

Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation Needs Assessment 2026

Hart District Council

Final Report
September 2026

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The Hart district Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTAA) provides the latest available evidence to identify accommodation needs. To support the preparation of the Local Plan, the GTAA presents data for two periods: 2026/27 to 2038/39 and 2026/27 to 2043/44.

The GTAA has included:

- A review of existing (secondary) data.
- Stakeholder consultation with a range of stakeholders.
- A household survey and site observations.

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

We are very grateful to the Travelling communities across the district for their positive engagement with the work.

Population and current accommodation provision

The 2021 Census identified a population of 233 people who identified as 'White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller' or 'Gypsy/Romany', no people identifying as 'Roma' living in Hart district and an estimate of 90 households where the household reference person identifies as being a Gypsy/Traveller.

There are currently a total of 53 pitches across 7 different sites based on current planning status:

- 1 council site (20 pitches, 15 occupied by 15 households, 5 vacant).
- 6 private authorised sites (33 pitches, 31 occupied by 31 households, 2 vacant).

There is 1 Travelling Showperson yard in Hart district (3 plots occupied by 3 households).

Planning policy requirements for needs assessments

National policy requires local planning authorities to robustly assess and plan for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs, principally through the NPPF (2024), Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS, 2024), and section 124 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016. The latest PPTS definition reinstates within the scope of assessment those who have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently on grounds of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age. Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers are recognised ethnic groups protected under the characteristic of race in the Equality Act 2010, engaging the Public Sector Equality Duty. The adopted Hart Local Plan (Strategy and Sites) 2032 contains a single policy H5 which covers Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. This seeks to retain existing permanent sites and sets out a criteria-based policy for proposals.

Gypsy and Traveller pitch requirements

The GTAA reports additional residential pitch need for two time periods: Period A 2026/27 to 2038/39 (13 years) and Period B 2026/27 to 2043/44 (18 years).

Period A: 2026/27 to 2038/39

The GTAA identifies a minimum need for 43 residential pitches across Hart district over the period 2026/27 to 2038/39 (Table ES1). The main driver of need is new household formation.

Table ES1 Gypsy and Traveller pitch need arising within Hart district 2026/27 to 2038/39

Period	Pitch Need
5-Year Authorised Pitch Shortfall (2026/27 – 2030/31) (A)	27
Longer-term need: 2031/32 – 2035/36 (B)	12
Longer-term need: 2036/37 – 2038/39 (C)	4
Longer-term need TOTAL to 2038/39 (8 years) E = B + C	16
NET SHORTFALL 2026/27 – 2038/39 (A + E) 13 years	43
Annual net need (average)	3.3

Period B: 2026/27 to 2043/44

The GTAA identifies a minimum need for 57 residential pitches across Hart district over the period 2026/27 to 2043/44 (Table ES2). The main driver of need is new household formation.

Table ES2 Gypsy and Traveller pitch need arising within Hart district 2026/27 to 2043/44

Period	Pitch Need
5-Year Authorised Pitch Shortfall (2026/27 – 2030/31) (A)	27
Longer-term need: 2031/32 – 2035/36 (B)	12
Longer-term need: 2036/37 – 2040/41 (C)	7
Longer-term need: 2041/42 – 2043/44 (D)	11
Longer-term need TOTAL to 2043/44 (13 years) E = B + C + D	30
NET SHORTFALL 2026/27 – 2043/44 (A + E) 18 years	57
Annual net need (average)	3.2

Transit provision

The Council experiences some unauthorised encampment activity, with 23 incidents reported over the period 2020 to 2025. It is recommended the Council considers negotiated stopping as a method to meet the needs of families travelling through the district. More information can be found at [Negotiated Stopping](#).

Travelling Showperson plot requirements

There is one occupied yard with three plots. There is no additional need for Travelling Showperson plots but the Council should maintain a criteria-based policy to assess any future applications.

Other caravan dwellers

There is currently no identified need for other caravan dwellers and a criteria-based policy is recommended in the Local Plan to address any future applications.

1. Introduction

Overview

- 1.1 This Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTAA) has been commissioned by Hart District Council to assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople residing in the district. The GTAA provides data for two time periods: Period A 2026/27 to 2038/39 (13 years) and Period B 2026/27 to 2043/44 (18 years) and forms a key evidence base for the Hart Local Plan.
- 1.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (2024), the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2024) and section 124 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 provide the policy context for this work.

Who the study covers

- 1.3 The 2024 Planning Policy for Traveller Sites provides the updated definition of Gypsies and Travellers as set out within Annex 1 of the 2024 PPTS:

“Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependants’ educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, and all other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or of living in a caravan, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.”
- 1.4 Similarly, the following definition from Annex 1 of the PPTS in respect of Travelling Showpeople is used:

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

‘For the purposes of this planning policy, “pitch” means a pitch on a “gypsy and traveller” site and “plot” means a pitch on a “travelling showpeople” site (often called a “yard”). This terminology differentiates between residential pitches for “gypsies and travellers” and mixed-use plots for “travelling showpeople”, which may/will need to incorporate space or to be split to allow for the storage of equipment.’ (MHCLG Planning policy for traveller sites December 2024 Annex 1, para 5).
- 1.6 For the purposes of this study, therefore, Gypsies and Travellers live on pitches within sites, whilst Travelling Showpeople live on plots within yards.
- 1.7 An Opinion dated 27th October 2025 by Marc Willers KC ‘On the interpretation and application of the new planning policy definition of the term “Gypsies and

Travellers” was prepared on behalf of Friends, Families and Travellers. This concludes that:

“The MHCLG’s decision to extend the scope of the planning policy definition of *‘Gypsies and Travellers’* is a positive step which goes some way to facilitating the traditional way of life of ethnic Gypsies and Travellers. It gives individuals from ethnic minority groups *‘with a cultural tradition of nomadism or of living in a caravan’* (whether or not they have ever lived a nomadic habit of life or lived in caravans themselves) the opportunity to rely upon the positive planning guidance in PPTS 2024 if they seek planning permission for a caravan site. It also ensures that the needs of such people for caravan pitches are properly assessed and met by LPAs.

Finally, it should be noted that the PPTS 2024 planning policy definition does not just cater for the accommodation needs of *ethnic* Gypsies and Travellers. New Travellers who can demonstrate that they pursue a *‘nomadic habit of life’* including those *‘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’* will also be captured by the definition and will be entitled to: rely upon the positive planning policy in PPTS 2024 when they seek planning permission; have their accommodation needs assessed when a LPA undertakes a new assessment of the need for Gypsy and Traveller pitches in its area; and have their needs met in any planned provision.”

Planning policy background

- 1.8 The 2024 National Planning Policy Framework states in Paragraph 63 *‘the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies’*. It then lists a number of groups including Travellers. A footnote to the paragraph *states ‘Planning Policy for Traveller Sites sets out how travellers’ housing needs should be assessed for those covered by the definition in Annex 1 of that document’*.
- 1.9 The 2024 Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) document states that *‘local planning authorities should make their own assessment of need for the purposes of planning’* and *‘ensure that their Local Plan includes fair, realistic and inclusive policies’* and *‘to increase the number of traveller sites in appropriate locations with planning permission, to address under provision and maintain an appropriate level of supply’*.
- 1.10 Policy A of the 2024 PPTS relates to evidence needed to plan positively and manage development. This states *‘in assembling the evidence base necessary to support their planning approach, local planning authorities should:*
 - *pay particular attention to early and effective community engagement with both settled and traveller communities (including discussing travellers’ accommodation needs with travellers themselves, their representative bodies and local support groups);*
 - *cooperate with travellers, their representative bodies and local support groups; other local authorities and relevant interest groups to prepare and maintain an up-to-date understanding of the likely permanent and transit accommodation needs of their areas over the lifespan of their development*

*plan, working collaboratively with neighbouring local planning authorities;
and*

- *use a robust evidence base to establish accommodation needs to inform the preparation of local plans and make planning decisions’.*
- 1.11 In the absence of further guidance on preparing Traveller accommodation needs assessments, the methods adopted by arc⁴ reflect Policy A of the PPTS and build upon methods established through previous guidance, our practical experience and findings from planning inquiries and appeals.
- 1.12 The calculation of pitch/plot requirements is based on established DCLG modelling methodology, as advocated in *Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments: Guidance* (DCLG, 2007). Although this guidance was formally withdrawn in December 2016, in the absence of any updated guidance on the subject, it continues to provide a good practice approach for needs modelling.
- 1.13 Policy B of the 2024 PPTS relates to planning for traveller sites and requires Local Plans:
- to be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development and consistent with the policies of the NPPF; and
 - to set pitch targets for Gypsies and Travellers and plot targets for Travelling Showpeople as defined in Annex 1 which address the likely permanent and transit site accommodation needs of travellers in their area, working collaboratively with neighbouring local planning authorities.
- 1.14 Policy B (paragraph 10) sets out that local authorities should, in producing their Local Plan:
- a. identify and update annually, a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5-years’ worth of sites against their locally set targets;
 - b. identify a supply of specific, developable sites, or broad locations for growth, for years 6 to 10 and, where possible, for years 11-15;
 - c. consider production of joint development plans that set targets on a cross-authority basis, to provide more flexibility in identifying sites, particularly if a local planning authority has special or strict planning constraints (local planning authorities have a duty to cooperate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries);
 - d. relate the number of pitches or plots to the circumstances of the specific size and location of the site and the surrounding population’s size and density; and
 - e. protect local amenity and environment.
- 1.15 Policy B (paragraph 13) sets out that local authorities should ensure that traveller sites are sustainable economically, socially and environmentally and therefore ensure that their policies:
- a. promote peaceful and integrated co-existence between the site and the local community;

- b. promote, in collaboration with commissioners of health services, access to appropriate health services;
- c. ensure that children can attend school on a regular basis;
- d. provide a settled base that reduces both the need for long-distance travelling and possible environmental damage caused by unauthorised encampment;
- e. provide for proper consideration of the effect of local environmental quality (such as noise and air quality) on the health and well-being of any travellers who may locate there or on others as a result of new development;
- f. avoid placing undue pressure on local infrastructure and services;
- g. do not locate sites in areas at high risk of flooding, including functional floodplains, given the particular vulnerability of caravans; and
- h. reflect the extent to which traditional lifestyles (whereby some travellers live and work from the same location thereby omitting many travel to work journeys) can contribute to sustainability.

Proposed revisions to the NPPF

- 1.16 Revisions to the NPPF were published for consultation in December 2025. There are some notable changes, with Traveller needs clearly embedded in Chapter 6: Delivering a sufficient supply of homes, and the provisions of the PPTS are now integrated into the NPPF.
- 1.17 Proposed policies continue to emphasise the need for evidence on permanent and transit site accommodation needs (policy HO1); setting requirement figures (policy HO2); and identifying land to supply specific deliverable sites for five years following the adoption of the local plan and a supply of specific, developable sites for subsequent years of the plan period (policy HO3).
- 1.18 Policy HO12: Traveller Sites considers development proposals for traveller sites:
 - 1. Development proposals for traveller sites should be located and designed so that they:
 - a. Provide a settled base that limits the need for long-distance travelling and potential environmental damage caused by unauthorised encampment, while recognising the extent to which traditional lifestyles (whereby some travellers live and work from the same location thereby omitting many travel to work journeys) can contribute to sustainability;
 - b. Enable access to education, welfare, and health services, including ensuring that children can attend school on a regular basis;
 - c. Promote opportunities for healthy lifestyles, such as by providing adequate landscaping and play areas for children, and minimising adverse impacts from local environmental factors (such as noise and air quality) on the health and wellbeing of travellers that may locate there; and

- d. Do not enclose the site such that the site and its occupants appear to be isolated from the rest of the community.
2. Alongside the criteria in this policy, when considering proposals for traveller sites, local planning authorities should take into account:
 - a. The existing level of local provision and need for additional sites;
 - b. Other personal circumstances which may be relevant; and
 - c. That applications for sites from any travellers should be considered and not just those with local connections.
3. Where development proposals require the permanent or temporary relocation of an authorised traveller site, an alternative site should be identified and provided. Alternative sites should take into account existing family or community groupings where possible, and involve residents occupying existing pitches, sites or plots in planning any unavoidable relocations to ensure satisfactory solutions are achieved.

Intentional unauthorised development

- 1.19 The [planning policy statement issued with PPTS 2015](#) and confirmed by [Ministerial Statement](#) makes clear that if a site is intentionally occupied without planning permission this would be a material consideration in any retrospective planning application for that site. Whilst this does not mean that retrospective applications will be automatically refused, it does mean that failure to seek permission in advance of occupation will count against the application.
- 1.20 In addition, PPTS 2024 (Paragraph 12) makes clear that in exceptional cases where a local authority is burdened by a large-scale unauthorised site that has significantly increased their need, and their area is subject to strict and special planning constraints, then there is no assumption that the local authority will be required to meet their Gypsy and Traveller site needs in full. This is intended to protect local planning authorities with significant land constraints from being required to provide for additional needs arising directly from large sites such as Dale Farm (a large unauthorised site in Essex).

Study geography and time frame

- 1.21 This study focuses on the needs of Travelling communities across the Hart District Council area and provides data for two time periods: Period A 2026/27 to 2038/39 and Period B 2026/27 to 2043/44.

Report structure

- 1.22 This report is organised into seven chapters, followed by appendices containing supporting data:
 - **Chapter 2** sets out the national and local policy context.
 - **Chapter 3** describes the methodology used to assess need.

- **Chapter 4** presents an overview of the Gypsy, Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople communities in Hart district and provides details of existing provision of pitches and plots.
 - **Chapter 5** presents the findings of the household and stakeholder surveys.
 - **Chapter 6** presents the analysis of future residential Gypsy and Traveller pitch, Travelling Showperson plot and Gypsy and Traveller transit need.
 - **Chapter 7** sets out the conclusions and recommendations.
- 1.23 Stakeholder feedback is presented in relevant sections throughout the report.
- 1.24 The report is supplemented by the following appendices:
- **Appendix A** Household survey questionnaire
 - **Appendix B** Glossary of terms.

2. Policy and local context

National policy

2.1 The national policy framework is set by:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024) which requires local planning authorities to assess and plan for the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople
- Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS, 2024) which is the principal policy document governing the assessment of need and site provision. Policy A requires robust assessment of current and future need; Policy B sets out criteria for site allocation. The PPTS requires local planning authorities to identify and maintain a five-year supply of deliverable sites to meet Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs. The Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2024) reinstates within the definition those who have ceased to travel permanently on grounds of educational or health needs or old age.
- Equality Act 2010, under which Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers are recognised ethnic groups protected under the characteristic of race. The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires the Council to have due regard to equality implications in decision-making.
- The PPTS (2024) definition of Gypsies and Travellers for planning purposes is persons of nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin.

Local policy framework

- 2.2 The adopted Hart Local Plan (Strategy and Sites) 2032 contains a single policy H5 which covers Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. This seeks to retain existing permanent sites and sets out a criteria-based policy for proposals.
- 2.3 The Council's emerging Local Plan review will take account of the need figures identified in this GTAA.

Previous GTAA

- 2.4 The 2020 GTAA identified a total of 7 Gypsy and Traveller sites with 51 pitches and 2 Travelling Showperson yards with 6 plots.
- 2.5 The GTAA identified an overall need for 44 Gypsy and Traveller pitches over the 15-year period 2020 to 2034 across the district or a need of 2.93 each year. Regarding transit provision, the GTAA recommended a strategic approach across Hampshire and local management-based approaches such as negotiated stopping arrangements.

3. Methodology

Introduction

- 3.1 The GTAA research method is grounded in an understanding of the requirement of the NPPF and based on an established methodology which regularly withstands scrutiny at planning inquiries and hearings.
- 3.2 The study comprises five main strands of work:
- Review of relevant literature, reports and review of existing (secondary) data
 - Stakeholder and agency consultation, including engagement with Hart district Housing and Planning Officers, neighbouring local authorities and other stakeholders
 - Site observation visiting all known authorised and unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller sites as part of survey fieldwork and raising awareness of the study with letters to households.
 - Household interviews carried out using a structured interview schedule with Gypsy, Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople households living on sites/yards and in bricks-and-mortar accommodation within or with connections to the district
 - Need calculation, with application of the PPTS-compliant pitch/plot need calculation model, drawing on household interview data, site survey findings, and secondary data sources.

Phase 1: Policy review and secondary data analysis

- 3.3 This phase considers the national policy and local existing policies and evidence from previous GTAAs. A range of secondary (existing) data are also analysed including census data, MHCLG caravan count data and unauthorised encampment data.

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

- 3.4 Our aim is to obtain interviews from all households living on sites using a standard questionnaire (Appendix A). This questionnaire has been carefully designed in consultation with councils, feedback from community representatives and planning agents.
- 3.5 A review of planning records identified 7 site locations for Gypsies and Travellers and one Travelling Showperson yard.
- 3.6 A total of 37 interviews out of 46 Gypsy and Traveller households living on pitches was achieved, representing an 80% response rate. In addition, 9 roadside families travelling through the district were interviewed, but they identified no specific residential need in Hart district.

- 3.7 A site manager stakeholder was aware of Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar accommodation. To engage with bricks and mortar households, the GTAA was publicised through the 'Proud Gypsy Traveller' Facebook page which particularly encouraged people in bricks and mortar housing to come forward to take part in the study. However, no responses were received but the needs assessment modelling does factor in potential need from bricks and mortar households.
- 3.8 All three households living on the Travelling Showperson yard were interviewed (100% response rate).
- 3.9 Regarding stakeholder engagement, a total of 14 individuals in organisations were contacted including council officers from neighbouring authorities (7), council officers (2), national organisations including advocacy groups (4) and the police (1). Stakeholders were contacted multiple times to complete a survey. A total of 7 responses were received.

Phase 3: Needs assessment and production of report

- 3.10 A detailed explanation of the pitch requirements is contained in Chapter 6 but briefly comprises analysis of the following:
- current pitch supply, households living in bricks and mortar accommodation; households planning to move in the next five years, and emerging households to give total need for pitches; and
 - supply based on the number of authorised pitches.
- 3.11 The overall need for pitches is then compared with the overall supply.

Site and pitch size

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

- 3.16 As a general guide, it is suggested by arc⁴ that the minimum pitch size is 25m by 25m (625 square metres or 0.0625 hectares). This would support a twin-unit chalet/mobile home (15m x 6.5m), a tourer, an amenity shed/building (5m x 4m), two vehicle spaces (minimum 2.4m x 4.8m for each space) and turning circle for vehicles, amenity space and a small garden area/play space. Residential units need to be 3m from the pitch boundary and at least 6m apart. A slightly larger pitch of 25m by 30m (750 square metres or 0.075 hectares) would be appropriate for larger household units requiring several residential units. Additionally, it may be appropriate to have several caravans on a pitch to accommodate newly-forming households who may require independent accommodation but want to stay living as part of an extended family group.
- 3.17 It is generally accepted amongst the Travelling community that private sites of up to 6-10 pitches are appropriate. Public sites tend to be larger and have policies and procedures in place to ensure the effective management of sites.

Showperson yard and plot sizes

- 3.18 In 2010, the Showmen's Guild of Great Britain prepared a document 'Travelling Showpeople's sites: a planning focus – model standard package'. This document was intended to provide guidelines to Travelling Showpeople and Local Planning Authorities when considering the needs of Travelling Showpeople.
- 3.19 This document confirmed that:
- A plot is a piece of land occupied by a Showperson with their family and equipment, used to store fairground rides, vehicles and other items as well as for living accommodation. The family unit can be large or small, for instance an extended family with grandparents, parents and children, or a single-family unit of parents and children.
 - A yard is two or more plots owned by the same family who may use this for their own family purposes or may let part out to other Showpeople.
 - A site is a group of plots where the land is owned by individual plot holders. Quite often a Showperson's site will have a common shared access onto the main road network.
 - Showpeople's sites do not fit neatly into the definition of a one land use category. The sites combine a residential use with a storage use, and maintenance is also likely to be carried out on site. The residential use can take the form of static homes and caravans.
 - For a Travelling Showperson yard, the document suggests a minimum plot size of 0.5ha, which should include space for residential accommodation and equipment storage.
- 3.20 There is no formal guidance on the minimum size of a yard or a plot. Discussions with members of the Showpersons community provides some further insight into current practice on yards.
- 3.21 Within West Yorkshire, a Showperson's development of 6.5 acres comprising 7 yards has recently been completed in Fitzwilliam, Wakefield district. The view of the Guild member who runs the development suggested a standard size of

150ft x 150ft per plot (0.2 hectares). For the Fitzwilliam yards, the basic plot size is 120ft x 220ft (0.25 hectares) but there are variations in the size of each plot depending on household circumstances.

- 3.22 Following further discussion with a member of the community who wants to develop new yards, it was recommended that the minimum size of a yard is 0.15ha and ideally 0.2ha. To take account of minimum spacing required under the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960, the minimum spacing between caravans is 6m for fire safety and 3m between the caravan and boundary. This would suggest that for a 0.15ha yard, a reasonable assumption is this could accommodate 2 caravans (or 2 plots) and a 0.2ha yard, 3 caravans (or 3 plots).
- 3.23 For any applications coming forward, the Council should work flexibly to ensure that any development reflects the specific needs of families and that the number of caravans on each yard accords with legal requirements for distance between caravans.

4. Review of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population and existing pitch/plot provision

Introduction

- 4.1 This chapter presents a range of data which considers the profile of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson communities in Hart district and the range of accommodation provision available within the district. It draws upon site observation, household surveys, stakeholder consultation and secondary data including the 2021 census and caravan count data.

Census data

- 4.2 The ONS has published detailed 2021 census data relating to Gypsy and Traveller populations. This provides valuable insights into the population dynamics and comparisons with overall populations although it is widely recognised that this is likely to under-report households who choose not to divulge they were from Travelling communities.
- 4.3 The 2021 Census reported a population of **233** people who identified as 'White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller' or 'Gypsy/Romany' and no people identifying as 'Roma' living in Hart district. The total number of households was estimated to be **90** based on the number of Household Reference People identified in the census, of whom an estimated 79 lived in bricks and mortar accommodation.
- 4.4 The previous 2011 Census reported 271 people and 98 households.
- 4.5 Table 4.1 sets out a range of data relating to people identifying as Gypsies and Travellers from the 2021 Census across Hart district. In summary:
- 88% live in bricks and mortar accommodation and 12% live in a caravan/mobile structure.
 - 83.7% rent (75.5% from a social landlord and 8.2% privately) and 16.3% are owner occupiers.
 - 16.3% were overcrowded compared with 2.5% of the general population.
 - 10.2% of households were single person, 10.2% couples, 34.7% couples with children, 38.8% single parents and 6.1% other household types such as extended families.

Table 4.1 Characteristics of properties and households which are occupied by people identifying as Gypsy and Traveller from 2021 Census in Hart district

Dwelling Stock	Number of people identifying as Gypsy/Traveller	% of people identifying as Gypsy/Traveller
Detached whole house or bungalow	25	10.0
Semi-detached whole house or bungalow	135	54.0
Terraced (including end-terrace) whole house or bungalow	35	14.0
Flat, maisonette or apartment	25	10.0
A caravan or other mobile or temporary structure	30	12.0
Total	250	100.0
Tenure	Number of people identifying as Gypsy/Traveller	% of people identifying as Gypsy/Traveller
Owned: Owns outright	25	10.2
Owned: Owns with a mortgage or loan or shared ownership	15	6.1
Private rented or lives rent free	20	8.2
Rented: Social rented	185	75.5
Total	245	100.0
Occupancy	Number of people identifying as Gypsy/Traveller	% of people identifying as Gypsy/Traveller
Occupancy rating of bedrooms 0 or more	205	83.7
Occupancy rating of bedrooms -1 or less (overcrowded)	40	16.3
Total	245	100.0
Household composition	Number of people identifying as Gypsy/Traveller	% of people identifying as Gypsy/Traveller
One person household: Aged 66 years and over	10	4.1
One person household: Other	15	6.1
Single family household: Couple family household: No children	25	10.2
Single family household: Couple family household: Dependent children	70	28.6
Single family household: Couple family household: All children non-dependent	15	6.1
Single family household: Lone parent household	95	38.8
Other household types	15	6.1
Total	245	100.0

General Health	Number of people identifying as Gypsy/Traveller	% of people identifying as Gypsy/Traveller
Very Good	100	40.0
Good	70	28.0
Fair	40	16.0
Bad	30	12.0
Very Bad	10	4.0
Total	250	100.0
Net health score (VG+G-B-VB)		52.0

Source: [Gypsy or Irish Traveller populations, England and Wales: Census 2021](#)

Note: Census figures are rounded to the nearest 5, so totals may differ slightly from the population figure quoted in the text.

- 4.6 In terms of health 68% of Gypsies and Travellers said their health was very good/good and 16% stated it was bad/very bad. The overall net health satisfaction score (% saying very good/good minus bad/very bad) was therefore 52% compared with 85% of the overall population.
- 4.7 Please note that the data reported from the census may differ from the findings of the household survey. This is because of the small population base of the Gypsy and Traveller population and data highly influenced by the level of response to both the 2021 Census and households interviewed as part of the 2026 household survey. It is also important to note that an estimate of total households in bricks and mortar is very difficult to establish.

Caravan Count information

- 4.8 Snapshot counts of the number of Gypsy and Traveller caravans were requested by the government in 1979 and have since been undertaken every January and July by local authorities. An annual count of Travelling Showperson caravans takes place every January. The counts provide a source of information on the number of caravans located on authorised and unauthorised sites but do not record the actual number of pitches on sites/yards.
- 4.9 The figures for the last seven Traveller caravan counts for Hart district are set out in Table 4.2. Data shows an average of 95 caravans across the district during the period January 2023 to January 2026.

Table 4.2 Bi-annual Traveller caravan count figures: January 2023 to January 2026 for Hart district

Count	Authorised sites with planning permission SOCIAL RENTED	Authorised sites with planning permission PRIVATE (TEMPORARY)	Authorised sites with planning permission PRIVATE (PERMANENT)	Unauthorised sites WITHOUT PLANNING PERMISSION	Total
Jan 2023	32	0	69	0	101
Jul 2023	29	0	54	0	83
Jan 2024	28	0	67	0	95
Jul 2024	34	0	55	0	89
Jan 2025	29	0	70	0	99
Jul 2025	26	0	69	0	95
Jan 2026	36	0	68	0	104
7-count average	31	0	65	0	95

Source: MHCLG Traveller Caravan Count, Live Table 1

4.10 Over the period 2023 to 2026 there were an increasing number of caravans on Travelling Showpersons plots (Table 4.3).

Table 4.3 Annual Travelling Showperson caravan count figures: January 2023 to January 2026 for Hart district

Count	Authorised sites with planning permission SOCIAL RENTED	Authorised sites with planning permission PRIVATE	Unauthorised sites WITHOUT PLANNING PERMISSION (TOLERATED)	Total
2023	0	4	0	4
2024	0	6	0	6
2025	0	11	0	11
2026	0	11	0	11
Average	0	8	0	8

Source: MHCLG Travelling Showpeople Caravan Count, Live Table 3

Local sites and yards

4.11 For Gypsy and Traveller residential sites, there are different types of site based on their planning status. **Authorised sites** are those with planning permission and can be on public or private land. Within the authorised category, there are also **temporary authorised sites**, which have planning permission granted for a limited period only (often used as an interim measure while a permanent site is identified or a planning application is being determined), and sites benefitting from a **Certificate of Lawful Use (CLU)**, which confirms that a use of land has become lawful through the passage of time (typically ten years of continuous use) without the need for a formal grant of planning permission, thereby conferring a degree of security equivalent to authorised status. **Unauthorised sites** are made up of either longer-term (approximately three months or longer)

unauthorised encampments, which can be considered to be indicative of a permanent need for accommodation (in some instances local authorities class these as **tolerated sites** and do not take enforcement action to remove them); shorter-term **unauthorised encampments**, where Travellers are temporarily stopping on land they do not own, often giving rise to welfare considerations that local authorities must have regard to before taking any enforcement action; and **unauthorised developments**, where Travellers are residing upon land that they own but which does not have planning permission.

4.12 Table 4.4 sets out the location of Gypsy and Traveller sites across Hart district. There are currently a total of 53 pitches across 7 different sites based on current planning status:

- 1 council site (20 pitches, 15 occupied by 15 households, 5 vacant).
- 6 private authorised sites (33 pitches, 31 occupied by 31 households, 2 vacant).

4.13 There is one Travelling Showperson's yard in Hart (3 plots, 3 households, 0 vacant).

4.14 Table 4.4 sets out assumptions regarding pitches and household occupancy on each site and yard. This provides a transparent base position from which the modelling of future pitch need in Chapter 6 can proceed. Table 4.5 provides a summary of provision and occupancy of sites and yards.

Table 4.4a List of Gypsy & Traveller sites (as of May 2026)

Site Reference	Site Name	Location	Type of Site	Total number of pitches	Occupied	Vacant	Households	Household interviews achieved	Interviews not achieved	Refused	Not available
LA1	Star Hill Park	Wokingham Road, Hartley Wintney, Hook, Hampshire RG27 8BP	Council authorised	20	15	5	15	13	2	0	2
Priv1	Guide Hut	21A Mill Lane, Yateley GU46 7TE	Private Authorised	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
Priv2	Four Oaks	41 Crondall Road, Crookham Village, Fleet GU10 5RU	Private Authorised	6	6	0	6	6	0	0	0
Priv3	Greenacre Stables	Taplins Farm Lane, Winchfield, Hook RG27 8SH	Private Authorised	2	2	0	2	2	0	0	0
Priv4	Oaktree Paddock	Potbridge Road, Odiham RG29 1JW	Private Authorised	2	2	0	2	0	2	0	2
Priv5	Penny Hill Park	Blackwater, Camberley GU17 9LT	Private Authorised	20	20	0	20	16	4	0	4
Priv6	Farnham Lodge	Farnham Road, Odiham, Hook RG29 1HS	Private Authorised	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL G&T				53	46	7	46	37	9	0	9

Table 4.4b List of Travelling Showperson yards (as of May 2026)

Yard Reference	Yard Name	Location	Type of Site	Total number of plots	Occupied	Vacant	Households	Household interviews achieved	Interviews not achieved	Refused	Not available
TSP1	Small Acre Farm	Chalkey Lane	Private Authorised	3	3	0	3	3	0	0	0

Source: Council data 2026, site survey and fieldwork 2026

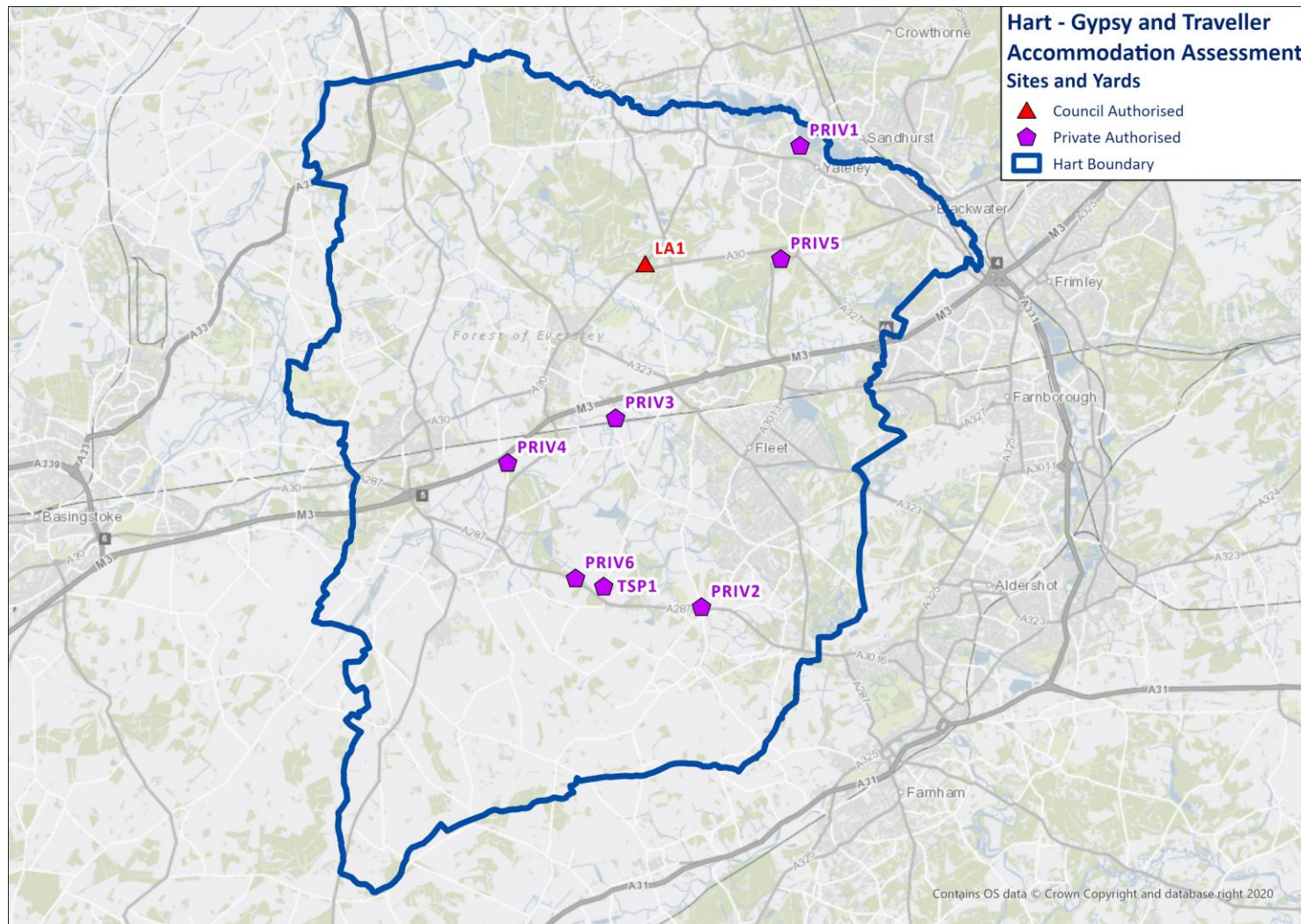
Table 4.5a Summary of Gypsy & Traveller sites (as of May 2026)

Number of Sites	Type of site	Total number of pitches	Total occupied pitches	Total vacant pitches	Number of households	Household interviews	Household interviews not achieved	Reason: Refused	Reason: Not Present
1	Council	20	15	5	15	13	2	0	2
6	Private authorised	33	31	2	31	24	7	0	7
7	TOTAL	53	46	7	46	37	9	0	9

Table 4.5b Summary of Travelling Showperson yards (as of May 2026)

Number of yards	Type of yard	Total number of plots	Total occupied plots	Total vacant plots	Number of households	Household interviews	Household interviews not achieved	Reason: Refused	Reason: Not Present
1	Private authorised	3	3	0	3	3	0	0	0

Source: Council data 2026, site survey and fieldwork 2026

Map 4.1 Location of sites in Hart district

5. Household and stakeholder survey findings

- 5.1 This chapter presents the findings of stakeholder consultation and the household survey, which was carried out to provide primary data to inform this GTAA. The survey aimed to reach as many Gypsy and Traveller households living in the study area as possible. It was conducted using the questionnaire presented in Appendix A. The stakeholder views expressed in this section may not reflect the views of the Council or arc4.

Gypsy and Traveller households living in Hart district

- 5.2 A review of the characteristics of Gypsy and Traveller households living in Hart district has been based on data for 37 households living on pitches, 9 roadside families and 3 Travelling Showperson households. The roadside families were all travelling through the district and not intending to stay in the area. The term roadside applies to households who are camped literally on the roadside or on other locations such as fields, car parks or other open spaces.
- 5.3 The number of responses achieved to particular questions is summarised for each question. It would not be appropriate to provide a detailed analysis of the survey information, for instance by residential location, as this has the potential to identify individual responses. Broad summaries of the household data are presented in a manner which maintains respondent confidentiality. Where analysis refers to 'small numbers' this means 4 or fewer households.
- 5.4 Based on the household interviews, the following profile has been developed for the Gypsy and Traveller communities in Hart district. Note for each theme, a base figure is given - this is the total number of households for which data are available.
- 5.5 **Ethnicity** (base=37): Of households interviewed, 65% identified as Romany Gypsy/English/Welsh Traveller and 35% identified as Irish Traveller. All of the roadside households (base=9) were Irish Travellers.
- 5.6 **Household size** (base=37): 21.6% two person; 21.6% three person; 21.6% four person households; 24.3% five person households and 10.8% six or more people. The roadside families had between 4 and 8 members in each household.
- 5.7 **Household type** (base=37): 16.2% couples, 18.9% couples with child(ren) including adult children, 18.9% single parents and 45.9% were multi-adult or extended families living as one household. All of the roadside households were couples with children.
- 5.8 **Age profile:** Household survey data reports the following age profile (base=144 people in 37 households): 34.0% were aged 13 or under, 5.6% aged 14-17, 29.9% aged 18-34, 16.0% aged 35-49, 11.1% aged 50-64 and 3.5% aged 65 and over.
- 5.9 **Length of residence** (base=37): 35.1% lived at their current place of residence for less than 5 years, 13.5% between 5 and less than 10 years, 5.4% between 10 and less than 20 years and 45.9% for 20 years or more.

Help and support needs

- 5.10 Respondents were asked if they had any broader help and support needs or experienced any barriers to getting services. Responses were positive, with households generally stating that they had no issue getting the services they required, in particular GP access.
- 5.11 Health need is greater on the council site. On private sites, 19 of 22 respondents reported no health-related needs, with only isolated mentions of mental health and arthritis. On the council site, 5 of 13 households reported health conditions (including arthritis, diabetes, a child with a disability, and osteoarthritis with a carer and blood-pressure management), with 8 reporting none.
- 5.12 GP access was mostly reported as satisfactory across both groups. A small number reported barriers: on the council site, one household could not access their GP because “everything is online” (a digital-access barrier) and one simply answered “yes” to experiencing barriers; on private sites, one found access difficult and one used a GP in a different area.
- 5.13 On site facilities, only five private-site households commented, and those that did described facilities as not applicable or acceptable, raising no significant problems. By contrast, all 13 council-site households reported problems, overwhelmingly concerning the shed or dayroom: seven described it as full of rubbish, several as unusable or useless, and others called for major improvements.

Travelling patterns

- 5.14 Households on both site types have a strongly nomadic background: asked where they lived at age 15, the large majority on both private and council sites reported travelling (often in the UK or Ireland), with only a couple having grown up in bricks and mortar. Current travelling is now limited, with around a third of respondents on each site type having travelled in the past year; the rest had not. Where a reason was given, travelling was work-related.

Travelling Showperson households living in Hart district

- 5.15 There is currently one Travelling Showperson’s yard in the district which accommodates 3 households. No further details are reported in this report for confidentiality reasons.

Other caravan dwellers

- 5.16 The revised PPTS 2024 broadens the definition of Traveller to include ‘all other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or of living in a caravan’ and therefore widens the range of people who are covered by the PPTS. This definitional change is also included in the proposed revisions to the NPPF published for consultation in December 2025.

5.17 The key points around the phrasing include:

‘cultural tradition’ which means a long-standing, established way of life, not a short-term arrangement or one linked to economic circumstances. The wording implies habits, customs and social practices passed through time.

‘nomadism’ which means regular or seasonal movement from place to place as part of that way of life, for instance historically for work, family networks or tradition.

‘living in a caravan’ refers to people who have culturally lived in a caravan or similar mobile accommodation, not simply anyone living in a van due to housing pressure.

5.18 Essentially, the definition is seeking to ensure that local authorities do not exclude groups that do not fit neatly into a particular ethnicity, for instance New Age travellers with an established nomadic culture and other non-Gypsy Traveller groups with a demonstrable, long-term tradition of mobile living.

5.19 Although case law is currently limited as the definitional change is relatively new, in practice the phrase is unlikely to include:

- People living in vehicles solely because of lack of housing or cost;
- People without a demonstrable cultural or historic tradition of nomadism; and
- Short-term van dwellers or those adopting vehicle living later in life for economic reasons alone.

5.20 Stakeholders did not identify any needs from other groups, for instance New Age Travellers or Van Dwellers in Hart district.

5.21 The Council should consider criteria-based policies to consider any needs arising from other groups with a cultural tradition of living in a caravan.

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

Introduction

- 6.1 This chapter assesses the overall pitch and plot requirements for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople across Hart district. It covers:
- Current and future pitch supply and need, based on data modelling.
 - Transit pitch requirements for Gypsies and Travellers.
 - Planning policy recommendations.
- 6.2 Pitch requirements are calculated using the modelling approach set out in the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments: Guidance (DCLG, 2007). Although that guidance has since been formally withdrawn, it continues to represent best practice for assessing pitch and plot need.
- 6.3 The methodology requires an assessment of current need, supplemented by a household survey, and projects future need using secondary data sources. Modelling presents an overall need figure based on the revised 2024 Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) definition.
- 6.4 The modelling establishes an overall gross need for pitches based on household growth rates and net need which take into account potential additional pitch capacity and household dissolution (households moving away, into bricks and mortar and the death of pitch occupants) to establish a net growth figure. The outcome of analysis is also tested against broader national net growth rates in the order of 1.25% to 3% each year.

Gypsy and Traveller residential pitch requirement model overview

- 6.5 Pitch need is assessed across two time periods:
- Short-term 5-year model covering the period 2026/27 to 2030/31; and
 - Longer-term models based on assumptions regarding children likely to need a pitch in the future: Model A covers the period 2031/32 to 2038/39 and Model B covers the period 2031/32 to 2043/44.

Short-term five-year model

- 6.6 The 5-year model takes into account the following need factors:
- The baseline number of households on all site types as of May 2026.
 - Existing households planning to move in the next five years, both from sites and from bricks and mortar accommodation, and where they intend to move.
 - Emerging households (those currently on sites or in bricks and mortar) expected to require a pitch within Hart district over the next five years.

- 6.7 The supply side of the model considers:
- Total number of pitches on authorised sites; and
 - Vacant pitches on authorised sites
- 6.8 The model then reconciles total need and existing authorised supply over the next five years by summarising:
- total need for pitches; and
 - total supply of authorised pitches.
- 6.9 Table 6.1 provides a summary of the short-term pitch need calculation for Hart district. Each component in the model is now discussed to ensure that the process is transparent and any assumptions clearly stated.

Need: Current households on pitches (section 1 Table 6.1)

- 6.10 Data from council records and site observation indicates there are currently 46 households living on sites in Hart district distributed as follows:
- 15 households on a council site
 - 31 households on private permanently authorised sites
 - No households on unauthorised sites

Current households in bricks and mortar accommodation (Section 2 of Table 6.1)

- 6.11 The 2021 Census identified approximately 79 Gypsy and Traveller households living in bricks and mortar accommodation across Hart district.

Existing households planning to move in the next five years (Section 3 of Table 6.1)

Households currently on sites

- 6.12 The 2026 household survey found that several households planned to move in the next 5 years to several alternative sites and into bricks and mortar accommodation.

Households currently in bricks and mortar

- 6.13 Drawing on national arc4 research, it is estimated that 5.3% of households in bricks and mortar accommodation would prefer to live on a site. Applied to the 79 Census households, this equates to approximately 4 households.

In-migration

- 6.14 Analysis of household survey data shows that 4 households moved into Hart district and onto a pitch during the previous five years. This in-migration rate is carried forward as an allowance for future in-migration in the short-term model. There is some debate regarding the inclusion of in-migration but it has been an

important driver of pitch need in Hart district and therefore included in modelling.

- 6.15 The overall pitch need from section 3 of the model is +4 pitches.

Emerging households (Section 4 of Table 6.1)

- 6.16 Based on the 2026 household survey, 30 emerging households are expected to require a pitch within Hart district over the next five years (rows 4a + 4b + 4d). Where young people aged 18 or over are living with their family and have not expressed a wish to form a new household, this is treated as a deliberate choice and no additional need is assumed.

Total need

- 6.17 Combining all need components, current households on authorised pitches, net movement and need from emerging households, gives a total pitch need of 80.

Supply of authorised pitches

- 6.18 There are currently 53 authorised pitches (46 occupied and 7 vacant).

Reconciling supply and demand over short-term

- 6.19 Comparing the total need of 80 pitches against the authorised supply of 53 pitches produces a net shortfall of 27 pitches over the 5-year period 2026/27 to 2030/31.

Table 6.1 Summary of demand and supply factors: Gypsies and Travellers – Hart district 2026/27 to 2030/31

	Category	Detail	Pitches
1. NEED:	Households Currently on Pitches		
1a	Households on pitches	Council site	15
1b		Private site – Permanently Authorised	31
1c		Unauthorised site	0
1d	TOTAL households on pitches		46
2. NEED:	Households in Bricks and Mortar		
2	Estimate (2021 Census)	Bricks and mortar accommodation	79
3. NEED:	Existing Households Planning to Move (Next 5 Years)		
3a	Currently on sites – no net impact	To another pitch/same site	0
3b		To another site in district	1.2
3c		From site to bricks and mortar (-)	3.7
3d		To site/bricks and mortar outside district (-)	0
3e	Currently in bricks and mortar (+)	Planning to move to a site in LA	4.2
3f		Planning to move to another B&M property	0
3g	Roadside or homeless	Currently on roadside	0
3h		Homeless (+)	0
3i	In-migration allowance (+)	Households who have moved in from elsewhere	3.7
3j	NET IMPACT	$-3c - 3d + 3e + 3g + 3h + 3i$	4
4. NEED:	Emerging Households (Next 5 Years)		
4a	On site – staying in district (+)	Planning to remain on current/other local site	16
4b	On site – another site in district (+)	Planning to move to another site locally	14
4c	On site – leaving district	Planning to move outside district (excluded)	1.2
4d	Currently in B&M (+)	Planning to move to a site in LA	0
4e	Currently in B&M	Moving to B&M (no net impact)	0
4f	On site	Moving to B&M (no net impact)	0
4g	TOTAL EMERGING NEED	$4a + 4b + 4d$	30
5	TOTAL NEED		
5	TOTAL PITCH NEED	$1d + 3j + 4g$	80
6. SUPPLY:	Authorised Pitches		
6a	Occupied permanently authorised pitches		46
6b	Vacant authorised pitches		7
6c	TOTAL AUTHORISED SUPPLY	$6a + 6b$	53
	RECONCILING NEED AND SUPPLY		
7	Total need (5 years)	From row 5	80
8	Total supply (5 years)	From row 6c	53
5-YEAR AUTHORISED PITCH SHORTFALL (2026/27 – 2030/31)			27

Longer-term pitch need

- 6.20 Longer-term pitch need is modelled from the age profile of children currently living in Gypsy and Traveller households who have expressed a preference for living on a pitch. The model assumes that a child is likely to form a new household at the age of 18.
- 6.21 A key assumption is that 50% of children will form new households in the local area: culturally, women tend to move away on marriage while men remain close to their families. This 50% rate has been tested at planning inquiry and corroborated by several Travelling interviewees.

Longer-term pitch need 2031/32 to 2038/39 (Period A)

- 6.22 Analysis indicates an overall need for 16 additional pitches over the longer-term 2031/32 to 2038/39 based on the number of children living on sites (Table 6.2).

Table 6.2 Future pitch requirements based on the assumption that 50% of children will require a pitch in Hart district (Period A)

Time period	No. children	No. pitches
2031/32 to 2035/36 (5 years)	24	12
2036/37 to 2038/39 (3 years)	8	4
Total (8 years)	32	16

Note: figures subject to rounding

Longer-term pitch need 2031/32 to 2043/44 (Period B)

- 6.23 Analysis indicates an overall need for 30 additional pitches over the longer-term 2031/32 to 2043/44 based on the number of children living on sites (Table 6.3).

Table 6.3 Future pitch requirements based on the assumption that 50% of children will require a pitch in Hart district (Period B)

Time period	No. children	No. pitches
2031/32 to 2035/36 (5 years)	24	12
2036/37 to 2040/41 (5 years)	15	7
2041/42 to 2043/44 (3 years)	21	11
Total (13 years)	60	30

Note: figures subject to rounding

Overall pitch need

- 6.24 Tables 6.4 and 6.5 consolidate the short-term and longer-term pitch need figures for Hart district across both modelled periods. The main driver of need in the first five years is emerging household need, supplemented by in-migration, and in the longer term anticipated household formation.
- 6.25 For Period A (2026/27 to 2038/39), the overall need is 43 additional residential pitches based on analysis of household data. For Period B (2026/27 to 2043/44), the overall need is 57 additional residential pitches.

Table 6.4 Gypsy and Traveller pitch need arising within Hart district 2026/27 to 2038/39 (Period A)

Period	Pitch Need
5-Year Authorised Pitch Shortfall (2026/27 – 2030/31) (A)	27
Longer-term need: 2031/32 – 2035/36 (B)	12
Longer-term need: 2036/37 – 2038/39 (C)	4
Longer-term need TOTAL to 2038/39 (8 years) E = B + C	16
NET SHORTFALL 2026/27 – 2038/39 (A + E) 13 years	43
Annual net need (average)	3.3

Table 6.5 Gypsy and Traveller pitch need 2026/27 to 2043/44 – Hart district (Period B)

Period	Pitch Need
5-Year Authorised Pitch Shortfall (2026/27 – 2030/31) (A)	27
Longer-term need: 2031/32 – 2035/36 (B)	12
Longer-term need: 2036/37 – 2040/41 (C)	7
Longer-term need: 2041/42 – 2043/44 (D)	11
Longer-term need TOTAL to 2043/44 (13 years) E = B + C + D	30
NET SHORTFALL 2026/27 – 2043/44 (A + E) 18 years	57
Annual net need (average)	3.2

Potential capacity for Gypsy and Traveller pitches on existing sites

6.26 To help meet the overall need, there are several potential sources of pitch supply as summarised in Table 6.6.

Table 6.6 Gypsy and Traveller pitch need: potential sources of pitch supply

Option	Detail	No. pitches	Comment
1. Regularisation of unauthorised private site	Pitches on site that is not authorised	0	No unauthorised sites
2. Potential household dissolution	Based on profile of residents on sites	1	Potential pitches coming available during the plan period owing to the current age of occupants
3. Reletting/turnover on council site pitches	Very few people have moved onto their pitch in the past 5 years	1	Minimal turnover anticipated
4. Site expansion/intensification	None identified	0	
Total		2	

6.27 Each of these options is now discussed in further detail.

Regularisation

- 6.28 Regularisation of sites that are not permanently authorised would help meet the needs identified. As there are no unauthorised sites in Hart district, this figure is zero.

Household dissolution

- 6.29 Analysis also considers potential for pitches to come available through the dissolution of households. This can result from the death of the sole occupant of a pitch, households moving out of the area and to bricks and mortar accommodation. The household survey indicated 1 pitch is likely to become available through death of the sole occupant.

Turnover on sites

- 6.30 Turnover relates to the number of pitches that are expected to become available for occupancy. Analysis only includes expected turnover on public sites as this is referenced in (former) CLG guidance and more accurate data on changes in pitch occupancy is likely to be available. Although there is likely to be turnover on private sites, the ability of households to move onto private sites may be more restrictive (for instance the site may be restricted to a particular family) and less likely to be recorded. There was some evidence of turnover/reletting on the existing council site, but this is minimal, with only 1 pitch moved onto in the past 5 years. However, the use of turnover in helping to meet need can come under heavy criticism. Therefore, the Council should note that there may be pitch supply arising from turnover which would help meet identified need but not rely on this to reduce the level of additional pitches needed to be delivered.

Site expansion/intensification

- 6.31 No sites were identified for expansion or intensification through household survey interviews.

Summary of need and capacity

- 6.32 Overall, there is a short-term 2026/27 to 2030/31 minimum need for 27 pitches.
- 6.33 Over the longer-term, the minimum needs are:
- Period A (2031/32 to 2038/39): 16 pitches
 - Period B (2031/32 to 2043/44): 30 pitches
- 6.34 The overall minimum need is therefore:
- Period A (2026/27 to 2038/39): 43 pitches
 - Period B (2026/27 to 2043/44): 57 pitches
- 6.35 There is a limited potential supply of 1 pitch through household dissolution. This would reduce the overall minimum need to 42 pitches (Period A) and 56 pitches

(Period B). Additionally, there is likely to be turnover/reletting of council pitches which has the potential to provide 1 pitch every 5 years.

Tenure preferences

- 6.36 Existing households planning to move and newly-forming households provided views on the type of site they expected to move to (base = 29 households). Most (76%) considered pitches on private sites and 24% considered pitches on council sites. In general, those currently on social rented pitches stated a preference for social renting and those on private pitches a preference for living on a private pitch.

Transit requirements

- 6.37 There are a number of ways to deliver temporary places where Travellers can stop whilst passing through a local authority area. These include transit sites, stop over areas and negotiated stopping. A good indicator of transit need is unauthorised encampment activity.
- 6.38 For Hart district over the period 2020 to 2025, there were 23 incidents of unauthorised encampment activity (Table 6.7):
- The number of caravans on unauthorised encampments ranged between 4 and 12.
 - The median number of caravans on an encampment has been 6 and mode (most frequently reported) has been 6 caravans.

Table 6.7 Unauthorised encampment activity in Hart district

Year	Number of encampments recorded
2020	3
2021	3
2022	1
2023	1
2024	10
2025	5
Size of encampment	Number of caravans
Median	6
Mode	6
Range	4 to 12

Source: Council data

- 6.39 A stakeholder with a knowledge of Traveller communities in Hart district considered that the low year-on-year encampment numbers do not yet warrant a transit site, and likewise saw no genuine current need for temporary stop-over places. Land availability was cited as the main barrier to transit provision.
- 6.40 However, when considering transit need, the Council needs to be mindful of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 (Part 4). This creates a criminal

offence of residing on land without consent in or with a vehicle, where significant damage, disruption or distress has been or is likely to be caused and the person fails to leave when asked. The Act gives police increased powers to act and introduces significant penalties (fines up to £2,500, impounding vehicles and prison sentences).

- 6.41 It is recommended that the Council considers negotiated stopping arrangements to positively manage unauthorised encampment activity, with a recommendation to identify land to accommodate encampments of up to 5 caravans, encampments of between 6 and 10 caravans and encampments of more than 10 caravans.
- 6.42 Negotiated stopping involves councils making an agreement with Gypsies and Travellers on unauthorised encampments. The terms of the agreement can vary but usually include the provision of portaloos, waste disposal, water; the length of the agreement can vary but tends to be around 28 days; and users agree to comply with rules for behaviour and use of the site. More information can be found at [Negotiated Stopping](#).

Cross-boundary issues: views of stakeholders

- 6.43 No respondent was aware of specific regular movements between Hart and their own area. Wokingham Borough Council observed that most of its Gypsy and Traveller population lives in the south of the borough close to Hart, making some degree of cross-boundary movement likely, though it held no evidence of its extent or nature. Bracknell Forest Council, West Berkshire Council, and Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council were each unaware of regular movements, with one authority caveating that this does not preclude established family connections, and a local site operator noting a reduction in movement during the traditional travelling season (Easter to the end of October).
- 6.44 On cross-boundary issues for the study to consider, Wokingham Borough Council requested any qualitative or quantitative data on movements into Wokingham that the occupier survey gathers. Bracknell Forest Council noted its own documented longer-term unmet need for permanent pitches, which the examination Inspector expected to be met through speculative proposals, and valued an appreciation of neighbouring positions. East Hampshire District Council referred back to its Duty to Co-operate Framework 2025. West Berkshire Council flagged that the Atomic Weapons Establishment (Aldermaston and Burghfield) public consultation zones (the 12km zone) extend into Hart district and that relevant development should have regard to this. Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council set out the principle that each authority should meet its own need rather than rely on neighbours, while noting that the forthcoming move to a single unitary authority means that needs should also be considered across the wider geography and beyond, including Wokingham and Winchester, with particular regard to whether transit or temporary stop-over provision is required.
- 6.45 Regarding the cooperation between plan-making authorities, neighbouring authorities who responded to the stakeholder survey agreed that the questionnaire contributes to cooperation. Rushmoor Borough Council agreed

and asked that Hart reciprocate engagement for its own forthcoming GTAA; Wokingham Borough Council agreed that it provides a starting point and expected further engagement on outcomes and emerging policy; Bracknell Forest Council agreed, noting that the referenced provisions have been superseded by the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026, and asked to be kept informed; and Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council agreed and asked to be kept informed of progress and cross-boundary implications.

Travelling showperson needs

- 6.46 There is one Travelling Showperson yard in Hart district which accommodates three households. Based on the demographics of households, no additional plot needs have been identified over the periods 2026/27 to 2038/39.
- 6.47 That said, the Council should recognise there is a national strategic need for more Travelling Showperson yards and the Council should maintain a criteria-based policy suitably amended to reflect the specific needs of Travelling Showpeople should an application for a yard come forward.

Other needs

- 6.48 The broader PPTS 2024 definition of Traveller, which includes 'all other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or of living in a caravan', and the groups it is and is not likely to cover are discussed in Chapter 5 (paragraphs 5.16 to 5.19).
- 6.49 Stakeholders did not identify any needs for New Age Travellers or Van Dwellers in Hart district including a local site operator. One council flagged an evidence barrier distinct to this group: councils generally hold less information on New Travellers and Van Dwellers, making need harder to assess than for ethnic or cultural Gypsies and Travellers.
- 6.50 The Council should therefore have criteria-based policies to consider any needs should they arise from other groups with a cultural tradition of living in a caravan.

7. Conclusion and response

- 7.1 This concluding chapter provides a brief summary of key findings and recommendations.

Gypsy and Traveller Current accommodation

- 7.2 There are well-established Gypsy and Traveller communities living in Hart district. There are currently 46 households living on 53 pitches across 7 different sites. There are also known to be bricks and mortar households in the district.

Future Gypsy and Traveller residential need

- 7.3 Based on an analysis of the needs of households living across all sites in Hart district and considering an allowance for households living in bricks and mortar, the overall minimum need for pitches is 43 (Period A 2026/27 to 2038/39) and 57 (Period B 2026/27 to 2043/44).

Transit provision

- 7.4 There is currently no provision to address transit need but given unauthorised encampment activity, the Council will need to consider appropriate responses.
- 7.5 In line with emerging practice around the country, it is recommended that the Council should develop a negotiated stopping protocol to positively manage any unauthorised encampment activity, with a recommendation to identify land to accommodate encampments of up to 5 caravans, encampments of between 6 and 10 caravans and encampments of more than 10 caravans.

Travelling Showperson need

- 7.6 There is one Travelling Showperson's yard in Hart but no identified plot need arising from households living on the yard. However, there is a national strategic shortfall of Travelling Showperson yards and need may arise in Hart district over the plan period. The Council should maintain and enhance its criteria-based policy in the Local Plan to appraise applications that may be received.

Policy recommendations

- 7.7 It is recommended that the Local Plan continues to set out criteria-based policies to inform future planning applications for private Gypsy and Traveller sites and Travelling Showperson yards.

Future updating

- 7.8 The GTAA should be updated on a 5-yearly basis to ensure that the level of pitch and plot provision remains appropriate for the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson populations across Hart district.

Appendix A: Gypsy and Traveller Fieldwork Questionnaire

QUESTION	RESPONSE
Date and Time	
Site Reference	
Address	
UK General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018	The UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 give people rights to control personal data held about them by organisations This study is being done for Hart District Council to identify if there is a need for more residential pitches and transit provision in the area. A report will be prepared based on the findings of these surveys. The information you provide will not be used for any other purpose.
Can you please say if you are happy to carry on with the questionnaire on this basis?	Yes.....No

	QUESTION	RESPONSE
1	Pitch/Property Type (and tenure if B&M)	
2	No. Statics/mobiles/chalets or bricks and mortar	
3	No. tourers/caravans	
3a	No. of amenity blocks	
4	Description of pitch occupancy	
5	No. households	
6	No. concealed households	
7	No. doubled up households	
8	Does anyone else use this pitch as their home/main home base? If so, who	

9	HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS	Gender	Age	Relationship to respondent
	Respondent			
	Person 2			
	Person 3			
	Person 4			
	Person 5			
	Person 6			
	Person 7			
	Person 8			

10	ETHNICITY	
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	QUESTION	RESPONSE
11	How many bedspaces are there on your pitch?	
12	Overcrowding of home	Y / N
13	Overcrowding of pitch	Y / N
14	Thinking back to when you were 15, were you living on a site, on the roadside or living in bricks and mortar housing?	S, R, B&M
15	Where were you living? Record district/settlement name	

	TRAVELLING QUESTIONS	RESPONSE
16	In the last year have you or someone in your household travelled?	Y / N
17	If yes, reason(s) for travelling	
18	If yes, please describe when and where do you travel? (if relevant)	
19	If no, what reasons do you or your household have for not travelling now or in the future?	

	WHERE YOU PLAN TO LIVE IN THE FUTURE	RESPONSE
20	Are you planning to move to another place to live in the next 5 years?	Y / N
21	Why are you planning to move?	
22	Where are you planning to move to? (Same Site, Private Site in District, Council Site in District, Outside District (if so where), Bricks and Mortar housing)	
23	What type of dwelling? (caravan, trailer, chalet, house, flat, bungalow)	
24	If pitch, single (one static) or double pitch (for two statics)	
24b	Do you need grazing land for livestock?	Y / N
24c	If you are considering bricks and mortar, what are your reasons	

	IF IN B&M HOUSING	RESPONSE
25	If you live in bricks and mortar housing, are you happy to live here or would you prefer to live on a pitch?	Happy Here / Prefer pitch
26	If you would prefer to live on a pitch is this because you have a 'cultural aversion' to living in bricks and mortar (this means it affects your mental health and makes you unhappy/depressed)?	Y / N

	EMERGING HOUSEHOLDS	RESPONSE
27	Emerging households: Are there any people in your household who want to move to their own pitch in the next 5 yrs?	Y / N

	Where planning to move to?	HH1	HH2	HH3	HH4
28	Where are you planning to move to? (Same Site, Private Site in District, Council Site in District, Outside District (if so where), Bricks and Mortar housing)				
29	What type of dwelling? (caravan, trailer, chalet, house, flat, bungalow)				
30	If pitch, single (one static) or double pitch (for two statics)				
31	If living in bricks and mortar, do you have a 'cultural aversion' to living in bricks and mortar? (this means it affects your mental health and makes you unhappy/ depressed)	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N

	ADDITIONAL RESIDENTIAL PITCHES	RESPONSE
32	Scope to expand site (extend the boundary of the site)	Y / N
33	No. additional pitches	
34	Scope to intensify pitches (put more pitches on the existing site)	Y / N
35	No. additional pitches	
36	Are there any vacant pitches on the site which could be used by another family? If so, how many pitches	
37	In general, is there a need for more residential pitches (for people to live on all the time?)	Y / N
38	If so, how many are needed?	
39	Who should own them (Council, people from the Traveller Community, non-Travellers)	
40	Do you own any land or know of anywhere within the district which could be considered for development as a site?	

	TRANSIT AND TEMPORARY STOPOVER NEED	RESPONSE
41	Is there a need to provide places where people can stop whilst travelling through the district? This can include transit pitches or stopover places	Y / N
42	Is there a need for transit pitches (for people stopping over temporarily) in the district? A transit pitch is intended for short-term use and usually includes space for two caravans, parking space and access to electricity, a toilet, washing facilities	Y / N
43	If so, how many are needed?	
44	Who should manage them? (Council, Traveller Community)	
45	Where should they be located?	

	TRANSIT AND TEMPORARY STOPOVER NEED	RESPONSE
46	Is there a need for stopover places? A stopover place is land which can be used on a temporary basis and usually include access to portaloos, waste disposal and water	Y / N
47	If so, how many are needed?	
48	Who should manage them? (Council, Traveller Community)	
49	Where should they be located?	

	RESIDENTIAL HISTORY	RESPONSE
50	How many years have you lived here?	
Routing	If more than five years	Go to Q56
	If five years or less	Go to Q51
51	Where did you move from? (District)	
52	Were you living on a Private Site, Council Site, Roadside or Bricks and Mortar housing?	
53	When you moved here, was the pitch vacant, a brand-new pitch or had the pitch been created by dividing up an existing pitch?	
54	What were the reasons for moving here?	
55	Did you already have a connection with the area? (e.g. family or friends living here; or you used to live here?)	

	SUPPORT NEEDS
56	Do you or a member of your household have any health-related needs? Could you please explain what they are?

	FINAL QUESTIONS	RESPONSE
57	Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about your housing or support needs?	
58	Do you know anyone in bricks and mortar housing looking to live on a pitch? If so, can you provide contact details	

OTHER COMMENTS

Appendix B: Glossary of terms

Bargee Travellers: Itinerant boat dwellers on Britain's inland and coastal waterways. This includes anyone whose home is a boat and who does not have a permanent mooring for their boat with planning permission for residential use.

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

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

CRE: Commission for Racial Equality.

Duty to cooperate: introduced in the Localism Act 2011 and set out in section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. It places a legal duty on local planning authorities in England to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with prescribed bodies on the preparation of a Local Plan. The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, which received Royal Assent on 26 October 2023, will revoke the Duty in relation to the reformed plan-making system and replace the legal test with a soundness test in national policy. However, the Duty remains a legal requirement for Local Plans progressed within the current system. The draft NPPF uses the term 'cooperation between plan-making authorities' (policies PM10 and PM11).

Gypsies and Travellers: Defined in MHCLG *Planning policy for traveller sites 2024* annex 1 as "*Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, and all other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or of living in a caravan, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.*"

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

MHCLG: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (known as DCLG before 2018, renamed the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) in 2021 and reverted to MHCLG in 2024). The ministry has oversight of policies to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers in England.

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

Negotiated Stopping: involves Local Authority officers making an agreement with Gypsies and Travellers on unauthorised encampments. The agreement allows Travellers to stay either on the land they are camped on or move to a bit of land more suitable for all parties. The length of the agreement can also vary from 2 weeks to several months but tends to be around 28 days. The agreement is a local one and will vary but has so far included Travellers agreeing to leave sites clean and not make too much noise and the Local Authority providing waste disposal and toilets, sometimes showers and water too. See [Negotiated Stopping](#) for more information.

Pitch: Area of land on a Gypsy/Traveller site occupied by one resident family; sometimes referred to as a plot, especially when referring to Travelling Showpeople. MHCLG *Planning policy for traveller sites* (December 2024) states that *“For the purposes of this planning policy, “pitch” means a pitch on a “gypsy and traveller” site and “plot” means a pitch on a “travelling showpeople” site (often called a “yard”). This terminology differentiates between residential pitches for “gypsies and travellers” and mixed-use plots for “travelling showpeople”, which may / will need to incorporate space or to be split to allow for the storage of equipment”*.

Plot: see pitch

PPTS: Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (DCLG, 2012 and 2015 editions, updated 2023 with latest edition published by MHCLG December 2024).

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

Roma: Migrant populations from Central and Eastern Europe that have arrived in the UK in the last half-century. It is an umbrella term used to describe sub-groups including Sinti, Lovari, Erldes and others.

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

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

Showpeople: Defined in MHCLG *Planning policy for traveller sites* (December 2024) as *“Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family’s or dependants’ more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above”*.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Unauthorised encampment: Land where Gypsies or Travellers reside in vehicles or tents without permission. Unauthorised encampments can occur in a variety of locations (roadside, car parks, parks, fields, etc.) and constitute trespass. The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 gives local authorities and the police powers to direct people to leave land, and failing to comply with a direction is a criminal offence. Unauthorised encampments fall into two main categories: those on land owned by local authorities and those on privately owned land. It is up to the landowner to take enforcement action in conjunction with the police.

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

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