10.2.2 Respondents in both housing and resident on sites were asked if they still travelled and if so, the seasons during which they were 'on the road'. Figure 10 illustrates the fluctuations in population movements by ethnicity and season. Spring equates to the period of 20th March to 20th June; Summer, 21st June to 22nd September; Autumn, 23rd September to 21st December and Winter, 22nd December until 20th March. Transit requirements and preferences are discussed in Chapter 11.

Figure 10: Travelling Patterns by Season and Ethnicity (Survey Data)



10.2.3 Of the overall sample (188 respondents), 69% (129) reported that they still travelled. A further 30% declined to answer the question. Whilst the figure of 129 includes a hardcore of fully nomadic travellers (including the majority of New Travellers interviewed and perhaps unsurprisingly all 34 individuals on unauthorised encampments) a further 95 respondents travel for at least part of the year. In total 83% of Showmen interviewed reported travelling for employment related purposes for some periods of the year, with those Showmen who do not travel generally being elderly, or in one or two cases remaining at home because of family responsibilities.

Plate 26: Roadside parking outside a public site in South Gloucestershire



10.2.4 As is clear from official statistics the summer months showed marked fluctuations in travelling patterns, with all groups (including New Travellers who are the most likely group to be on unauthorised encampments) more likely to be 'on the road' at that season. The increase in summer travelling is likely to relate as much to greater social and employment opportunities as to the likelihood that children will be in school during the other seasons, which may inhibit travelling for the wider family group. Irish Traveller families show the most marked increase in travelling over the summer and in part this relates to the increase in nomadism amongst housed Irish Traveller families whom we interviewed. Only two housed respondents, who were not Showmen, reported travelling during all seasons of the year and these were an Irish Traveller and New Traveller respectively. In general, across all categories of respondents (other than Showmen) who have access to stable accommodation, Irish Travellers are more likely to be nomadic for a longer

period of the year; a pattern which we have noted in other GTAAs we have undertaken. Overall, 46% of Romany Gypsies; 56% of 'other'; 91% of New Travellers and 82% of Irish Travellers reported travelling for at least some periods in the year. Those individuals least likely to travel at all are resident on local authority sites or LA/RSL housing and in general, female, aged between 26 and 59 years old. The next largest category of those who say they '*no longer travel*' is over 60 year olds and this relatively small group is two-thirds female, reflecting the generally longer lifespan of women and disproportionate number of females to males in the over 60s amongst these communities in particular due to the decreased life expectancy of Gypsy and Traveller men (Crawley, 2004).

10.2.5 Of those who do travel, six people did not reply to the question on duration of travel. Of the remainder the most popular response was: 1 to 3 months (40 cases); 3 to 6 months (35 cases); 6 months+ (30 cases including almost all roadside/UE respondents – the remaining four stating 3 to 6 months with a caveat pertaining to whether evicted or moved on). Eighteen respondents, including the majority of housed interviewees, noted that they travelled for less than one month. Those individuals in publicly provided accommodation (whether housed or sited) are likely to travel for the shortest period of time and this may relate to terms of tenancy agreements for those in housing or their ability to retain (or pay for) a pitch in their absence. Families on private authorised sites report the greatest tendency amongst those with stable accommodation to travel for longer periods of time, and to report that the entire family will travel together.

10.2.6 Respondents were asked whether they would still travel if they had a stable base whether that was in a house or on a site. To some extent this question was therefore speculative and an attempt to assess the likelihood of individuals with accommodation (as opposed to those on unauthorised encampments) continuing to need access to stopping places, or their possible use of transit sites. Overall, of the 33 people who reported that they would *not* travel if they had access to stable accommodation, only two were on unauthorised encampments, the remainder already had accommodation and in the main either reported that they did not travel or declined to answer that question. Of those who would continue to travel/did travel; reasons given are as follows: Cultural reasons (shows, horsefairs, etc) - 89 cases; Employment (24 Showmen; 24 Romanies; 22 Irish Travellers; 18 New Travellers, 10 'other's) - 100 cases; Family reasons - 87 cases; and 'other' - 17 cases, including 'to have a change of scenery'.

10.2.7 Of those individuals who responded to the question on 'who travels' by far the largest category (47 cases) reported that the entire household travelled with a further fifteen respondents referring to the fact that family members will all meet up and travel together (usually for cultural/family gatherings) '*all the family, we all meet up in the summer time. I move with my parents and husband and children*'. Four respondents noted that only a single male travelled for work related purposes and two individuals noted that they were or would be getting married and travelling with their spouse. Several respondents with older teenage/young adult children referred to their

children's autonomy in electing whether or not to travel with parents: *'now the boys are older they sometimes travel on their own or with their dad, who still travels'; 'whole household usually, but the older children choose to stay or travel separately sometimes'*. For one family in housing, their concerns over leaving their property empty (in contrast to the situation which would be found on a site where there are always family members around) leads to them travelling at different times: *'my eldest son and daughter take it in turn to stay in the house to keep it secure'*.

10.2.8 Housed respondents who did not still travel were asked if they would still like to. Of the thirteen respondents who said they would still like to travel four reported that under the terms of their tenancy they were unable to keep a caravan. Three referred to personal reasons such as health or death of a spouse which meant that they felt unable to travel and the remainder who gave explicit information on why they no longer travelled referred to the lack of safety or stopping places. *'I don't feel safe stopping on the side of the road anymore, no transit sites with facilities'; 'if I travel [I] am always moved on - problems with police'*; mirroring the comments made by some sited families who no longer travel and who referred to the fact that travelling had become more difficult since the 1994 Act. A further two housed respondents living in socially rented accommodation noted that *'I don't travel, as my house would not be secure if left'* further reinforcing the comments made by the family (above) who travel in rotation to ensure that their possessions were protected. Several Gypsies and Travellers noted wistfully that they missed being able to travel freely *'my children are at school and they [only] get to travel at school holidays - we just ride to the fairs. We would love to travel again in a caravan and stay at sites or on the roads'*.

11. PREFERRED LOCATION AND USE OF TRANSIT SITES/STOPPING PLACES

11.1 Use of Transit provision

11.1.1 Interviewees were asked whether or not they would use transit provision when travelling if it was available. Twenty-seven respondents (including four people who don't currently travel) stated that they would use temporary stopping places if they were available; in some cases with a caveat on safety or basic facilities available at those halts. A further 42 (including ten people who say they don't currently travel, and two of whom cited lack of stopping places as a reason for not doing) said that they would use transit sites if a network were available. In total, 69 people (37% of the sample) reported that they would make use of transit pitches or stopping places if they were available and/or suitable.

11.2 Location of Transit sites

11.2.1 Seventy-four respondents commented on where transit sites should be located, with some individuals giving more than one preference. Whilst the division of responses by ethnicity was fairly even, five Showmen specifically mentioned the need for transit provision in South Gloucestershire often in relationship to routes for travelling to fairs, and one wanted a transit site (which would be open to Showmen) available between Bath and Bristol. Even individuals (of all ethnicities) who no longer travel had comments to make on where transit sites should be located, in several cases referring to the needs of their relatives *'so my daughter could stop'*; *'My brothers might use one if there was one near to Bath'*. Respondents agreed that there was a general need for more transit sites, often not specifying specific locations, preferring to detail the quality of sites *'somewhere safe so we're not on a lay-by which is horrible'*; *'not under some pylon or by a works'*. Table 41 details most common answers.

11.2.2 Thirty-two respondents (44% of those who answered this question - more than one answer possible) had additional comments to make on transit sites. Of these, by far the most common categories concerned people's anxiety over using transit sites *"they are dirty and badly run"*; *"Known to be rough"*; *"that Roundway is like a refugee camp"*; *"We wouldn't use one – they are dangerous you don't know who is there"* (11) or the need for more transit sites *"they are very few and far between now"*; *"definitely need more, all over the South West"* (12 cases). Two respondents felt that transit sites could be a liability in a local area, *"get rid of them all they are nothing but trouble"*. Showmen (8 cases) reported that *"we can't use them"*; *"not for us"*; *"not suitable anyway with trying to get lorries on and off"*. Five respondents noted that difficulties can occur between occupants of different ethnicities or cultures *"massive culture clash between Romanies and them New Travellers"*; *"we don't mix"*; *"we need to keep to our own"* and of great concern in terms of Race Relations Amendment Act Duties four Irish Traveller respondents (in different locations and of differing families) noted that *"most won't let us on –*

because we're Irish"; "Irish can't use them"; "It's difficult to get on with the red tape".

Table 41: Suitable locations for transit sites (more than one response possible)

Location	Number of responses	% of respondent to this question who gave this answer
Edge of Towns "near to doctors, shops" "convenient"	30	41%
"near to motorways/main road" "main junctions would be good" "anywhere people travel to for work"	19	26%
"More needed everywhere" "should be a national network"	18	24%
"somewhere rural and quiet" "where we can be left in peace"	14	19%
"Somewhere safe" "not too near a village to avoid harassment"	12	16%
South Gloucestershire "near to Thornbury" "Kingswood"	11	15%
Bristol – "by the ring road"	11	15%
Bath/B&NES "so my daughter could stop" "by the A39"	8	11%
"Traditional stopping places" "on disused land or Green Lanes"	5	7%
Shepton Mallet; Gloucester; Glastonbury; Swindon (1 mention each)	4	5%
"they're only any good if you have somewhere else to go"; "I don't care, just need somewhere to stop that isn't on the roadside"	3	4%
"Near to council sites so family can stop to visit"	1	1%

11.2.3 Six respondents noted that they had never used transit sites and four of these stated that they would not do so *"We wouldn't use them, they're rough and dirty"*. Three individuals were concerned about management issues but felt that with firm, on-site management they would welcome the opportunity to use such facilities. A point made by two respondents was that transit sites would not solve the long term need for pitches in the study area, with one person stating *"is it fair or practical to move people on if they don't have anywhere else to go?"*.

11.2.4 Respondents living on authorised public sites (or in three cases in houses) were particularly keen to have the option of provision of a transit pitch on authorised sites, but one which would **only** be available for their family members *"Residential sites should have spaces for family but not for transit for strangers"*; *"So, a family member could pull on a pitch"*. Only one Irish Traveller respondent noted that transit pitches should be available on sites for family members and this may be reflective of the lower likelihood of Irish Travellers living on local authority sites and thus their greater flexibility over receiving visitors at private sites. Ten respondents (all Romany Gypsies) were enthusiastic about the thought of a network of transit sites (as long as they were properly run and *'clean – most transit sites don't have proper showers or enough washing facilities'*) so that it would be possible to visit relatives and stay reasonably close to their site *"if there wasn't any room on*

your pitch and you wanted family to stay for a while then temporary pitches will be good”; “it’s ideal as family like to stay with their families from time to time”.

- 11.2.5 Whilst welcoming the idea of having relatives able to visit and stay at a safe location near to their own home (“*as long as they didn’t mess it [transit site] up*”), a resounding fifteen respondents (47% of those who answered) believed that transit pitches should be kept separate from residential ones in **all** circumstances to avoid unknown people pulling onto a family site. Particular concerns were expressed over safety and security ‘*you never know who might come on*’. This finding is common to (although expressed less strongly in the study area) other GTAAs we have undertaken in the past, where respondents have reported their anxiety that paedophiles or people ‘*pretending to be Travellers to get away from the police*’ might make use of transit pitches and ‘*not be safe with the children*’ or ‘*bring trouble*’.
- 11.2.6 Finally, one New Traveller respondent presented a nuanced discussion on the costs of residential and transit pitches and noted that both are far too expensive when compared to the costs of local authority or public housing. He felt that costs of council tax/rental fees on a transit site should be proportionate to the number of residents and length of stay rather than in a ‘*flat cost bracket*’.

PART SEVEN

12. EMPLOYMENT

12.1 Employment Issues

12.1.1 Although in this survey (on the advice of the advisory forum) we did not explicitly ask about employment or family income, references to appropriate locations for sites (including transit provision) were often made in connection to employment opportunities. Whilst this is most prominent in the responses of Showmen, approximately 20% of other respondents referred to work as a reason for remaining at a particular location or moving into or from an area.

12.1.2 Based upon other GTAAs in which the team have been involved, most Gypsies/Travellers prefer self-employment, in such occupations as farm and land work (particularly New Travellers), tree-logging (both Romany and Irish Travellers), vehicle trading, tarmac, carpet-dealing (Irish Travellers) and external building work (Romany and Irish Travellers). Whilst we would recommend that additional work (perhaps through focus groups) is undertaken with local Gypsy/Traveller communities if further information is required on changing employment patterns and retraining opportunities needed (although see further under 'Education' in Chapter 14) in other locations we have found evidence that:

- a) Types of work had changed over the years, with a decline in traditional work, contributing to severe economic disadvantage and social exclusion.
- b) Retired/disabled people tend to comprise around 20 to 30% of respondents to GTAAs, unemployed/lone parents who are not economically active a further 10 to 29%, and 'home-makers' (overwhelmingly female in 'ethnic' Gypsy and Traveller communities a further 5 to 10%. New Travellers tend to include a higher percentage of lone parents than are found amongst other groups of Gypsies/Travellers (although not in the West of England study area) (see 3.3.10, 'Demographics', above).
- c) Gypsy and Traveller cultures are highly gendered with the majority of women either not economically active or working in part-time and 'family friendly'/gendered employment such as cleaning, childcare and hairdressing/beauty skills. Amongst New Travellers the pattern may vary significantly with more male carers and women undertaking a variety of work in factories, manual trades, etc.
- d) Amongst men, our recent GTAAs have found that the commonest types of work were landscaping/gardening, cleaning, and roofing/building. There is a move towards employment outside of the home amongst some women, with respondents in a variety of locations reporting that they were working in 'cleaning'; teaching assistantships and shopwork. Local considerations such as accessibility of employment, travel routes, decline or increase in field and factory work are of importance in assessing feasibility options to enhance

employment take-up amongst Gypsy/Traveller communities, as are literacy skills (see 'Education', Chapter 14).

- e) In other locations we have regularly encountered respondents who report that living on a site (coupled with low literacy levels) makes it harder to find work when this was known by potential employers. This form of discrimination is difficult to counter effectively and it may be that local authorities would seek to remind employers of their duties under the Race Relations Acts and/or to undertake an information campaign with both Gypsy/Traveller communities and employers around this issue if found to be relevant in West of England.
- f) Family networks and informal reciprocal arrangements are important for encouraging and sustaining economic activity (for example, group working on building/landscaping projects).
- g) Seasonal social security benefits are often important income sources, especially for those resident on council sites.
- h) Difficulties with the theory part of the driving test (related to low literacy levels) is affecting work prospects for younger Gypsies/Travellers (see further Chapter 14 - Education).
- i) Some respondents have reported that they are unable to obtain vehicle or other insurances (or were required to pay a higher premium) on giving their address as a 'Gypsy site'. Such difficulties affect employment prospects.
- j) Respondents have in the past reported that restrictions on what could and could not be stored at their accommodation (for example, a ban on scrap metal) affected their traditional forms of work. Whilst this is particularly acute at public sites, planning regulations may also have a negative impact on employment opportunities and it may be that further work is required with families at planning application stage to allow them to consider their storage/work requirements when designing private sites.

RECOMMENDATION

- (10) That local authorities seek to remind employers of their duties under the Race Relations Acts. If employment-related discrimination is found to exist in the West of England, that an information campaign is undertaken with Gypsy/Traveller communities and employers around legal rights and duties.**

13. HEALTH

13.1 Introduction

13.1.1 In health terms, Gypsies and Travellers are arguably the most socially excluded group in society, with health outcomes and status significantly poorer than that found in the lowest socio-economic group in the UK population (Parry et al, 2004). They have poorer health than that of their age/sex-matched comparators, and reported chest pain, respiratory problems, and arthritis were more prevalent. Exceptionally high rate of miscarriage, still-birth and perinatal death are also found amongst the community with women twenty times more likely to experience the death of a child than amongst other UK communities. A range of other research studies has found that the Gypsy and Traveller mortality rate is between one and one and a half times that of the housed population with Baker (2005) reporting an average life expectancy of fifty years of age in Leeds. A recent Irish study (Parish of the Travelling People/Crosscare, 2007) found that fifty per cent of the Traveller population died before the age of fifty. In 2001, the confidential enquiry on maternal death (NICE, 2001) noted the death rate amongst Gypsy and Traveller women was higher than for any other one ethnic group, with deaths often directly related to lack of stable sites and adequate maternal care. Travellers also exhibit high child accident rates associated with instability of sites and lack of access to health care (Beach, 1999).

Plate 27: Utility buildings on private site in South Gloucestershire



13.1.2 In the study area we found a very high rate of registration with GPs, indicating the effectiveness of health service engagement with the resident population. In total 86% of those who responded to this question (3 n/r) reported that they were registered with a local GP service. Twenty-four (13%) of those surveyed did not have a local doctor. The accommodation type and ethnicity of that sub-group is as follows:

Table 42: 'Type' of Traveller and Accommodation – respondents not registered with a local GP

Accommodation Type	Number of respondents	Ethnicity/Type of Traveller	GP elsewhere?
Transit Site	1	Irish Traveller (IT)	No
Private Site with pp	1	Showman (S)	Yes
Self owned site with PP	1	Romany Gypsy (RG)	Yes – only visiting relatives on site
Self owned site no PP	2	'Other' (O) x 1; IHT x 1	No x 2
Unauthorised Encampment	18	'O' x 2; IHT x 2; RG x 5; NT x 9	9 x n/r 2 x yes (NTs) 7 x No (2 x 'O'; 1 x IHT; 4 x NT)

13.1.3 Accommodation type is therefore the single clearest marker pertaining to likelihood of GP registration, a finding common across all areas, and noted repeatedly in the past thirty years by health staff working with Travellers (see Greenfields, 2006). Although not specified in responses to this GTAA we are aware of some localities where respondents have reported that GP surgeries will not accept them as patients if living on unauthorised encampments or at unauthorised developments. Further outreach work may be required to explore why residents of unauthorised encampments and unauthorised developments are not registered with medical practices, and consider if this is choice or results from problems in accessing services. Only one of the group without GP registration reported having a household member with poor health (asthma), stating that *'my caravan isn't really suitable for my kids with asthma because it get's damp, but it's all I've got so we've got to live with it'*. Nine of the eighteen respondents who were not registered with a GP surgery (six on unauthorised encampments in Bath and North East Somerset; one at a transit site in South Gloucestershire and one person in North Somerset) reported using local A&E/casualty facilities to access medical care. Six of these respondents of all 'types' were aware of the existence of the Travellers Health Project (see further below: 13.6).

13.2 Elderly Gypsies and Travellers

13.2.1 We consider elsewhere the age range of respondents to the survey and their household members (see 3.3.11-3.4, above). Overall, 9% of households included someone over the age of 60. The very oldest cohort members (three individuals over 75) were all members of Show families.

13.2.2 None of the elderly Showmen reported being in bad health or suffering from the range of conditions reported by the other over 60s and this may be reflective either of extremely good health and longevity or an 'interviewer effect' with respondents unwilling to acknowledge poor health to a member of their own community.

13.2.3 The remaining 60 to 75 year old age group reported a range of health conditions including five instances each of arthritis and asthma; three cases each of cardio-vascular disease and nerves; and two cases (respectively) of 'other illnesses' and diabetes. Health conditions reported by all age groups and 'types' of Traveller are detailed in Table 43 below. The health status of this age group is generally good and compares well with the wider population; a situation which is relatively uncommon and reflective of ease of access to good quality health care in the study area.

13.2.3 The monitoring of older Gypsies and Travellers for health and other support needs and culturally specific care needs potentially provides a benchmark for good practice in minority health and race relations initiatives.

RECOMMENDATION

(11) That further outreach work is undertaken with community members to ensure that health and social care services continue to be targeted appropriately as the population of elderly Gypsies and Travellers increases.

13.3 Specific health conditions

13.3.1 Parry et al (2004) and others, (see Greenfields, 2006) found the most marked inequalities were in occurrence of anxiety (or 'nerves', particularly related to accommodation), respiratory problems (asthma and bronchitis), heart disease, diabetes and arthritis. In our experience these are the most common conditions reported by Gypsies and Travellers, along with a range of disabilities (for example, epilepsy and spinal injuries/back problems). In a number of cases respondents report multiple health problems experienced by their family, or attempting to care for more than one relative with disabilities or health problems.

13.3.2 In our survey we explored whether respondents suffer from a range of health problems or have household members with disabilities. In total, 41 respondents (22%) of the overall sample reported that a household member suffered from bad health. When compared to other studies we have undertaken this appears to reflect an extremely good rate of health amongst the Gypsy/Traveller/Showman population of West of England, but against this, must be balanced the fact that 101 (54%) of respondents declined to answer this question, the lowest proportion in any area where we have undertaken a GTAA, to date. We do not attempt to present a prevalence rate for these conditions in the presence of so much missing data but provide the findings for information purposes only.

Table 43: Health conditions of household members: [41 cases]

Health Problem	Number of people in survey with health condition	Number of people accessing medical help for the condition (NB: not all respondents answered this question)
Arthritis	16	11
Asthma/Lung Problems	24	19
Diabetes	6	4
Heart Problems	6	4
Nerves/Depression	29	28
'Other' (please specify)	9	7

13.3.3 We find it noteworthy that nerves/depression are cited as the most common illness experienced by respondents, and whilst this is a theme which arises in many GTAAs, the increased rate of reporting (when compared to other conditions) is worthy of comment. Reports of asthma and lung conditions are high, as is to be expected with these populations. We consider that this high rate is likely to result from a combination of genetic pre-disposition (the condition is prevalent amongst Gypsy/Traveller communities) exacerbated by high rates of smoking amongst the Traveller population and (frequently) damp conditions in trailers, with poor quality amenity blocks and day rooms at some sites. 'Other' conditions reported included three people with spinal injuries/dependent upon wheelchairs; bowel problems; cancer; two cases of Downs Syndrome; Spina Bifida; disabilities following meningitis and two parents caring for disabled children. A higher percentage of respondents living in housing are caring for disabled relatives or people with very poor health than on sites, and this is likely to relate to the convenience of residence in a house in such circumstances but may also exacerbate tendencies to depression and anxiety (see further 13.5).

RECOMMENDATION

(12) We would suggest that further partnership work should be considered with the Travellers' Health Project and Bristol Mind (who are currently engaged in work with Gypsy/Traveller populations) to develop appropriate support services for newly housed families or those who are isolated as a result of caring responsibilities.

13.4 Disability

13.4.1 Respondents were asked whether any household members suffered from disabilities. 40 respondents reported that at least one household member had disabilities and in some cases that they were caring for more than one person. Conditions ranged from being dependent upon a wheelchair; Spina Bifida; or other forms of 'severe disability'. Eleven people told us that the disability required adaptations to be made to their home to make it suitable for their relative's needs. Of these eleven families, four reported that their home was unsuitable '*not wide enough doorframes for access [with wheelchair]*' and that this made it difficult to care for their family member. One was living on local

authority site in North Somerset, another person had moved into public housing to support their family member and found that the house was not suitably adapted '*can't manage the stairs – very very painful*' [severe spinal injury] and the two remaining respondents were living on private sites; one with planning permission and the other without.

13.4.2 In the absence of data from all respondents, the extent of disability amongst families by ethnicity is speculative, but survey responses indicate that if all individuals who have a household member with a disability have recorded this fact, that 32% of Romany families; 39% of 'others'; 14% of New Travellers; 10% of Showmen and 10% of Irish Travellers are caring for someone with a disabling condition which impacts on their day to day activities. We would note that this is a significantly higher rate than is found amongst the 'mainstream' population, particularly given the younger age range amongst the communities surveyed.

13.5 Accommodation issues and health

13.5.1 As mentioned by several respondents in our survey, and confirmed by other research, accommodation is a key factor in mitigating or exacerbating bad health. A Children's Society report (Webster, 1994) identified the impact of increased evictions, restricted access to healthcare and education, an increase in unsafe conditions on roadside sites, and a breakdown of social and community support networks on health status. It is noteworthy that of respondents reporting anxiety, depression or other mental health problems, ten were living in housing (42% of the entire housed sample), with one respondent reporting that approximately half of her household were receiving treatment for depression) and of the remaining interviewees four were living on the 'roadside' (12% of the unauthorised encampment respondents). One third of the respondents who reported a household member with depression or 'nerves', were also caring for someone with a physical disability. Half of these families (five cases) were resident in housing. (See further Focus Group data at Appendix C for qualitative discussions on the health impacts of poor quality accommodation).

13.5.2 Ill-health is exacerbated by living on road-side sites with limited access to clean water, and Gypsies/Travellers particularly suffer from disease linked to sanitation and environment. Unsited Travellers experience inequality in matters such as registering with a GP, obtaining hospital appointments and contact with health services, (Greenfields, 2006) factors highlighted by our survey data pertaining to GP registration.

13.6 Housed Gypsies

13.6.1 For Gypsy/Travellers, living in a house is often associated with long-term illness, poorer health and anxiety (see Greenfields and Smith, 2008 forthcoming; Parry et al, 2004; Power, 2004). Forty-six percent of the housed sample reported that they were unhappy living in housing with one-third saying they were 'dissatisfied or very dissatisfied'. Several people reported that they had moved into housing because of 'family reasons' and then

subsequently expanded on their answers to refer to the health of dependents or household members which had led to their choice of accommodation. A further five respondents, two in South Gloucestershire, one in Bristol and two in North Somerset reported moving into housing as a result of continued eviction and shortage of sites. One respondent (who suffers from depression) stated that moving from a site which closed into housing caused their mental health difficulties. As noted above, housed families are more likely to be caring for someone with a disability or ill health than other respondents with 50% of people who answered that question in such a situation.

13.6.2 With reference to families resident on caravan sites who are caring for disabled family members, in response to the Disability Discrimination Acts and equality of access to good and services, grants for disabled access have recently been extended to those on caravan sites and this may in future have an impact on choice of residence.

13.7 The Travellers Health Project

13.7.1 The Travellers Health Project (THP) covers the same geographic area as the four West of England local authorities. This specialist services records all health advice and assistance given to Travellers whether through site or home visits, health education session or by telephone. We are advised that the THP steering group are currently considering amending their terms of reference and may offer a different mode of service delivery to that which existed during the research period (and from which statistics are drawn). We understand that if these changes take place, it is intended that specialist services will still be delivered to Gypsies and Travellers across the study area although the service is likely to change its name and health visiting staff may operate within discrete PCTs rather than across the entire study area.

13.7.2 An estimated 15% of THP contacts take place by telephone (based on statistics from one quarter). In the first nine months of 2005/06 (April to December 2005) the THP team recorded 1,736 contacts. From this we would predict an estimated 2,300 contacts for the full year. The percentage breakdown of contacts for April to December 2005 by local authority is shown below and compared with the percentage breakdown by local authority caravans recorded in the January 2006 count. Clearly a major reason for the differences in these data sets relates to the likelihood that known clients will contact the THP several times in a recording period (particularly likely given that a relatively high percentage of roadside Travellers had not heard of the service). In addition, the THP works with a small number of housed Gypsies/Travellers and those resident on identified unauthorised sites all year round, whereas the caravan count is a 'snap shot' on two occasions in the year.

13.7.3 The higher number of Gypsies and Travellers in South Gloucestershire is largely reflected in these statistics. The fact that in Bristol City a high percentage of Gypsies and Travellers are believed to live in 'bricks and mortar' housing may account in part for the higher number of health contacts in that locality, particularly if the THP is recognised as providing support to

isolated or depressed individuals. The difference in statistics in North Somerset may be worth investigating further, and could either indicate a need for greater outreach (see recommendation 13 below) or show some of these Gypsy and Traveller households are accessing adequate health support from other sources.

Table 44: Contact between THP and Gypsies/Travellers 2005/6 showing residence of client and percentage of clients living in caravans

LA	B&NES	BCC	NS	SG
% health contacts by UA	5.0	7.5	5.3	82.2
% resident in caravans	3.1	4.5	24.9	67.4

Source: THP records 2005-2006

13.7.4 Although not directly comparable with the recorded age-ranges as found in our survey, the THP also records the age profile of the Gypsies and Travellers with whom it works. The Table below shows the percentages for new contacts during April to December 2005. Clearly this will only record those household members who have sought health assistance or advice during this period but this dataset can be interrogated further and compared with the findings from the survey to explore the age profile of the study area communities (both resident and passing through) in more depth.

Table 45: THP contacts by age-band April-December 2005

Age band	Number	%
0-4	168	25.3
5-11	112	16.9
12-15	55	8.3
Men 16-64	87	13.1
Women 16-64	236	35.6
65-74	4	0.6
Over 75	1	0.2
TOTAL	663	100

Source: THP records April-December 2005

13.7.5 Excluding the 0 to 4 age group (as we might reasonably assume a high proportion of these could be pre and ante natal care for existing residents' children) this gives 495 new contacts. This is far in excess of what we would expect from the numbers in 'snapshot' caravans counts. It would tend to suggest that there needs to be more investigation into 'hidden' Gypsy and Traveller communities (see recommendations above), for example, those in 'bricks and mortar' housing and those who travel through the area and who are not recorded in caravan counts. Alternatively, it would be helpful if (subject to Data Protection Act requirements) the information sharing model developed by the South Gloucestershire Multi-Agency Forum on Gypsy and Traveller Children is rolled out across the study area to assist in ensuring that community members are able to access appropriate services, for example, education, health and homelessness services information.

13.7.6 Whilst the expertise of the Travellers Health Project was highly praised by more than half of respondents who had had come into contact with the staff

(38 cases) only a limited number of families were aware of the service (66 respondents).

13.7.7 Typical comments on the services provided by the THP were:

- *'It is very useful if you aren't in the same location (if traveling) they can give you information on doctors surgery's etc or health needs where you are going'*
- *'very helpful indeed'*
- *'they are very good and reliable, make sure the children are up together with their jabs [inoculations]'*

13.7.8 In common with other 'trusted' services or individuals (often individual, 'named' Gypsy and Traveller officers, or health visitors/TES staff), the THP workers were perceived of as a conduit for information and referral: *'They are very helpful to Gypsies and Travelers and help lead to other services'*.

13.7.9 It would appear likely that families living on residential sites or in housing are less likely to access the Project or have knowledge of its existence, possibly as a result of their access to mainstream health services. Of more concern, given the link between poor health and high mobility/residence on unauthorised sites, ten respondents living on unauthorised encampments had not heard of the Travellers' Health Project.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (13) That outreach work is undertaken with residents of transit and longer-stay unauthorised encampments to familiarise them with the specialist health care services available through the Travellers' Health Project.**
- (14) We commend the Bristol City Council 'myth-busting' booklet as a model for providing comprehensive local information on appropriate agencies and services for Gypsies and Travellers (including those in transit). Forum members have suggested the 'myth-busting' materials should be developed further for use across all four unitary authorities with appropriate changes made to the text**
- (16) That public agencies (for example, LA/PCT) attempt to ensure that records of contacts with Gypsies and Travellers are retained in a compatible format to assist in updating of future GTAAs and other development work.**

14. EDUCATION

14.1 Introduction

- 14.1.1 Research shows that Gypsy/Traveller children are seriously and consistently disadvantaged in the education system. The Ofsted report of 1999 identified 'Gypsy/Traveller pupils as the group most at risk in the education system today', and the Parekh Report (2000) noted the 'generally low educational attainment' of Gypsy and Traveller children as 'a matter of serious concern'. In 2005, at Key Stage 2 (English and Maths), just over a quarter of Traveller of Irish Heritage pupils and around a third of Gypsy/Roma pupils achieved the expected level, compared to at least three quarters of all pupils on average (DfES statistical release, 01/03/06). At GCSE level (Key Stage 4) in 2005, 22.5% of Irish Traveller pupils and 14.7% of Gypsy/Roma pupils achieved 5+ A*-C grade GCSEs in contrast to a national average for all pupils of 54.9%. A persistent pattern of early school leaving is noted across the country, and as many as 12,000 Gypsy and Traveller children may be 'out of school' at any one time (Letter from Lord Adonis, Parliamentary Under Secretary for State of Schools to Directors of Children's Service, 16th November 2006).
- 14.1.2 In addition to these alarming statistics, "Traveller of Irish Heritage and Gypsy/Roma pupils are 2.7 and 2.6 times more likely than White British pupils to have Special Educational Needs (SEN)" (Lindsay, Pather & Strand, 2006). It has been suggested (although evidence is inconclusive) that explanatory factors for this over-representation in SEN statistics "range from factors associated with school such as negative teacher attitudes, racism and bullying, and a curriculum perceived as lacking relevance, to factors associated with Traveller cultures, such as high mobility, poor attendance and early drop out from school" (2006: 18).
- 14.1.3 In 2002/03, permanent exclusion rates among Gypsy/Roma and Traveller of Irish Heritage pupils were around four times the rate for all pupils, including Black Caribbean boys, typically recognised as the group most at risk of exclusion from education (DfES, 2006). Faced with these alarming statistics it is critically important that the survey findings pertaining to educational attainment and aspiration amongst Gypsies and Travellers in the West of England are taken into account in planning how best to engage with families to support their children in education, and maximise lifelong learning opportunities.
- 14.1.4 In total 109 respondents were willing to answer (at least some) questions on education. Forty-five respondents (38%) stated that questions pertaining to children's education weren't relevant as their children were outside of the compulsory schooling age-range or they were living in childless households. Sixty-seven respondents in South Gloucestershire (who were administered the pilot questionnaires) were not asked whether their school-age children were in education as this question was added during development of the final questionnaire. Thirteen respondents declined to answer but analysis of other data indicated that only three of these households contained school age children. In total only eleven households who have school-age children did

not indicate that those children were in school, indicating a very high degree of activity by the TES who work closely with families across the study area.

- 14.1.5 Of those children who are not in school, or who declined to answer (total of thirteen children excluding unknown number of children at an unauthorised development) three households were resident in housing (North Somerset and Bristol City), one household resident on a public site (South Gloucestershire), one family in transit (South Gloucestershire) and the remainder were resident on unauthorised encampments or in one case a unauthorised development. Of those respondents who said their children were **not** in school, only six provided an explanation: (New Traveller) explaining that they '*home educated*'; four other respondents (three Romany Gypsies, one Irish Traveller) referring to bullying as a factor which led to them removing their children from the educational system: "*Bullied at school, because he was a Gypsy - from the Gorgas*"; "*My son was bullied because he was Gypsy, so now he has a college placement*" and one transient resident responding that "*we're only here temporarily*".
- 14.1.6 A total of ten respondents noted that they had experienced difficulties in getting their children into school (two in housing, eight living on sites). A total of five of these respondents provided more information, with three referring to the difficulties they had when they wanted to take their children out of school to travel "*schools don't like if you come and go because it affects their schooling*". Three other interviewees noted that shortage of school places in their new location meant that their child had missed school initially: "*Could not get into schools – no places. I had to appeal to get them a place in a school nearly five miles away – it was that or nothing*". Two housed respondents noted that once they were settled into housing it was far easier for their children to obtain a school place, "*once we was settled down put their names on the list and that was that*". Focus group data (Appendix C) provides further discussion on both parental and children's attitudes to education and school provision. A number of focus group participants reported an ambivalent relationship with education providers (other than the TES) who were often perceived as being more welcoming to other BME communities than to Gypsies and Travellers and resistant to understanding Traveller culture.
- 14.1.7 Thirty-four respondents (ten Irish Travellers; thirteen Gypsies; one Showman; six New Travellers and four 'others') stated that they did not know about the Traveller Education Service. Of the Irish Traveller respondents, the majority were either utilising transit accommodation or on unauthorised encampments, as were the New Travellers. The Romany Gypsies were predominantly of an older age group without dependent children in accommodation of all tenures.
- 14.1.8 We asked survey respondents whether they were aware of the TES 'distance learning option' which supports children while they are travelling. Such provision can be particularly useful (and is usually well utilised by) Show families. Our survey found that twenty-nine respondents were aware of this service (fifteen Showmen; six Irish Travellers; five Romany Gypsies; and three 'other'). Only one family out of this group lived on an unauthorised encampment and most of these respondents were resident in South

Gloucestershire or Bristol City. Of the thirty-four respondents who said that they did not know about 'distance learning' whilst a proportion were older with no or grown-up children, a significant number had school-age children. Lack of knowledge about distance learning existed across all ethnicities – apart from Showmen - with particular gaps amongst New Travellers. The localities in which respondents stated they had no knowledge of the service were mainly North Somerset and Bath and North East Somerset.

RECOMMENDATION

(16) That further outreach work is undertaken (in particular to Irish and New Traveller families) and in the North Somerset and Bath and North East Somerset authority areas. Information should be disseminated to advise Gypsies/Travellers of the benefits of contact with the TES and the range of services available from ACTES.

14.1.9 Thirty two respondents (28%) of all ethnicities and on all types of site/housed accommodation were extremely positive when referring to the TES. In particular the 'play-bus' warranted several mentions as a positive resource. Other comments included: *"they were very helpful in getting my children into school"*; *"very nice, give advice on all sorts"*. Six respondents (two Romany, two Irish Travellers, one 'other' and one Showman) reported that the TES had 'not' been helpful but no further information was forthcoming in any of these cases.

14.1.10 Sixty respondents (32%) reported that education had played at least a part in their decision on where they would live. Typical comments (Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers) included: *"I travelled all my life but stopped so we could put the children into school"*; *"education is everything"*; *"I didn't have the best education, we didn't settle on a site until I was 12 and I know that to get on you have to have education"*; *"So that my children can vote and get mortgages to buy suitable land - and they won't hopefully find themselves in the same boat I am now"*. New Travellers were more likely to speak in terms of accessing home or 'alternative' education networks *"more people home educating here than in Wales"* or *"so I could be near a Steiner school."* One Showman made the point that *"local schools here understand about Showmen's needs"*.

14.1.11 Thirty-two respondents of all ethnicities/types (17%) reported that their children had experienced difficulties as school. This is a significantly lower percentage than we have found in other areas and may be reflective of the largely integrated Gypsy/Traveller community or merely lack of reporting given that over 100 respondents did not reply to this question. In part, this is reflective of the fact that the original South Gloucestershire questionnaires completed in 2006, did not include this question. The highest number of respondents who reported that their children had experienced bullying at school were (perhaps surprisingly) Showmen and those who categorised themselves as 'other' with 20% of Showmen and 43% of 'others' referring to their children being 'called names'; experiencing 'racist bullying' or "Called

Gypsy when they are not – they are Showmen". Two respondents noted that bullying became worse when children entered secondary school which may become a factor in families removing children from the education system. One child suffered a broken collar bone as a result of being 'picked on'. See further under Appendix C (focus group) data for discussions on cultural awareness within schools.

14.1.12 From the above comments it is clear that considerable work still needs to be undertaken in educational environments to provide a safe and positive situation in which Gypsy/Traveller/Showmen children can learn. Schools may need to be reminded of their duties under the Race Relations Acts and furthermore encouraged to work in partnership with parents to celebrate the diversity of cultures within their school community. Clear messages on the unacceptability of bullying need to be reinforced, and the concerns of Gypsies/Travellers and Showmen taken as seriously as would be those of other BME communities, if children experienced abuse as a result of their ethnicity.

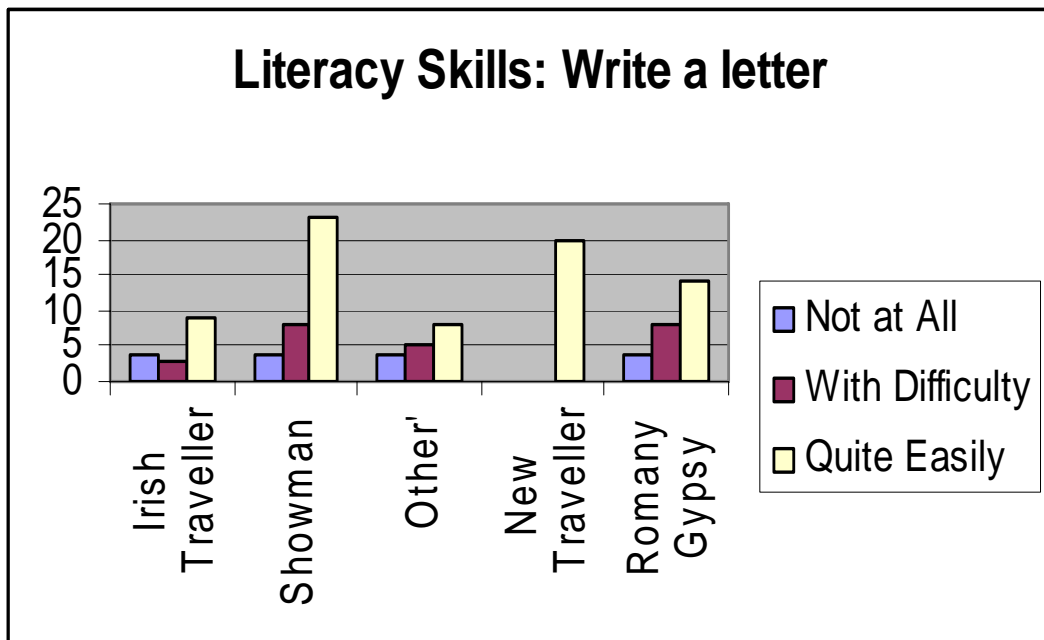
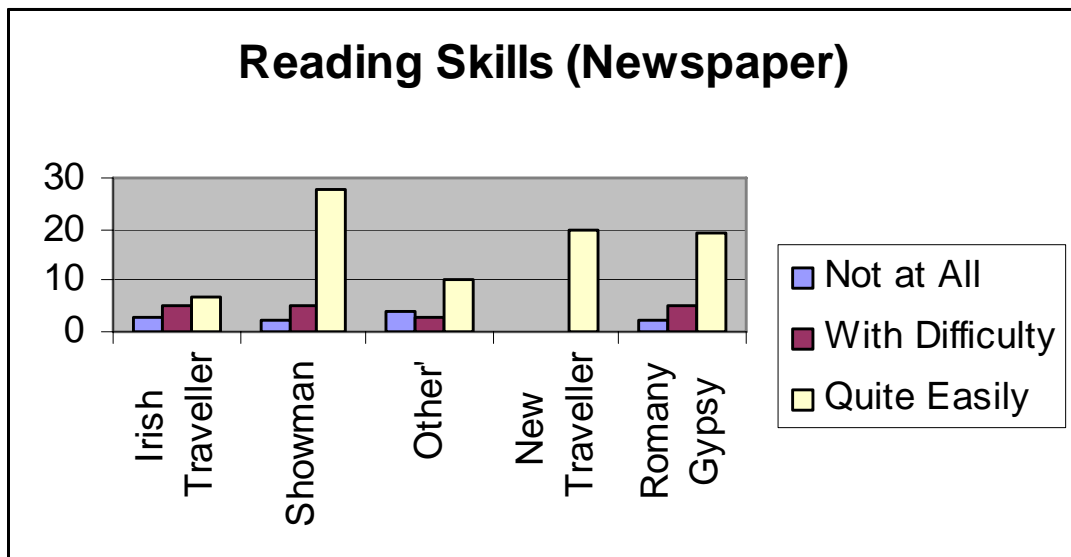
RECOMMENDATIONS

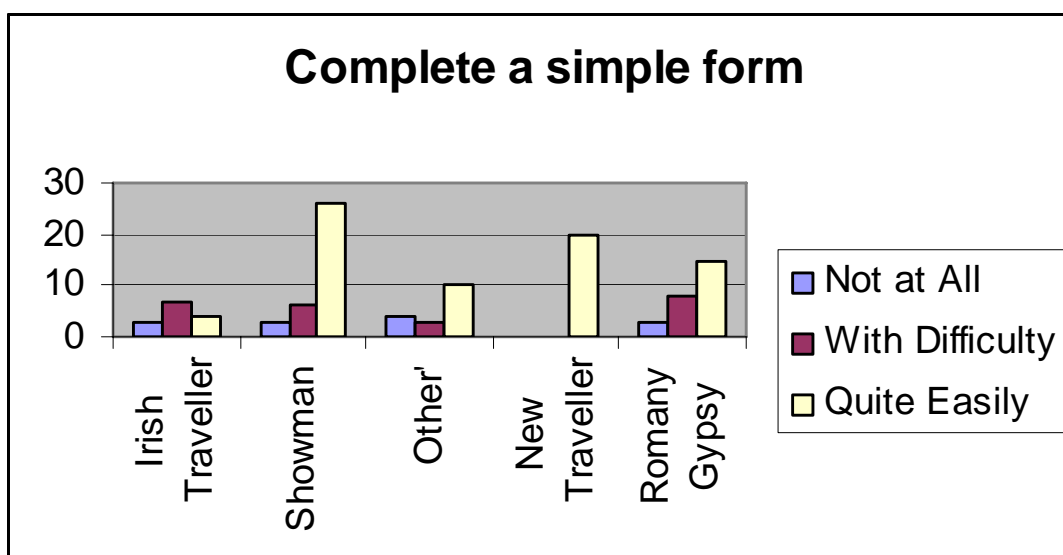
- (17) That schools initiate (in partnership with the TES and parents) a celebration of Gypsy/Traveller/Showman culture and incorporate information on these communities' history and practices into citizenship and diversity learning. We recommend use of both national and local resources such as the Avon Consortium of Traveller Education Services' (ACTES) Citizenship Pack.**
- (18) That additional work is undertaken to remind Local Education Authorities and individual schools of their Race Relations Act responsibilities towards 'ethnic' Gypsy and Traveller pupils.**
- (19) That further partnership work is initiated with Gypsy and Traveller communities and ACTES to explore educational needs and barriers to participation and encourage Gypsy and Traveller community members to work closely with schools.**
- (20) That housed Gypsies and Travellers are made aware (through a variety of media) of formal complaints procedures and processes which may assist them in dealing with incidents of racist bullying in educational establishments.**
- (21) That housed Gypsies and Travellers (who in focus groups often reported limited knowledge of TES services or that they feel sited families are prioritised due to lack of resources) are made more aware of educational options and processes available to their families (for example, appealing refusal of a school place).**

14.1.13 We were keen to explore barriers to education and learning which might face older members of the communities – or act as a disincentive or block to

supporting children to remain in education. As a crude proxy for literacy skills we asked respondents whether they were able to complete a series of literacy related tasks. Questionnaires completed in South Gloucestershire in 2006 (early phase of GTAA) do not contain these questions and are thus excluded from this analysis. The data set therefore consists of a maximum of 121 cases. The results of the responses are shown below in Figure 11.

Figure 11: Reading, Writing and Form Completion: Self Assessment of skills





14.1.14 In examining the data it is self evident that New Travellers have not experienced the long-term institutionalised educational disadvantages apparent in the responses of the other communities. No New Travellers report being unable to complete any of the three tasks. Showmen exhibit the next highest literacy skills with only three respondents (all between the ages of 26 and 59) reporting that they do not have any literacy skills.

14.1.15 Respondents were asked what were the main factors which impacted on their literacy status, and where possible, information was gathered on age at leaving school (there were only a limited number of responses to this element of the question). Preliminary analysis of data on school leaving age (for those who remained in the education system past secondary school) indicates that 14 to 15 was the peak age for leaving education for individuals aged between 26 and 59 years of age. Twenty five respondents reported that they had not gone to school or had experienced very limited or disrupted education. The age range of respondents seemed to have only minimal impact on whether or not they had attended school, with 'evictions' and 'moved' representing the largest category of reasons for limited literacy skills. This response was given by all categories (other than New Travellers), although Showmen were less likely than other groups to report eviction. Of the five respondents who cited having to work as a reason for literacy problems, four were Showmen and one was a Romany Gypsy. Two respondents referred to racist bullying as a reason for leaving school.

14.1.16 A total of sixteen respondents stated that they '*didn't get on at school*' or '*had learning problems - dyslexia*'. This group was spread across all categories with three New Travellers giving this reason. Of those people who '*didn't like school and left as soon as could*' Irish Travellers are disproportionately represented (eight cases). Showmen were the most likely to refer to **learning** what they needed 'from my family', followed by Romany Gypsies. Thirty-two respondents of all ethnicities stated that they had '*gone through school*' although as noted in a number of cases they left before the official school leaving age or pre-exams when they had turned sixteen. Showmen (half of all

Showmen interviewed), English Gypsies and New Travellers were the most likely to report having attended school until their mid/late teens.

- 14.1.17 Only eight respondents had been to college or further education and of these, five were New Travellers, two were Irish Travellers who had been settled on a long term basis on public sites, and one Romany Gypsy in housing.
- 14.1.18 We found a very high percentage of respondents had attended a training course themselves, or had a family member who had undertaken such training. This is in contrast to other areas where we have undertaken GTAAs. In total 37 respondents had household members who had received some form of training. Although all ethnicities were represented in these responses, New Travellers formed the largest single category, confirming our opinion that despite residence on unauthorised encampments, this group of Travellers are more likely to access appropriate services and have knowledge of educational and other options.
- 14.1.19 Twelve Romany Gypsies had undertaken training, mainly those resident in housing or self owned sites, undertaking courses on skills such as IT; management; equestrian skills; hairdressing; building, mechanics; etc. Three Irish Traveller respondents, all on long-term sites, had undertaken or had family members who had undertaken courses. Two Showmen also reported household members who had undertaken training e.g. health and safety.
- 14.1.20 Thirty-two respondents reported having household members who would like to access training. This is once again a high percentage and is unusual in our experience of undertaking GTAAs. Where access to education is requested it is predominantly focussed on skills based training which intersects with traditional Gypsy/Traveller trades such as tree surgery, building, etc. Only a limited number of respondents (three) requested help with literacy or driving test theory and this low number may be a tribute to the work undertaken by the TES who are able to advise Gypsy/Traveller residents of a range of options available. In other areas where we have worked we have found far higher numbers who request assistance with basic skills but less interest in pursuing further training. This base can be built on to enhance community cohesion and equality of opportunity amongst the Gypsy/Traveller communities.
- 14.1.21 It is our experience that Gypsies and Travellers often feel excluded from mainstream job opportunities requiring formal education, and may lack awareness of such opportunities. Working with young people of secondary school age (and young parents) to enhance skills-based learning may improve mainstream employability. With many young Gypsies and Travellers dissatisfied with their disadvantaged lifestyles, they could be interested in training opportunities if made more aware of them and we recommend that further work is undertaken (see focus group findings with young people at Appendix C) to enhance awareness of educational and training options.

14.1.22 We would propose that the TES and local LEAs explore partnerships with local further and higher education providers to develop courses of particular interest to Gypsies and Travellers. Such courses can develop marketable skills and lead to certificated modular qualifications through ‘non-traditional assessment processes’, for example, examination of practical skills, portfolio development, etc which may be more accessible to individuals with limited literacy skills. Course development of this type is currently being considered at BCUC in partnership with local service providers, the national charity Friends, Families’ and Travellers and local Gypsy and Traveller groups. Delivery of such courses in short intensive blocks which are not unduly disrupted by occasional travelling or employment responsibilities may prove a particularly effective way of engaging young people in post compulsory education.

14.1.23 Focus group data (although predominantly referring to non-academic training) raises a number of suggestions for courses which women in particular would participate in ‘*if it was for Travellers so you get to know each other*’. First Aid training, swimming classes and dress-making skills were suggested by several. Friends, Families and Travellers (national charity) in Brighton has offered similar (very popular) courses elsewhere in the country which combine basic literary and other ‘lifeskills training’.

RECOMMENDATION

(22) Consideration is given to engagement with further and higher education providers to explore developing modular or intensive learning experiences, (for example, short blocks of training) for Gypsies and Travellers in both ‘academic’ and practical skills.

14.1.24 Young people who participated in a Forum meeting particularly wanted to highlight the need for support around education, especially if they are out of school as a result of movement or bullying, etc.

RECOMMENDATION

(23) That outreach work is undertaken with young Gypsies and Travellers to understand their needs and preferences in terms of educational, social and youth activities.

15. USE OF HOMELESSNESS AND SUPPORT SERVICES

15.1 Homelessness services

15.1.1 A total of twenty respondents (16% of those who were asked this question) had had contact with the homelessness services. Respondents were resident on all site types (representation split broadly between those living on public sites in South Gloucestershire (although three respondents live on private sites); housing in Bristol City and North Somerset; and unauthorised encampments in Bath and North East Somerset).

Table 46: Homelessness Services received by survey respondents

Service	B&NES	BCC	NS	SG
Advice	3	1	1	1
B&B	1	2	2	3
Temporary Housing	1	3	1	2
Other	2	-	1	-
<i>'Nothing provided – not even advice'</i>	-	-	1	-
Total	7	6	5	6

15.1.2 Respondents on all types of sites (including owner-occupied, public and private rented as well as unauthorised encampments) and in housing had received services from Homelessness Services. 55% of respondents who had been in contact with the Service were resident at unauthorised encampments. Three Gypsies/Travellers in housing had initially been placed in B&B by Homelessness Services and subsequently transferred to RSL/LA rented properties.

15.1.3 New Travellers were over-represented in terms of contact with Homelessness Services (40% of New Travellers interviewed had received advice or other service) which is perhaps reflective of their generally precarious accommodation situation (predominantly at unauthorised encampments). That all but one of these respondents still lived at an unauthorised encampment may be explained by the fact that a relatively high proportion of such respondents are single people without children who are often ineligible for public accommodation in the absence of special circumstances. Romany Gypsies (seven cases) were the second largest category of service users, two of whom received accommodation (housing) with the remainder currently resident on public sites. Irish Travellers are (from our survey) highly unlikely to apply or receive support from Homelessness Services with only two respondents – one sited and one housed having been in contact with relevant team. All respondents who were placed in temporary housing are currently sited (which may indicate difficulties with supporting the tenancy or more positively that local authorities were able to provide site pitches within a relatively short time period), although two of the eight who moved into B&B were now live in housing.

15.1.4 Over half of all people who had experienced homelessness services reported having had *'problems'* with the service or that the offers made (for example,

B&B) were inappropriate or that the staff did not appear to understand the special circumstances and pressures faced by Gypsies and Travellers.

15.1.5 Typical comments include:

- *"[We were] treated inhumanely. Not fairly – forced to stay in a hostile situation"* [housing problems in temporary accommodation with respondents experiencing racist abuse from neighbours];
- *"My site does not have any permission, so I am effectively homeless living on a knife edge and with my heart problems this stress does not help me. Homeless services cannot provide Gypsies and Travellers with acceptable accommodation as there is not enough sites and they will not grant planning permission. Putting us in a B&B is not culturally acceptable so we end up on the roadsides"*;
- *"I was brought up in a trailer I CAN'T go into B&B"*.

15.1.6 Dissatisfaction with the service received did not appear significantly greater for any one type of Gypsy/Traveller although New Travellers (by virtue of their over-representation in the sample) are most likely to report dissatisfaction, in some cases relating to *'not getting services off them'*. One typical comment was: *'I had to squat in several places when I was young because I didn't get no help. You had to be pregnant or have a child before they'd house me'*

15.1.7 BCC's Homelessness Service was regarded with most favour (fewest complaints) and this may relate to degree of contact between the BCC Gypsy and Traveller and Housing (Homelessness Services) Teams. Equal numbers of complaints were made about all other Homelessness Services teams (North Somerset, South Gloucestershire and Bath and North East Somerset) predominantly pertaining to lack of comprehension of Gypsy/Traveller culture and bureaucratic delays

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (24) That authorities consider adopting the model of equalities training in place in South Gloucestershire which ensures that Homelessness Services Staff receive cultural training on Gypsy and Traveller issues.**
- (25) That Homelessness Services staff engage in closer partnership working with the Gypsy and Travellers/Equalities Officers in each authority. Clear explanations are provided to all Homelessness Applicants about available options and constraints to minimise mistrust and suspicion of the service provided.**
- (26) Use of a single contact point for recording Homelessness/Site Applications for Gypsies and Travellers will avoid clients' frustration at speaking to numerous officers, and ensure that appropriate record keeping occurs (see earlier recommendations).**

(27) Enhanced record keeping is maintained across all authorities with clear and detailed information on the advice given and services received by Gypsy and Traveller clients.

(28) That the Gypsy/Traveller/Showman Forum monitors satisfaction levels of clients of Homelessness Services and considers further how these can be improved.

15.2 Accommodation Support

15.2.1 Twenty-eight respondents (twelve Romany Gypsies; two Irish Travellers; one 'other'; and thirteen Showmen) are currently in receipt of accommodation support (provided through Supporting People teams). Little information was forthcoming in terms of what help or support they were receiving.

15.2.2 The overwhelming majority of these respondents live in South Gloucestershire (17 out of 28) with all Showmen (other than the four resident on unauthorised encampments) living on private sites; one Irish Traveller living in housing and the remainder of respondents in that authority resident at a mixture of public and private sites. Four of the remaining five people in South Gloucestershire are Romany Gypsies, with only one Irish Traveller in receipt of support. Five respondents in North Somerset are all Romany Gypsies of whom one lives in housing and rest are on a mixture of private rented and public sites. The remaining six families who are receiving tenancy support are all in Bristol City, with four on sites, and two in houses. Again respondents are overwhelmingly from the Romany Gypsy community with only one Irish Traveller represented in this group.

15.2.3 The most noteworthy consideration arising from analysis of this data is the **under-representation** of Irish Travellers and housed families in this element of the survey. Given that it is highly unlikely that the large majority of such households do not require any support we would suggest that their absence from these findings is indicative of a failure to take-up services, perhaps because of lack of knowledge of their existence. This finding echoes those from health and education, implying that Irish Travellers and housed families are particularly excluded in terms of access to data sources or their ability to appropriately access public services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

(29) In the light of the severe under-representation of Irish Travellers, housed respondents and Gypsy/Traveller residents of Bath and North East Somerset in access to accommodation support/'supporting people' services, outreach to such groups should be developed as a matter of some priority.

(30) Members of the groups identified above should be provided with more information about support services. Service take-up appropriate to their needs should be encouraged to ensure equality of opportunity for Gypsy/Traveller communities.

16. EXPERIENCES OF HARASSMENT AND INTIMIDATION

16.1 Incidents of racial violence

- 16.1.1 Support Against Racist Incidents (SARI), an organisation which works across the entire study area, records that they were advised of two cases of harassment/racism experienced by Gypsy/Traveller households in 2006. One case was recorded in North Somerset and the other in Bristol City. That this is a significant under-recording of such incidents is clear from both focus group data (see Appendix C) where graphic information is provided of violent and abusive racism: *'When I was away travelling I was afraid to sleep [we had] petrol bombs one night and a friend of mine's car was on fire'* as well as 'low-level' persistent bullying: *'our two boys go to the same school and are called dirty Gypsies all the time....the children get used to it, they just carry it in the back of their mind'* and survey data.
- 16.1.2 Eighty-five respondents of all ethnicities/types (particularly those on the 'roadside'/ unauthorised encampments and Showmen who reported experiencing harassment and intimidation from passers-by *'at the fairgrounds all the time'*) recorded having experienced harassment and abuse. As this question was not included in the first South Gloucestershire questionnaires (67 pilot interviews), this means that 70% of the sample who were asked this question have had such experiences.
- 16.1.3 Fifteen of the respondents who reported that they had experienced racism or discrimination are resident in housing (out of a total of 24 housed respondents) indicating that 63% of such families have been victims of such abuse. It is of particular concern that a number of these families report experiencing racist abuse from neighbours who are aware of their ethnic origins. *'In my last house I had glass bottles thrown at my windows and called dirty gypsy, but I am not dirty. I don't know how they found out.'* One respondent reported their frustration at apparently being unable to end the persistent abuse they experience on their housing estate: *"Where I live I'm being called prejudice names all the time, I've retaliated and got myself in trouble with the law – that's why I want to move out!"*.
- 16.1.4 Housed families within all authorities and in all forms of tenure (although most particularly those resident in social housing on housing estates) report having been victims of racism. Perhaps unsurprisingly given the nature of urban housing estates, a higher percentage of residents in Bristol City housing than in other areas had had such experiences. North Somerset appears to be the authority with least reported racism towards housed Gypsies/Travellers. New Travellers in Bath and North East Somerset (probably because of their visibility on unauthorised encampments) all report experience of harassment or intimidation, usually from passers-by. *'Throwing stones, shouting, hooting horns'; 'passers-by, shout out verbal abuse, call us dirty, hippies, some throw rubbish at our site'*.
- 16.1.5 The experience of racist bullying and harassment is common to families with school age children, with twenty three families (of all ethnicities/types)

reporting that their children had experienced difficulties at school because of their ethnicity or lifestyle. Whilst in the main parents reported that schools ‘do try to deal with it’ the persistence of the experience of harassment and intimidation is horrifying, with some children growing up in hostile school environments ‘name calling. My son was beat up and it was videoed on a phone’ and continuing to be bullied or harassed in adulthood.

16.1.6 Typical comments include:

- “We do get a harassment in shops or just people passing they look at you as you were dirt, even though we would be a lot cleaner than them”;
- “Many times throughout my life I’ve been harassed and intimidated. School bullying, verbal abuse while working on the fairgrounds”.
- “We had bricks thrown through our windows in Wales”.

16.1.7 89% of the respondents who had experienced harassment or intimidation were very clear that this was because of ‘who they were’ (for example, Gypsies/Travellers). Typical comments included:

- ‘When people know I’m a Gypsy they called me ‘pikey’ and ‘Gyppo scumbag’[that type of] bad language’
- ‘General abuse when people drive past sites [i.e]. “piss off Pikey” – I mean we are not even Gypsies – we’re Irish Travellers’
- ‘We was forced out of the house when locals found out we are Gypsies’.

16.1.8 It is of extreme concern that less than half of victims of such harassment (44%) had bothered to make a formal complaint to the police, housing officers or other relevant agencies ‘well what is the police going to do really?’. In general, our survey found that other than when their own children were affected (for example, racist bullying at school) respondents tended not to complain unless the intimidation was extreme and prolonged, regarding it more as a natural hazard of being a Gypsy/Traveller ‘well it’s always the same wherever you live’.

16.1.9 Thirty respondents reported that when they did make a complaint or report the incident was dealt with satisfactorily, but a number of qualitative comments tell a different story indicating that often the outcome was no different, whether or not the respondent had sought support:

- ‘Police came, but couldn’t prove who did the offence but we had support from SARI’;
- ‘Police came but nothing was resolved because they didn’t know who the culprits were’;
- ‘I wouldn’t take it to court as I’m afraid of reprisals’ [respondent lives on ‘very run-down estate’];
- ‘[council officer] told us to move to a less obvious site (resident of unauthorised encampment) as we were visible from the road’.

16.1.10 We were also concerned to find during focus groups and individual discussions with respondents that a number of participants were only semi-aware that they (as ‘ethnic’ Gypsies/Travellers) were subject to protection

under the Race Relations Act *'really – well can you put that in writing? [on being advised that a 'no Travellers' sign they had mentioned was illegal]*.

16.1.11 We feel that the findings from this section of the study give cause for grave concern and would emphasise the need to undertake follow-up work on these topics as a matter of some urgency.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (31) That authorities' equalities teams engage with Forum members to develop outreach work and services aimed at advising Gypsies and Travellers of their legal rights.**
- (32) Authorities to provide enhanced support services for Gypsies and Travellers who wish to make a complaint about experiences of racism in their neighbourhood.**
- (33) That specialist staff, with experience of working with Gypsy/Traveller communities, are designated as a single point of contact to deal with harassment and intimidation experienced by sited and housed families.**
- (34) That LEAs/schools are encouraged to undertake targeted work with school students pertaining to anti-Traveller discrimination/racism in line with their Race Equalities duties and duty of care to children exposed to bullying.**
- (35) That housing officers and front line staff are made aware that Gypsies and Travellers may experience abuse and racism (particularly when they move into housing) and that they discuss with newly accommodated tenants the processes available to them if they experience anti-social or racist behaviour.**
- (36) That SARI services are more widely publicised amongst Gypsy/Traveller communities, and that staff in that agency work with Forum members to devise suitable publicity materials for dissemination to Gypsies and Travellers.**

17. USE OF COUNCIL SERVICES

17.1 Uptake and Access to Services

17.1.1 We were asked to consider how ‘user-friendly’ Gypsies and Travellers found local authority provided services. Sixty-six respondents of all ethnicities reported using swimming pools and leisure centres in the West of England study area. Showmen and Irish Travellers are particularly well represented in this figure with very few New Travellers making use of such services.

17.1.2 When considering library use, the numbers of interviewees reporting use of this service declines steeply to a total of 37 respondents. Library users are predominantly Showpeople and New Travellers which corresponds with findings on literacy skills 14.1.13-14.1.17 above). Although very few qualitative comments were provided which related to improvements to services, one innovative suggestion was the issue of ‘*a nationwide membership card – [I want] to have a card that could use in any library all over the country*’.

17.1.3 Some access issues exist for individuals who are living on unauthorised encampments (for example, inability to obtain a library ticket if resident on a unauthorised encampments or in transit). Local Authority waste disposal (skip) services are well used by the travelling communities, with 48 respondents utilising these facilities. Opening hours and the ability to dispose of trade waste were of concern for five respondents. Comments pertaining to improvements to ‘skips’ were mainly focussed around difficulties with accessing the facility ‘*don’t lock them up – or issue keys for people to use them [out of hours]*’.

17.1.4 Forty-one respondents (predominantly those living on authorised sites and in housing – although also some on unauthorised developments) reported having contact with council offices. Satisfaction with services provided by council offices varied significantly, with particular unhappiness reported in terms of planning ‘*they don’t want to help us get permission*’ and homelessness services (Chapter 15 above). Two respondents were particularly keen that they should be made aware of a central contact point in the local authority where staff familiar with ‘Traveller issues’ were based: ‘*they could provide a special desk for us*’; ‘*[they should have] a separate department for our kind*’. A suggestion which was broadly endorsed by Forum members who welcomed the idea of a specialist designated officer within each authority.

17.1.5 The front-line office staff where the Gypsy and Traveller team is based in Bristol were particularly praised for their helpfulness and willingness to assist community members who phoned or arrived in person. It is likely that this attitude relates not only to the proximity and expertise of the Gypsy and Traveller team based in that building, but also the experience of front-line staff in BCC who have become familiar with dealing with Gypsy and Traveller families. ‘*They always try to help us*’.

17.1.6 The category of 'other services' was loosely defined by respondents, with four individuals making comments, two of which referred to '*rubbish collection*' or '*them taking the rubbish without any hassle*' and one stating that '*they 'should let us have access to water – public tap*'. We assume from these responses that 'other' categories of service used may relate broadly to environmental health issues. Residents of unauthorised encampments were least likely to report use of council offices or 'other' services. One heartfelt comment – referring to council services was as follows: '*they should have a bit of humanity I think the council should be more thoughtful towards us, to let us stay for a while we [clean up] and take our rubbish with us*'.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (37) All front-line staff to receive equalities training on Gypsy/Traveller cultures and to be aware of the specific needs of these communities.**
- (38) Customer care training to emphasise good practice, preferences, gender issues (for example, female clients may not wish to see a male officer alone) and the discrimination historically experienced by Gypsy/Traveller communities which may lead to communication difficulties or mistrust.**
- (39) Staff to be aware that literacy difficulties *may* exist or that clients may have problems in accessing websites/receiving post, or be reliant upon a mobile phone for contact.**
- (40) Clients to be made aware (verbally as well as by provision of written information) of the purposes for which data is recorded and where they can seek further advice or assistance pertaining to their enquiries.**
- (41) That each authority provides information (both to front-line staff and to community members) on how to contact a key 'named' worker responsible for co-ordinating contact with and communication on Gypsy and Traveller matters.**

PART EIGHT

18. CONCLUSIONS AND SITE PROVISION RECOMMENDATIONS

18.1 Summary of Research Undertaken

18.1.1 The GTAA above, in addition to calculating pitch requirements for the time-period 2006-2016, explores a comprehensive range of services and provision appropriate to improving accommodation and increasing social inclusion amongst Gypsy and Traveller communities in the study area.

18.1.2 The brief (devised in consultation with the client authorities, service providers and other stake holders including Gypsy/Traveller/Showmen Forum members) asked us to consider the following elements:

a) To generate reliable estimates of future accommodation needs and to produce detailed information about local Gypsies and Travellers including:

- demographic characteristics;
- current accommodation; and
- aspiration for various types of accommodation.

b) Secondary requirements included an exploration of the following elements:

- employment;
- health and education (and access to such services);
- experiences of discrimination;
- experiences of homelessness services;
- support needs of Gypsies and Travellers; and
- mobility/movement and potential use of transit provision.

18.1.3 We were not asked (and do not consider it appropriate) to make recommendations as to the appropriate location of sites (both residential and transit) across the study area (although we disaggregate the recommendations by authority). Neither do we recommend the division between public and private provision. These are properly a matter for the authorities in consultation with community members most affected by their decisions. The survey findings pertaining to location preference and affordability of sites will however be of assistance in undertaking this exercise.

18.1.4 All recommendations from this GTAA are summarised at Appendix G. However, we would make some general points with regard to selection of site locations and development.

18.2 Consultation

18.2.1 We consider that the development of a study wide Gypsy/Traveller/Showman Forum (building upon the earlier BCC Gypsy/Traveller Forum) provides the authorities with an invaluable tool for consulting with community members and disseminating information pertaining to future plans. The Forum can be expanded, adapted and amended to work with a variety of service providers

on a range of areas related to delivery of future accommodation and support services. The composition of the Forum (Gypsies/Travellers and Showmen of all ethnicities and from all authorities in the study area) represents a positive step in terms of engagement with members of these diverse communities.

18.2.2 Forum members have considerable expertise across a broad range of subjects including planning applications, inter-agency forum working and community development. The group is highly engaged and willing to work towards future planning for service and accommodation delivery. We would strongly recommend that regular meetings are held with Forum members to ensure that communities are kept informed of the processes of land identification and site development and strengthen their sense of stakeholding in the development process.

18.3 Developing Sites

18.3.1 Findings from the surveys and focus groups indicate not only that a considerable interest exists in self-provision of sites, but that a relatively high percentage of local Gypsy and Traveller residents may be able to self-fund such sites if they believed that they were likely to obtain planning permission. Owner-occupied sites, predominantly in the UA areas in which respondents are resident, remain the primary aspiration for many Gypsies and Travellers we surveyed, including those in housing.

18.3.2 During a meeting with the Forum to discuss findings from the draft GTAA intense interest was found to exist in the possibility of the development of part-rent/part-buy pitches, perhaps through Public-Private Partnerships or working with RSLs to enable greater choice of accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers.

18.3.3 Clear evidence also exists of on-going need for public provision and it may be that a mixture of LA/RSL sites offer an appropriate method of supplying such need. We would note that a significant demographic 'bulge' will occur in approximately ten years when young people (predominantly from Irish Traveller families currently resident in the study area) will require accommodation if they remain in the locality. Planning for site provision will need to take account of this projected long-term need.

18.3.4 The development of choice-based lettings schemes²⁸ (enabling applicants to 'bid' for pitches) and coupled with enhanced housing options advice across the entire study area, may be one way of creating greater flexibility and access to suitable accommodation for individuals who require socially provided sites.

18.3.5 Showmen are generally used to dealing with legal and business arrangements and it is likely that the overwhelming majority of need identified for Show families could be self-provided through a mixture of owner-occupied and private rented pitches.

²⁸ For further information see the choicemoves website www.choicemoves.org.uk

18.3.6 Different ‘types’ of Traveller may have varying preferences for site design – for example, New Travellers indicated a preference for ‘Green Lanes’ or generally low-impact accommodation. If sites were to be provided which appealed to such communities, it is likely that they would be rather different in appearance and facilities from those required by some other Gypsy/Traveller groups who may, for example, have preferences for work spaces or specific design features.

18.3.7 Account should be taken of preferences for co-residence (for example, extended family groups), and this requires an acknowledgement that distinctions do exist between the ‘types’ of Gypsy/Traveller communities and that this may be expressed in preferences to live amongst individuals who share a common heritage and practice.

18.3.8 The DCLG consultation on the draft guidance on site design (2007) provides best practice advice on these and other matters including appropriate amenities and proximity to services.

18.4 Location

18.4.1 Whilst in theory any land which may be regarded as suitable for residential purposes can be considered as suitable for development as a Gypsy and Traveller site, it is important to take into account location preferences of the intended residents of such sites.

18.4.2 Consultation with Gypsy/Traveller and Showmen communities will enable ‘community appropriate planning’ to be undertaken (we recommend the Planning 4 Real approach²⁹ as well as taking account of the consultation on draft guidance on site design recently issued by the DCLG. Utilising such approaches encourage partnership working, and permit potential residents a real ‘choice’ over where they live.

18.4.3 We would strongly recommend that consideration is given to a variety of sizes of sites, at a selection of locations, both rural and peri-urban as well as permitting a range of tenures and greater or lesser flexibility over working areas, etc. Circular 1/06 provides clear guidance on matters which should be taken into account when planning for sites.

18.4.4 Whilst we recognise the land restrictions identified for each authority (Appendix B) we would highlight that best practice suggests that GTAA findings should be consulted upon with local Gypsies and Travellers when preparing Development Plan Documents. It goes without saying that sites must not be located on poor quality or contaminated land which would not be regarded as suitable for housing, for example, adjoining sewage works or land-fill areas and should be where possible (so long as not overly restrictive in terms of criteria) located near to educational and health facilities, road networks, and employment opportunities.

²⁹ For further information see <http://www.nif.co.uk/planningforreal/>.

18.4.5 S106 agreements and limited release of land from Green Belt may also assist in provision of adequate sites across the study area. The compulsory purchase powers of authorities may also prove an appropriate tool for assisting in meeting accommodation need through the provision of sites.

18.5 Transit Provision

18.5.1 Whilst the primary need identified across the authority is for residential provision, there is a relatively high degree of travelling found across the study area, with some highly mobile families involved in persistent unauthorised encampments which occur throughout the year.

18.5.2 We would particularly recommend that consideration is given to encouraging the flexible use of private sites to permit some transit provision for relatives/friends of the occupiers. Not only would this assist in minimising unauthorised encampments but could prove a cost-effective and popular alternative to the provision of numerous stopping places and transit sites across the study area.

18.5.3 That a clear need for transit provision exists is evident from both survey findings and official statistics analysed elsewhere in this report. We propose that transit provision (although disaggregated for the purposes of this report) can also be considered on a *'need where it is supplied'* basis as long as adequate pitches are provided across the study area.

18.5.4 In Table 47 (below) we bring together the distinct components of this study relating to residential and transit provision for Gypsies/Travellers and Showmen, disaggregated to authority level.

Table 47: Estimate of requirement for residential and transit pitches for Gypsies/Travellers and Showmen 2006-2016 (Study and UA level): after allowance made for 'new pitches planned'

Authority	Residential pitches	Transit caravan capacity	Showman Households
B&NES	19	20	1
BCC	24	0 ³⁰	8
NS	36	10	0
SG	48	25	42
Total (STUDY AREA) 2006-2011	127	55	51
B&NES	3	0	0
BCC	6	0	3
NS	13	0	0
SG	22	0	15
Total (STUDY AREA) 2011-2016	44	0	18

³⁰ Bristol City Council requires a total transit capacity of 20 caravans/pitches but already has a site with this capacity.

18.5.5 Note that calculations of pitch requirements are dependent upon estimated 'supply' of pitches being met (for example, planning permission included in the estimate as likely to be granted by 2008). This element of the calculation will need to be kept under review both during the primary assessment period (2006-2011) and in future assessments.

18.5.6 In addition, (following Niner, Leicestershire GTAA 2007) we note that by the time the next GTAA exercise is undertaken it will be appropriate to review standard assumptions applied pertaining to house-site and site-house transfer requirements, as a higher percentage of the ageing Gypsies and Traveller population may opt to move into housing for convenience and access to appropriate support services, even if adequate pitch supply exists.

18.6 Conclusions (Site Provision)

18.6.1 We are aware that recommendations arising from GTAAs cannot ever be said to be rigidly 'fixed' as unexpected population changes and patterns of settlement can occur across study areas leading to greater or lesser need than first envisaged. As the shortfall of both socially rented and private sites are met across the South West Region it will be possible to see whether clear levels of unmet need still exists and if so, for what type of site (for example, residential or transit). At this particular time however, we believe that our findings are as robust as possible given the current data available and our adherence to recommended methodologies.

18.7 Planning for other provision

18.7.1 This GTAA provides discussion and recommendations on a range of subjects pertaining to social inclusion, record keeping and information sharing and the delivery of health, education and other services. We have identified some good practice in terms of health and education services, and information sharing (particularly in South Gloucestershire). Bristol City is to be commended for the service provided by its Gypsy and Traveller team.

18.7.2 We note generally weaker practices in some authorities in terms of record keeping (particularly waiting list data and compatibility of records of unauthorised encampments) which if modified will greatly assist in 'refreshing' the GTAA in future years.

18.7.3 Particular concerns exist around the extent of discrimination, harassment and intimidation experienced by many respondents. We strongly urge that all authorities and service providers act in partnership to address this situation and to fulfil their duties under Race Relations legislation to promote race equality and good race relations.