

Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation Assessment 2025

Milton Keynes City Council

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



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

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The Milton Keynes 2025 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) is being prepared by arc⁴ Ltd. The GTAA provides the latest available evidence to identify the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople across the city.

The GTAA is currently being finalised and this statement sets out evidence to date.

The GTAA has included:

- A review of existing (secondary) data.
- Stakeholder consultation with a range of stakeholders.
- Site visits and a household survey. A total of 33 households were identified as living across 18 authorised and 10 unauthorised pitches, with doubled up households on 5 pitches. Of the 33 households, 21 were interviewed (64%) and information from the remaining 12 households was provided through site management information or data from planning enforcement. Overall, the GTAA achieved information on all households on sites.

Data have been carefully analysed to provide a picture of current provision across Milton Keynes and to assess 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 Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson communities across Milton Keynes for their positive engagement with the work. We are also thankful to Lucy Ritchie who helped to publicise the study with local residents.

Population and current accommodation provision

The 2021 Census identified a population of 159 people who identified as 'White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller' or 'Gypsy/Romany' and an estimate of 50 households where the household reference person identifies as being a Gypsy/Traveller.

Across Milton Keynes (Table ES1) there are a total of 28 pitches across the following sites:

- 2 council sites (18 pitches, 18 occupied by 20 households)
- 1 Unauthorised pitch adjacent to a council site (1 pitch, 1 occupied by 1 household)
- 1 Unauthorised site (4 pitches, 4 occupied by 7 households)
- 1 Unauthorised site subject to planning enforcement (5 pitches, 5 occupied by 5 households)

In January and July each year, councils carry out a Traveller caravan count to inform MHCLG statistics. The latest seven bi-annual MHCLG Traveller caravan counts (January 2022 to January 2025) recorded an average of 34 caravans across all sites in Milton Keynes. The January 2025 count recorded 34 caravans that were all socially rented. No Travelling Showperson caravans have been reported in the period 2021 to 2025.

Table ES1 Summary of Gypsy and Traveller sites in Milton Keynes

Site Code	Site Name and address	Postcode	Type of site	Number of pitches	Total pitches occupied	Total pitches vacant	Number of households on pitches	Interviews achieved	Site management/ local knowledge/ planning application	Total household information
LA1	Calverton Lane, Milton Keynes	MK19 6ET	Council	12	12	0	14	10	4	14
LA2	Willen Road, Newport Pagnell	MK16 0QE	Council	6	6	0	6	4	2	6
Unauth 1	Willen Road, Newport Pagnell	MK16 0QE	Unauthorised extension	1	1	0	1	0	1	1
Unauth2	Brook End Nursery, opposite Wellies Day Nursery, North Crawley	MK16 9HH	Unauthorised private	4	4	0	7	7	0	7
Unauth3	Land adjacent to High Street opposite Gun Street, Sherington	MK16 9PE	Unauthorised private	5	5	0	5	0	5	5
TOTAL G&T				28	28	0	33	21	12	33

Planning policy requirements for needs assessments

The 2024 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 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 policy (including travellers)’*. A footnote in the NPPF then 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’*.

The 2024 Planning Policy for Traveller Site (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’*.

In the absence of further guidance on preparing GTAAs, the methods adopted by arc⁴ reflect the PPTS, build upon those methods established through previous guidance, our practical experience and decisions made at planning inquiries and appeals.

Need assessment period

Need has been assessed over a short-term period 2025/26 to 2029/30, the longer-term period 2030/31 to 2042/43 and the very long term period 2043/44 to 2049/50. It is assumed that the short-term need reflects the full plan period from 2022.

Gypsy and Traveller pitch requirements

For the period 2025/26 to 2049/50, there is a need for 75 additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches across the City of Milton Keynes (Table ES2). Of this need, 38 pitches are needed in the first five years 2025/26 to 2029/30, 24 over the longer-term period 2030/31 to 2042/43 and 13 over the very long term 2043/44 to 2049/50.

Needs analysis considers the needs arising from existing households, households on unauthorised sites, newly forming households, in-migrant households and current vacancies on existing sites. Needs analysis also takes into account households on the housing waiting list for pitches on public sites. The main drivers of need across the city are from households currently living on unauthorised sites, households on the housing register needing a pitch which includes need arising from bricks and mortar households and household formation from households already on pitches.

Table ES2 Gypsy and Traveller pitch need 2025/26 to 2049/50

Residential Pitch need	City of Milton Keynes
5yr Authorised Pitch Shortfall (2025/26 to 2029/30) (A)	38
Longer-term need	
Over period 2030/31 to 2034/35 (B)	9
Over period 2035/36 to 2039/40 (C)	7
Over period 2040/41 to 2042/43 (D)	8
Longer-term need TOTAL (E=B+C+D)	24
Very long-term need 2043/44 to 2049/50 (F)	13
TOTAL SHORTFALL 2025/26 to 2049/50 (A+E+F)	75

The overall scale of need is much higher to that reported in the 2021 GTAA. This reported a total need for 29 pitches over the period 2021 to 2040 of which 9 met the former planning definition and 20 did not meet the definition. The marked increase in need is primarily due to two unauthorised sites (13 pitches) and the children and young families associated with these sites.

Meeting the need

The council should consider the following to help meet identified residential pitch need as set out in Table ES3. There are a potential for 12 pitches to become available over the plan period through the potential regularisation of existing pitches on unauthorised sites (6) and the potential for 6 pitches to become available through household dissolution. There is limited turnover on public sites and therefore turnover is not factored into supply, but if pitches become available over the plan period this would also help meet identified need.

By taking into account potential regularisation and household dissolution, there would be potential supply of 12 pitches which would result in a residual need of 63 pitches on new sites over the period to 2049/50.

Notwithstanding evidence in this GTAA on need, additional need may arise over the plan period, for instance households moving into the City of Milton Keynes. It is therefore recommended the council has criteria-based policies to inform future planning applications for private sites should they arise.

Household growth rates

The scale of need represents an annual household growth rate of 3.3%. The anticipated scale of household dissolution represents a 0.8% dissolution rate, resulting in an overall net annual growth rate of 2.5%.

Table ES3 Gypsy and Traveller pitch need : potential sources of pitch supply from existing sites

Option	Detail	No. pitches	Comment
1.Regularisation of unauthorised private site	Pitches on site that is not authorised (Brook End Nursery)	0	Flood risk issue
2. Regularisation of unauthorised pitch on public site	There is an extra pitch that has been developed at the entrance to site at Willen Road	1	Potential for regularisation
3. Regularisation of unauthorised pitches on unauthorised site subject to enforcement	Pitches on site that is not authorised (High Street, Sherington)	5	Potential for regularisation
4. Additional pitches sites to meet family needs on sites not currently authorised	Unauth 3 Sherington	0	Limited scope for longer-term expansion to meet family need
5. Expansion/ intensification of existing public sites	None identified	0	No potential expansion of existing public sites with exception of additional pitch at Willen Road
6. Potential household dissolution	All on public pitches	6	Potential pitches coming available over the plan period owing to the current age of occupants.
7. Turnover/relets on council pitches	Minimal turnover of sites as mainly occupied by extended family groups	Assume limited turnover	No additional potential supply is assumed through turnover
Total		12 pitches	

Notwithstanding evidence in this GTAA on need, additional need may arise over the plan period, for instance households moving into Milton Keynes. It is therefore recommended the council has criteria-based policies to inform future planning applications for Gypsy and Traveller sites should they arise.

Transit provision

A bespoke study on transit need was prepared by ORS and published in January 2024. A total of 11 groups of Travellers were identified in addition to other groups who stopped in Milton Keynes for work. The study provided a number of options for the council to consider including a transit site and Negotiated Stopping arrangements. The preferred approach recommended by ORS was for the council to explore establishing a hybrid approach to manage smaller encampments building on elements of the

Negotiated Stopping model supplemented by a number of smaller temporary stopping places. More information can be found at [click here for link to model](#)

Travelling Showperson plot requirements

There are no Travelling Showperson yards in Milton Keynes. The previous 2021 GTAA also established no current or future need for plots on yards. For the 2025 GTAA, contact was made with the relevant section of the Showman's Guild of Great Britain to establish whether there was a need but no response was forthcoming. However, we were made aware of a household wanting to move to Milton Keynes and there is a potential need for 10 plots from Travelling Showpeople who have an economic and/or family links with Milton Keynes.

It is recommended that the council develop a criteria-based policy to consider any applications coming forward over the plan period.

1. Introduction

Overview

- 1.1 In April 2025, arc⁴ was commissioned by Milton Keynes City Council prepare a 2025 Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation Assessment (GTAA). This report updates the findings of the previous 2021 study.
- 1.2 The overall scope of the study is to ensure that the council has a robust evidence base to determine an appropriate level of residential pitch and transit provision needed over the period 2025/26 to 2049/50 for Gypsies and Travellers and plots for Travelling Showpeople.
- 1.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) and section 124 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 provide the policy context for this work.

Who the study covers?

- 1.4 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.”
- 1.5 Similarly, the following definition from Annex 1 of the Guidance 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.’
- 1.6 In addition:
‘For the purposes of this planning policy, “pitch” means a pitch on a “gypsy and traveller” site and “plot” means a pitch on a “travelling showpeople” site (often called a “yard”). This terminology differentiates between residential pitches for “gypsies and travellers” and mixed-use pitches for “travelling showpeople”, which may/will need to incorporate space or to be split to allow for the storage of equipment.’ (DCLG Planning policy for traveller sites December 2024 Annex 1, para 5).
- 1.7 For the purposes of this study, therefore, Gypsies and Travellers live on pitches within sites, whilst Travelling Showpeople live on plots within yards.

Report structure

1.8 The GTAA 2025 report structure is as follows:

- **Chapter 1 Introduction:** provides an overview of the study.
- **Chapter 2 Policy and local context:** presents a review of the national policy context which guides the study.
- **Chapter 3 Methodology:** provides details of the study's research methodology.
- **Chapter 4 Review of current Gypsy and Traveller population and provision of pitches/plots:** reviews estimates of the Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population across Milton Keynes and existing site/yard provision.
- **Chapter 5 Household survey:** presents relevant data obtained from the household survey research.
- **Chapter 6 Pitch/plot/transit requirements:** focuses on current and future pitch/plot requirements. This chapter includes a detailed assessment of drivers of demand, supply and current shortfalls across the city
- **Chapter 7 Conclusion and strategic response:** concludes the report, providing brief summary of key findings and recommendations.

1.9 The report is supplemented by the following appendices:

- **Appendix A** Household questionnaires.
- **Appendix B** Glossary of terms.

2. Policy and local context

- 2.1 This study is grounded in an understanding of the national legislative and planning policy context that underpins the assessment and provision of accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
- 2.2 This chapter sets out the policy context within which this GTAA has been prepared, including a consideration of the previous GTAA for Milton Keynes

Government policy and guidance

- 2.3 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’**.
- 2.4 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’**.
- 2.5 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’**.
- 2.6 In the absence of further guidance on preparing GTAAs, the methods adopted by arc⁴ reflect Policy A of the PPTS; build upon those methods established through previous guidance; our practical experience and findings from planning inquiries and appeals.
- 2.7 The calculation of pitch/plot requirements is based on established DCLG modelling methodology, as advocated in *Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment Guidance* (DCLG, 2007). Although this guidance was

formally withdrawn in December 2016, in the absence of any updated guidance on the subject, it continues to provide a good practice approach for needs modelling.

2.8 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.

2.9 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.

2.10 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.

Intentional unauthorised development

- 2.11 The planning policy statement issued with PPTS 2015 ([click here for link to statement](#)) and confirmed by Ministerial Statement ([click here for link to 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.
- 2.12 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).

Considering ‘Cultural’ and ‘PPTS’ need

- 2.13 The PPTS 2024 now contains a revised definition of Gypsy and Traveller which includes reference to people with a cultural tradition of nomadism or living in a caravan.

Responding to challenges

- 2.14 GTAAAs are subject to intense scrutiny, particularly at planning inquiries and hearings. The methodological approaches taken by arc⁴ aim to maximise the robustness of evidence and measures include:
 - An up-to-date assessment of the number of pitches on sites and the number of households living on pitches and any vacancies.
 - Maximising response rates from households.
 - Carefully considering the relationship between households and the pitches they occupy.
 - Sensitive analysis of the flows of existing households from and to districts.
 - Consideration of overcrowding and concealed households.
 - Careful consideration of turnover on council/housing association pitches, with clear assumptions over future potential capacity from households moving away from pitches.

- Longer-term modelling of need using detailed demographic information contained from household survey work.
- Reasonable assumptions around the number of households in bricks and mortar accommodation who may want to move to a pitch.

Further review of the PPTS

- 2.15 The government has stated in its response to changes to the NPPF that **‘in the context of our wider reforms to planning policy, we will review the PPTS next year’** i.e. 2025.

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 methodology has comprised:
- a desktop analysis of existing documents, including data on pitches/sites, plots/yards and unauthorised encampments;
 - the collection of primary data, including household interviews with Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople;
 - an assessment of accommodation needs taking into account all available data and information.
- 3.3 The information gathering has been carried out in three phases, as outlined below:
- Phase 1: Literature/desktop review.
 - Phase 2: Survey of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople across Milton Keynes
 - Phase 3: Needs assessment and production of the GTAA 2025 report.

Phase 1: Literature/desktop review and steering group discussions

- 3.4 We have reviewed relevant literature, including legislative background and best practice information; and analysis of available secondary data relating to Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the district. The research has been overseen by a steering group comprising local authority officers.

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

- 3.5 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. Site visits and interviews took place during May 2024 and June 2024.
- 3.6 A total of 33 Gypsy and Traveller households live on pitches. Interviews were achieved with 21 households living on sites. In addition, data for 7 households was obtained from site management data and data for 5 households was obtained from planning enforcement data. Information on 100% of households living on sites was therefore achieved.

Information on the needs of Travelling Showpeople was obtained from a community representative with extensive local knowledge of Showpeople who need yard provision in Milton Keynes.

Phase 3: Needs assessment and production of report

- 3.7 A detailed explanation of the pitch requirements is contained in Chapter 7 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 and turnover on sites on public pitches.
- 3.8 The overall need for pitches is then compared with the overall supply.

Pitches and households

- 3.9 One of the key challenges faced when assessing Gypsy and Traveller pitch requirements is the actual nature of pitches and how this relates to the number of households they can support.
- 3.10 PPTS 2024 refers to the need for local planning authorities to **‘identify and update annually, a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years’ worth of sites against their locally set targets’ and ‘relate the number of pitches/plots to the circumstances of the specific size and location of the site and the surrounding population’s size and density’** (PPTS 2024, paragraph 10).
- 3.11 Planning decision notices usually refer to the number of pitches on a site or the specifics of what can be on a pitch e.g. statics, tourers; or specific individuals and/or households.
- 3.12 As part of the GTAA, it is essential that the characteristics of sites, the number of pitches and how many households these can support is carefully considered. There are a range of issues which need to be considered when reviewing site and pitch characteristics and their potential implications for future pitch and site requirements which are now summarised.

Site and pitch size

- 3.13 There are no definitive parameters for site or pitch sizes. 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’**.
- 3.14 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’**.
- 3.15 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’.

- 3.16 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’.**
- 3.17 As a general guide, it is suggested by arc⁴ that the minimum pitch size is 25m by 25m (625 square meters 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 meters 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.
- 3.18 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.
- 3.19 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.
- 3.20 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 minimum size of a plot is 0.5ha and should include space for residential accommodation and equipment storage.

Occupancy

- 3.21 A pitch may accommodate more than one family unit, for instance it could include a family, older children who have formed their own household and other family members. This could lead to potential overcrowding and this is considered as part of the GTAA household survey.
- 3.22 Private sites may restrict occupancy to close family/friends. This limits opportunity for others to move onto the site but this restrictive occupancy may provide for emerging needs within a household, for example as grown-up children (previously living within a parent(s) or grandparent(s) home) form independent households of their own.
- 3.23 It should also be noted that touring caravans on sites have the potential to help meet emerging need from household members which could be accommodated on existing pitches if appropriate space is available.
- 3.24 Quality, size of pitch and proximity of caravans on pitches vary dramatically.

Response

- 3.25 For each site, a pragmatic and reasonable judgement should be made as part of the GTAA regarding the number of pitches or sub-divisions on sites. This may relate to the number of families living on sites and could include a consideration of the potential intensification of sites (for instance through further sub-division, extension or use of vacant areas within the site). Capacity and layout of sites should be identified through site observation (directly or indirectly through Google maps or similar), planning history and local knowledge of planning, enforcement and liaison officers.
- 3.26 Pitches can become intensified or sub-divided once planning applications have been approved. These sub-divisions tend to be tolerated by councils. Often pitches become subdivided to provide space for newly-forming households, particularly from family members. The potential for pitch intensification/sub-division was considered on site visits and respondents were asked whether intensification/sub-division was possible on the site they lived on.

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

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

Census data

- 4.2 In October 2023, the ONS published detailed census data relating to Gypsy and Traveller populations. This provides valuable insights into the population dynamics and comparisons with overall populations.
- 4.3 The 2021 Census reported a population of **159** people who identified as ‘White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller’ or ‘Gypsy/Romany’ and no people identifying as ‘Roma’ living in Milton Keynes. The total number of households was estimated to be **50** based on the number of Household Reference People.
- 4.4 The previous 2011 Census reported 65 people and 26 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 Milton Keynes In summary:
- 90% live in bricks and mortar accommodation and 10% live in a caravan/mobile structure.
 - All households rented (32% privately and 68% from a social landlord).
 - 37% were overcrowded compared with 9.8% of the general population.
 - 41% were couples with children, 26% single parent, 11% singles and 22% were other household types.

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

Theme	Category	Number of people identifying as Gypsy/Traveller	% of people identifying as Gypsy/Traveller
Dwelling Stock	Detached whole house or bungalow	25	18.5
	Semi-detached whole house or bungalow	35	25.9
	Terraced (including end-terrace) whole house or bungalow	30	22.2
	Flat, maisonette or apartment	30	22.2
	A caravan or other mobile or temporary structure	15	11.1
	Total	135	100.0
Tenure	Owned: Owns outright	*	0.0
	Owned: Owns with a mortgage or loan or shared ownership	*	0.0
	Private rented or lives rent free	40	32.0
	Rented Social rented	85	68.0
	Total	125	100.0
Occupancy	Occupancy rating of bedrooms 0 or more	85	63.0
	Occupancy rating of bedrooms -1 or less (overcrowded)	50	37.0
	Total	135	100
Household composition	One person household: Aged 66 years and over	*	0.0
	One person household: Other	15	11.1
	Single family household: Couple family household: No children	*	0.0
	Single family household: Couple family household: Dependent children	45	33.3
	Single family household: Couple family household: All children non-dependent	10	7.4
	Single family household: Lone parent household	35	25.9
	Other household types	30	22.2
	Total	135	100.0
General Health	Very Good	55	35.5
	Good	50	32.3
	Fair	35	22.6
	Bad	15	9.7
	Very Bad	*	0.0
	Total	155	100.0
	Net health score (VG+G-B-VB)		58.1%

Source: 2021 Census

Note: * = small frequencies and not reported

- 4.6 In terms of health 67.8% of Gypsies and Travellers said their health was very good/good and 9.7% said it was bad/very bad. The overall net health satisfaction score (% saying very good/good minus bad/very bad) was 58.1% compared with 80.7% 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 2025 household survey. It is also important to note that an estimate of 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 six Traveller caravan counts for Milton Keynes are set out in Table 4.2. Data shows an average of 34 caravans across the area during the period January 2022 to January 2025. Of these all were reported on council sites, although there are caravans on unauthorised sites that should be included in future counts.

Table 4.2 Bi-annual Traveller caravan count figures: January 2022 to January 2025 for Milton Keynes

	Authorised sites with planning permission			Unauthorised sites without planning permission	
Count Date	Social Rented	Total Private (Temporary)	Total Private (Permanent)	Total Unauthorised	Total
Jan 2022	24	0	0	0	24
Jul 2022	35	0	0	0	35
Jan 2023	38	0	0	0	38
Jul 2023	39	0	0	0	39
Jan 2024	36	0	0	0	36
Jul 2024	36	0	0	0	36
Jan 2025	32	0	0	0	32
7-Count Average (Jan 2022- Jan 2025)	34	0	0	0	34
7-Count % Average (Jan 2022- Jan 2025)	100%	0	0	0	100%

Source: MHCLG Traveller Caravan Count, Live Table 1

- 4.10 Over the period 2021 to 2025 no caravans on Travelling Showperson plots have been reported (Table 4.3).

Table 4.3 Annual Travelling Showperson caravan count figures: January 2021 to January 2025 for Milton Keynes

	Authorised sites with planning permission		Unauthorised sites without planning permission	
Count Date	Social Rented	Total Private	Total Unauthorised (tolerated)	Total
2021	0	0	0	0
2022	0	0	0	0
2023	0	0	0	0
2024	0	0	0	0
2025	0	0	0	0
5 -count % Average	0	0	0	0

Source: MHCLG Travelling Showpeople Caravan Count, Live Table 3

Local site and yards

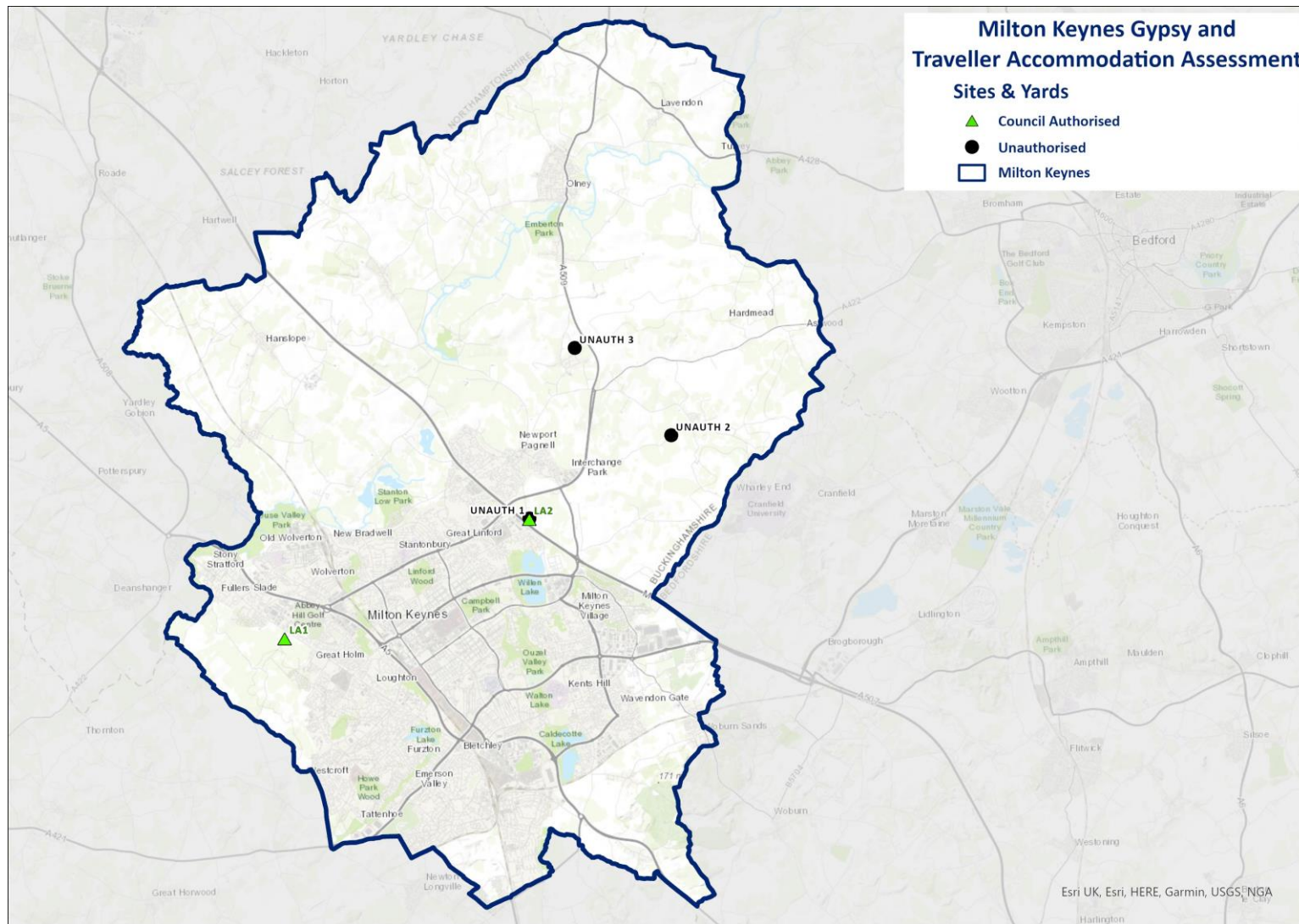
- 4.11 There are several ways in which sites can be described which are associated with their planning status. Authorised sites are those with planning permission and can be on either public or privately-owned land. Unauthorised sites are made up of either longer-term (approximately three months or longer) unauthorised encampments and 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); and unauthorised developments, where Travellers are residing upon land that they own and that does not have planning permission (see Appendix B for more detailed definitions).
- 4.12 Table 4.4 sets out assumptions regarding pitches and household occupancy on each site. This provides a transparent base position from which the modelling of future pitch in Section 6 need can proceed.
- 4.13 Across Milton Keynes there are a total of 28 pitches across the following sites:
- 2 council sites (18 pitches, 18 occupied by 20 households)
 - 1 Unauthorised pitch adjacent to a council site (1 pitch, 1 occupied by 1 household)
 - 1 Unauthorised site (4 pitches, 4 occupied by 7 households)
 - 1 Unauthorised site subject to planning enforcement (5 pitches, 5 occupied by 5 households)

Table 4.4 List of Gypsy & Traveller sites (as at June 2025)

Site Code	Site Name and address	Postcode	Type of site	Number of pitches	Total pitches occupied	Total pitches vacant	Number of households on pitches	Interviews achieved	Site management/ local knowledge/ planning application	Total household information
LA1	Calverton Lane, Milton Keynes	MK19 6ET	Council	12	12	0	14	10	4	14
LA2	Willen Road, Newport Pagnell	MK16 0QE	Council	6	6	0	6	4	2	6
Unauth 1	Willen Road, Newport Pagnell	MK16 0QE	Unauthorised extension	1	1	0	1	0	1	1
Unauth2	Brook End Nursery, opposite Wellies Day Nursery, North Crawley	MK16 9HH	Unauthorised private	4	4	0	7	7	0	7
Unauth3	Land adjacent to High Street opposite Gun Street, Sherington	MK16 9PE	Unauthorised private	5	5	0	5	0	5	5
TOTAL G&T				28	28	0	33	21	12	33

Source: Council data 2025, site survey and fieldwork 2025

Note: There are two households on council pitches doubling up but their needs are accounted for as part of the emerging needs in Table 6.1.

Map 4.1 Location of sites and yards in Milton Keynes

5. Household survey findings and stakeholder summary

- 5.1 This chapter presents the findings of the household survey, which was carried out to provide primary data to inform this GTAA. The survey aimed to reach as many Gypsy and Traveller households living in the study area as possible. It was conducted using the questionnaire presented in Appendix A. The chapter also summarises key findings from stakeholder engagement.

Gypsy and Traveller households living in Milton Keynes

- 5.2 A review of the characteristics of Gypsy and Traveller households living in Milton Keynes has been based on data from a total of 33 households on pitches obtained either through 2025 household survey data (21) or from site management information (7) or enforcement team data (5).
- 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 type or location of site, 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 responding.
- 5.4 **Ethnicity** (base=33): Of household on pitches 63.6% identified as Irish Traveller and 36.4% identified as Romany Gypsy/English Traveller.
- 5.5 Data obtained provided an insight into household size, type and the age of residents living on pitches.
- 5.6 **Household size** (base=33): 21.2% of households were single person; 9.1% two person; 18.2% three person; 21.1% four person, 9.1% five person. 12.1% six person and 9.1% seven or more person households.
- 5.7 **Household type** (base=33): 21.2% of households were single person, 3% couples, 57.6% couples with child(ren) including adult children, 12.1% were single parents and 6.1% were other households (for instance multi-adult households and extended families).
- 5.8 **Age profile:** The household survey identified a total of 123 Gypsies and Travellers living on sites across Milton Keynes of whom 62 were adults and 61 were children. Household survey data reports the following age profile (base=96) of the Travelling population in Milton Keynes: 33.3% were aged 13 or under, 11.5% aged 14-17, 25.0% aged 18-34, 16.7% aged 35-49, 9.4% aged 50-64 and 4.2% aged 65 and over.
- 5.9 **Length of residence** (base=22): 40.9% had lived at their current place of residence for less than 5 years, 0% between 5 and less than 10 years, 18.2% between 10 and less than 20 years and 40.9% for 20 years or more.
- 5.10 **Overcrowding:** When asked if their home was overcrowding (base=14), 21.4% said that their home and 21.4% said that their pitch was overcrowded.

Help and support needs

- 5.11 Respondents were asked if they had any broader help and support needs. Several mentioned health concerns such as disability and some specific issues but no one requested further support.

Stakeholder engagement summary

- 5.12 Stakeholder engagement focused on a series of themes including:
- Permanent residential pitch needs and locations
 - Travelling Showpeople accommodation requirements
 - Unauthorised encampment activity
 - Transit site provision
 - Households living in conventional housing
 - Cross-boundary issues
- 5.13 Unfortunately despite several contacts with stakeholders, the level of response was low.
- 5.14 The one area where stakeholders provided substantive input was regarding movement between areas. Council officers from neighbouring Central Bedfordshire reported that:
- Families who camp in Central Bedfordshire also frequently camp in Milton Keynes
 - Some families have migrated from Central Bedfordshire to Milton Keynes and are occupying sites without planning permission

Strategic Recommendations

- 5.15 Stakeholders emphasised the need for:
- Realistic suggestions for new pitch provision in Milton Keynes
 - Accurate research including site visits and direct consultation with families
 - Proper assessment of existing pitch numbers
 - Cooperation between neighbouring authorities under planning legislation

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

Introduction

- 6.1 This section reviews the overall pitch and plot requirements of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople across Milton Keynes. It takes into account current supply and need, as well as future need, based on modelling of data. This chapter also considers transit pitch requirements for Gypsies and Travellers. Finally, the chapter presents planning policy recommendations.
- 6.2 The calculation of pitch requirements is based on modelling as advocated in **Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment Guidance** (DCLG, 2007). Although now formally withdrawn, the former DCLG Guidance still provides the best-practice approach towards the assessment of pitch and plot needs (see Chapter 2 for further discussion).
- 6.3 This approach requires an assessment of the current needs of Gypsies and Travellers and a projection of future needs. It advocates the use of a survey to supplement secondary source information and derive key supply and demand information. Modelling presents an overall need based on the revised 2024 PPTS definition which is also called the ‘cultural’ need.

Gypsy and Traveller pitch requirement model overview

- 6.4 Pitch need is assessed for two time periods. A short-term 5-year model looks at need over the next five years (2025/26 to 2029/30). A longer-term model looks at need over the longer-term (to 2042/43) arising from children likely to need a pitch and the very long term 2043/44 to 2049/50.
- 6.5 In terms of **need**, the 5-year model considers:
- the baseline number of households on all types of site (authorised, unauthorised and temporary authorised sites) as at June 2025;
 - existing households planning to move in the next five years (currently on sites and also from bricks and mortar) and where they are planning to move to; and
 - emerging households currently on sites and planning to emerge in the next five years and stay within the study area on a pitch; to derive a figure for total pitch need.
- 6.6 In terms of **supply**, the model considers:
- total supply of current pitches on authorised sites; and
 - vacant pitches on authorised sites.
- 6.7 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.

- 6.8 The longer-term model then considers the cultural need over the period to 2042/43. This is based on the age profile of children under 13 living in Gypsy and Traveller households on pitches.
- 6.9 The very long-term model considers the annualised longer-term need applied to the seven-year period 2043/44 to 2049/50.
- 6.10 It is assumed that any need arising since 2022 is considered as part of the short-term need.

Gypsy and Traveller pitch need analysis: Description of factors in the 5-year need model: Milton Keynes

- 6.11 Table 6.1 provides a summary of the 5-year pitch need calculation for Milton Keynes. Each component in the model is now discussed to ensure that the process is transparent and any assumptions clearly stated.

Need

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

- 6.12 These figures are derived from council data and site observation data. In summary there are 32 households in total living on sites, with 19 households living on authorised sites and 13 households living on unauthorised sites. Please note there are 2 more households living on authorised sites but their needs are factored elsewhere in the model as newly forming households.

Current households in bricks and mortar accommodation (2)

- 6.13 The 2021 Census suggested there were 44 households living in bricks and mortar accommodation.

Weighting

- 6.14 As information from all households living on pitches on sites has been obtained there is no need to weight the data.

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

- 6.15 This was derived from information from the 2025 household survey for respondents currently on pitches and housing waiting list data
- 6.16 Of existing households currently on sites, the household survey indicates that 3 plan to move in the next 5 years (rows 3a, 3b and 3c). Overall, these moves will release 2 pitches for occupancy and one household plans to move to a site elsewhere in the city and therefore have no net impact on need.
- 6.17 For households currently in bricks and mortar, based on national arc⁴ studies it is estimated that 5.3% of households living in bricks and mortar would prefer to live on a site which would equate to around two households. The housing waiting list identified four households currently in bricks and mortar wanting to move to a site and one roadside household and this higher figure is used in modelling.

- 6.18 Regarding in-migration, the household survey identified 4 households who had moved onto a pitch in the past 5 years. The housing waiting list includes 4 households who want to move to a pitch in Milton Keynes and have a connection with the area. Both data sources therefore identify the same number of households and modelling assumes 4 households moving into Milton Keynes in the next 5 years.
- 6.19 The factors presented in section 3 of the model result in an overall net requirement of +6 pitches from existing households planning to move in the next 5 years.

Emerging households (4)

- 6.20 This is the number of households expected to emerge in the next 5 years based on 2025 household survey information. The total number is +20. If of this number +19 want to move onto a site and +1 plans to move to bricks and mortar. Therefore, the net need for pitches from emerging households is +19. If young people aged 18 and over were living with family and have not specified that they want to form a new household, this is assumed to be through choice and the model does not assume they want to form a new household. Of the 19 emerging households, 12 were currently living on council/KCC sites (63%) and 7 on unauthorised sites (37%).

Total need for pitches (5)

- 6.21 This is a total of current households on authorised and unauthorised pitches, households on pitches and in bricks and mortar planning to move in the next five years and demand from emerging households from pitches and bricks and mortar accommodation. This indicates a total need for 56 pitches.

Supply

Current supply of authorised pitches (6)

- 6.22 Modelling assumes a total supply of authorised pitches to meet the needs of 18 households. This is broken down to a total of 18 occupied Gypsy and Traveller pitches (note two pitches on council sites are occupied by more than one family but the needs of these families is factored into modelling) and zero vacant pitches.

Reconciling supply and demand

- 6.23 There is a total need over the next five years (2025/26 to 2029/30) for 56 pitches in Milton Keynes (Table 6.1) compared with a supply of 18 authorised pitches. The result is an overall need for 38 additional pitches.

Table 6.1 Summary of demand and supply factors: Gypsies and Travellers – Milton Keynes 2025/26 to 2029/30/30

CULTURAL NEED			Milton Keynes Total
1	Households living on pitches (includes households doubled up on pitches)	1a. On council site	18
		1b. On private site - Authorised	0
		1c. On private site – Temporary Authorised	0
		1d. On unauthorised site	13
		1e. Total (1a to 1d)	31
2	Estimate of households living in bricks and mortar accommodation	2021 Census estimate	44
		WEIGHTING	1.000
3	Existing households planning to move in next 5 years or on unauthorised site	Currently on sites	
		3a. To another pitch/same site (no net impact)	0
		3b. To another site in LA (no net impact)	1
		3c. From site to bricks and mortar (-)	1
		3d. To site/bricks and mortar outside district (-)	1
		Currently in Bricks and Mortar	
		3e. Planning to move to a site in LA (+)	4
		3f. Planning to move to another B&M property (no net impact)	0
		Roadside in Milton Keynes	
		3g. Currently on roadside (+)	1
		In-migrant households	
		3h. Allowance for in-migration (+)	3
		3i. TOTAL Net impact (-3c-3d+3e+3g+3h)	6
4	Emerging households (5 years)	4a. Currently on site and planning to live on current site	19
		4b. Current on site and planning to live on another site in the district	0
		4c. Currently on site and planning to live outside the district	0
		4d. Currently in B&M planning to move to a site in LA (+)	0
		4e. Currently in B&M and moving to B&M (no net impact)	0
		4f. Currently on Site and moving to B&M (no net impact)	1
		4g. TOTAL (4a+4b+4d)	19
5	Total Need	1e+3i+4g	56
SUPPLY			
6	Current supply of authorised pitches	6a Current supply of occupied permanently authorised pitches	18
		6b. Current authorised pitches which are vacant	0
		6c. Total current authorised supply (6a+6b)	18
RECONCILING NEED AND SUPPLY			
7	Total need for pitches	5 years (from 5)	56
8	Total supply of authorised pitches	5 years (from 6c)	18
5 YEAR AUTHORISED PITCH SHORTFALL 2025/26 TO 2029/30			38

Longer-term pitch requirement modelling to 2042/43

- 6.24 Longer-term pitch need modelling has been carried out using known household structure information from the household survey of households living on pitches. On the basis of the age of children in households, it is possible to determine the extent of 'likely emergence', which assumes that a child is likely to form a new household at the age of 18.
- 6.25 When calculating longer-term need, a reasonable assumption is that half of these children will form new households, bearing in mind culturally women tend to move away on marriage and men tend to stay in close proximity to their families on marriage. The model therefore assumes that 50% of children will form households when they reach 18 and that these households remain in the local authority area. This approach has been tested at inquiry and the assumption has been corroborated by several Travelling interviewees. Demographic data are currently available to 2042/43. Over this period, there is a need for an additional 24 pitches (Table 6.2). Note there are 17 children on the unauthorised site at Sherington. The age profile of children on that site is assumed to reflect the overall profile of children on sites.

Table 6.2 Future pitch requirements based on the assumption that 50% of children will require a pitch in Milton Keynes

Time period	No. children	No. pitches
2030/31 to 2034/35 (5 years)	17	9
2035/36 to 2039/40 (5 years)	14	7
2040/41 to 2042/43 (3 years)	16	8
Total (2030/31 to 2042/43) (13 years)	47	24

Very long-term term pitch requirement modelling 2043/44 to 2049/50

- 6.26 Modelling over the very long-term 2043/44 to 2049/50 (7 years) is based on the annual need over the period 2030/31 to 2042/43 which is 1.846 each year. The very long-term need is therefore 13 (7x1.846).

Overall pitch need

- 6.27 Table 6.3 summarises the overall need for pitches across Milton Keynes over the period 2025/26 to 2049/50. Need has been assessed over a short-term 2025/26 to 2029/30, longer-term 2030/31 to 2042/43 and very long term 2043/44 to 2049/50. The overall need is 75 additional pitches. The main driver of need in the first five years is households living on unauthorised sites and emerging households. Longer and very long term need takes into account the demographic profile of people living on sites.

Table 6.3 Plan period Gypsy and Traveller pitch need 2025/26 to 2049/50 – Milton Keynes

Residential pitch need	Additional pitch need
5yr Authorised Pitch Shortfall (2025/26 to 2029/30) (A)	38
Longer-term need	
Over period 2030/31 to 2034/35 (B)	9
Over period 2035/36 to 2039/40 (C)	8
Over period 2040/41 to 2042/43 (D)	7
Very long-term need	
Over period 2043/44 to 2049/50 (E)	13
Longer-term and Very long-term need TOTAL to 2049/50 (20 years) F=(B+C+D+E)	37
NET SHORTFALL 2025/26 to 2049/50 (A+F) (25 years)	75
Annual net shortfall	2.8

Potential capacity for Gypsy and Traveller pitches on existing sites

6.28 There are several potential sources of pitch supply that are summarised in Table 6.4.

Table 6.4 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 (Brook End Nursery)	0	Flood risk issue
2. Regularisation of unauthorised pitch on public site	There is an extra pitch that has been developed at the entrance to site at Willen Road	1	Potential for regularisation
3. Regularisation of unauthorised pitches on unauthorised site subject to enforcement	Pitches on site that is not authorised (High Street, Sherington)	5	Potential for regularisation
4. Additional pitches sites to meet family needs on sites not currently authorised	Unauth 3 Sherington	0	Limited scope for longer-term expansion to meet family need
5. Expansion/ intensification of existing public sites	None identified	0	No potential expansion of existing public sites with exception of additional pitch at Willen Road
6. Potential household dissolution	All on public pitches	6	Potential pitches coming available over the plan period owing to the current age of occupants.
7. Turnover/relets on council pitches	Minimal turnover of sites as mainly occupied by extended family groups	Assume limited turnover	No additional potential supply is assumed through turnover
Total		12 pitches	

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

Regularisation

- 6.30 Regularisation of sites that are not permanently authorised would help meet the needs identified. There are three unauthorised sites in Milton Keynes and two could be considered for regularisation if they satisfy relevant Local Plan policies. This would create **6 authorised pitches**.

Potential for additional pitches on existing sites

- 6.31 There may be potential to expand the existing council site at Willen Road which should be considered further by the council. For the unauthorised sites, there is no scope for expansion/intensification of the sites.

Household dissolution

- 6.32 Analysis also considers in a sensitive manner the potential for pitches to come available through the dissolution of households. Based on the age profile and household composition on pitches, a potential of **6 pitches** could become available over the period to 2049/50. This is low as median age of household representatives is currently 45.

Turnover on sites

- 6.33 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 limited evidence of turnover/reletting on the existing council sites and therefore the needs model does not factor in turnover/reletting on pitches. However over the plan period some supply of pitches would be anticipated.

Summary of need and capacity

- 6.34 Overall, there is a need across Milton Keynes for 75 additional authorised pitches over the period 2025/26 to 2049/50. There is a need for 38 additional pitches in the first five years 2025/26 to 2029/30, driven mainly by unauthorised sites and emerging households; 24 additional pitches in the longer-term 2030/31 to 2042/43 through demographic need; and 13 pitches over the very long-term period 2043/44 to 2049/50 based on the annual demographic need 2030/31 to 2042/43 extrapolated over this very long-term period.
- 6.35 There is a potential supply of additional 12 authorised pitches through:
- Potential regularisation of existing pitches on sites that are not permanently authorised (6 pitches)
 - Potential expansion/intensification of sites that are not permanently authorised (0 pitches)
 - Household dissolution (6 pitches)

- 6.36 This would reduce the need 2025/26 to 2049/50 to 63 new pitches.
- 6.37 In addition, there is potential supply through the reletting of pitches on council sites.

Alternative need analysis based on annual growth rates

- 6.38 The dramatic increase in residential pitch need over the period 2025/26 to 2049/50 can also be contextualised by considering annual household growth rates.
- 6.39 Table 6.5 sets out the projected number of households using growth rates of between 1.5% and 3.5% each year. The rate of 3.3% represents the anticipated growth rate based on the pitch need modelling. Higher growth rates can be associated with youthful populations and emerging need will be a key driver of pitch need over the period 2025/26 to 2049/50.
- 6.40 Modelling of household dissolution indicates a potential loss of 6 household reference people over the period 2025/26 to 2049/50, representing an annualised dissolution rate of 0.8%. This would imply a net overall household growth rate of around 2.5%.
- 6.41 The main conclusion is that the youthful population living on pitches in Milton Keynes is a key driver of future pitch need. Some household dissolution is anticipated but this is low given the current age profile of household reference people. The scale of pitch need identified is consistent with a gross growth rate of 3.3% each year which would be reduced to around 2.5% when household dissolution is considered.

Table 6.5 Annual household growth rate analysis

	Annual Gross Household Growth Rate				
	1.5%	2.5%	3.0%	3.3%	3.5%
2025 base no. households	33	33	33	33	33
2026	33.5	33.8	34.0	34.1	34.2
2027	34.0	34.7	35.0	35.2	35.4
2028	34.5	35.5	36.1	36.4	36.6
2029	35.0	36.4	37.1	37.6	37.9
2030	35.6	37.3	38.3	38.9	39.2
2031	36.1	38.3	39.4	40.2	40.6
2032	36.6	39.2	40.6	41.5	42.0
2033	37.2	40.2	41.8	42.9	43.5
2034	37.7	41.2	43.1	44.3	45.0
2035	38.3	42.2	44.3	45.8	46.5
2036	38.9	43.3	45.7	47.3	48.2
2037	39.5	44.4	47.1	48.9	49.9
2038	40.0	45.5	48.5	50.5	51.6
2039	40.6	46.6	49.9	52.2	53.4
2040	41.3	47.8	51.4	53.9	55.3
2041	41.9	49.0	53.0	55.7	57.2
2042	42.5	50.2	54.5	57.6	59.2
2043	43.1	51.5	56.2	59.5	61.3
2044	43.8	52.8	57.9	61.5	63.4
2045	44.4	54.1	59.6	63.5	65.7
2046	45.1	55.4	61.4	65.7	68.0
2047	45.8	56.8	63.2	67.8	70.3
2048	46.5	58.2	65.1	70.1	72.8
2049	47.2	59.7	67.1	72.4	75.3
2050	47.9	61.2	69.1	74.8	78.0

Tenure preferences

- 6.42 Based on the tenure preferences of existing and emerging households (number of tenure preferences stated =19), 63% stated a preference for a social rented pitch and 37% a pitch on a private site. This was based on specific preferences expressed or if no tenure was specified the current tenure of pitches occupied.

Transit requirements

- 6.43 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.
- 6.44 For Milton Keynes, there were 174 incidences of unauthorised encampment activity reported between January 2023 and March 2025 (Table 6.6). This

compares with 146 encampments reported 2020 to 2023 (ORS Transit Study 2024)

- The number of caravans on unauthorised encampments has ranged between 1 and 18.
- The median number of caravans on an encampment has been 3 and mode (most frequently reported) has been 1 caravan.

Table 6.6 Unauthorised encampment activity in Milton Keynes

Number of encampments recorded	2022/23 = 10 2023/24 = 92 2024/25 = 72	
Number of caravans	Median	3
	Mode	1
	Range	1 to 18

Source: Council data January 2023 to March 2025

- 6.45 The scale of unauthorised encampment activity is considerable and is one of the highest levels arc⁴ has reported on in its GTAA's. Activity is strongly linked to work opportunities.
- 6.46 Table 6.7 summarises the number of caravans reported on encampments. It shows that over half of encampments (56.6%) comprised 3 or fewer caravans and 79.4% comprised 6 or fewer caravans.

Table 6.7 Caravans on encampments

No. caravans	% of encampments	Cumulative %
1	35.3	35.3
2	6.6	41.9
3	14.7	56.6
4	8.8	65.4
5	8.1	73.5
6	5.9	79.4
7	2.9	82.4
8	5.1	87.5
9	0.7	88.2
10	3.7	91.9
11	2.9	94.9
12	1.5	96.3
13	0.7	97.1
14	1.5	98.5
15	0.0	98.5
15	0.0	98.5
16	0.7	99.3
17	0.0	99.3
18	0.7	100.0

TOTAL	100.0	
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Source: Council data January 2023 to March 2025

- 6.47 The 2024 ORS Transit Study provided further background information to unauthorised encampment activity. It identified 11 distinctive groups stopping in Milton Keynes plus other large groups who visit for work. The 11 groups included encampments associated with:
- households who live elsewhere but work in Milton Keynes;
 - households who live on a site or in bricks and mortar in Milton Keynes;
 - households who want to live on a site or in bricks and mortar in Milton Keynes; and
 - households now subject to injunctions or have settled elsewhere.
- 6.48 When considering transit need, the council needs to be mindful of the 2022 Police, Crime, Courts and Sentencing Act (Part 4). This makes using land for stopping without permission a criminal offence rather than a civil offence. The Bill gives police increased powers to act and introduces significant penalties (fines up to £2,500, impounding vehicles and prison sentences).
- 6.49 The 2024 transit study recommended a 'hybrid approach' to managing unauthorised encampments building on the Negotiated Stopping model developed by LeedsGATE ([click here for link to model](#)) to provide short-term provision, supplemented by a number of temporary stopping places. 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.
- 6.50 Additional residential pitch provision may also help reduce the level of encampments as the ORS study did highlight residential needs from people stopping in Milton Keynes.
- 6.51 Building on from the recommendations of the 2024 Transit Study and recognising that although the majority of encampments are 3 or fewer caravans, 26.5% of encampments had 5 more caravans and around 10% had 10 or more caravans. It is therefore recommended that the council identifies land to accommodate encampments of up to 5 caravans, encampments of between 6 and 10 caravans and encampments of more than 10 caravans using negotiated stopping arrangements.

7. Travelling Showperson plot requirements

Introduction

- 7.1 There is currently no provision for Travelling Showpeople across Milton Keynes. However the council have been in discussion with a community representative who was interviewed as part of the GTAA. There is a significant strategic need for Travelling Showperson yards nationally and across the south east generally. Regarding Milton Keynes, 10 family groups were identified who had either housing or economic links with the city and required yards in Milton Keynes for residential purposes.
- 7.2 It is therefore recommended the council recognise the strategic need for Showperson yards and the need from 10 named family groups who have a need to be living in Milton Keynes. Any application for yards should be addressed through a criteria-based policy.
- 7.3 Through discussions with several Travelling Showpeople who have developed yards, a recommended minimum size for a yard on 0.15ha which could accommodate up to 3 caravans (or 3 plots) and ideally 0.2ha which could accommodate up to 5 caravans (or 5 plots).

8. Conclusion and response

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

Current accommodation

- 8.2 There are well-established Gypsy and Traveller communities living across Milton Keynes. There are currently 2 authorised council sites (18 pitches) and three unauthorised sites (10 pitches). There are a total of 123 people in 33 households living on pitches including 62 adults and 61 children.
- 8.3 There are currently no Travelling Showperson yards in Milton Keynes.

Future Gypsy and Traveller residential need

- 8.4 There is an overall minimum need for 75 additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches across Milton Keynes over the period 2025/26 to 2049/50.
- 8.5 Of this need, 38 pitches are needed in the first five years, 24 over the longer-term period 2030/31 to 2042/43 and 13 over the very long term 2043/44 to 2049/50.
- 8.6 Needs analysis considers the needs arising from existing households, households on unauthorised sites, newly forming households, in-migrant households and current vacancies on existing sites. Needs analysis also takes into account households on the housing waiting list for pitches on public sites. The main drivers of need across the city are from households currently living on unauthorised sites, households on the housing register needing a pitch which includes need arising from bricks and mortar households and household formation from households already on pitches. The annual net shortfall need is 3 pitches.
- 8.7 The need in the first five years 2025/26 to 2029/30 is:
- households living on pitches = 31
 - Existing households needing a pitch = 6
 - Emerging households needing a pitch = 19 (of which 12 were living on council/KCC sites and 7 on unauthorised sites)
 - Total need = 56
 - Total authorised supply = 18
 - Net shortfall 2025/26 to 2029/30 (56 need – 18 authorised supply) = **38 pitches**
- 8.8 The need over the **longer-term** 2030/31 to 2042/43 is based on the demographics of people living on sites. There are a total of 47 people currently aged under the age of 13 who are expected to need a pitch during the period 2030/31 to 2042/43. Assuming that 50% form households, the pitch need is **24 pitches**.

- 8.9 The need over the **very long-term** 2043/44 to 2049/50 was based on the results of the demographic analysis 2031/31 to 2042/43 which identified an annual need for 1.846 pitches each year. For the very long-term period of 7 years, the additional need would be **13 pitches**.
- 8.10 The total need over the 25 year period 2025/26 to 2049/50 is **75 pitches** or 2.8 each year. In the previous GTAA, the overall need was 29 or 1.5 each year. It is assumed that the short-term model takes into account need arising from 2022.
- 8.11 The main difference between the two studies has been the increase in unauthorised sites, one of which has a large number of children and extending the study period to 2049/50.
- 8.12 In order to meet its need for pitches, the council is recommended to consider regularising sites that are not permanently authorised along with intensifying and expanding existing sites where possible. In addition, the council should acknowledge there is likely to be some household dissolution which would result in pitches coming available and turnover/reletting of pitches on the council sites.
- 8.13 There is a potential supply of **6 pitches** through regularisation which would help to meet short-term need. In addition, pitches are expected to come available through household dissolution (**6 pitches**) and turnover/reletting on council pitches is likely over the plan period.
- 8.14 This would reduce the need 2025/26 to 2049/50 to 63 new pitches.
- 8.15 Analysis has also considered annual growth rates. The scale of need evidenced is equivalent to an annual growth rate of 3.3%. Although this is high, it reflects the youthful population living on sites. The household dissolution rate is estimated to be 0.8% annually, resulting in a net annual growth rate of around 2.5%.
- 8.16 Notwithstanding evidence in this GTAA on need, additional need may arise over the plan period, for instance households moving into Milton Keynes. It is therefore recommended that the Local Plan references the need in the GTAA as a minimum need which is likely to be met but sets out criteria-based policies to inform future planning applications for sites.

Transit provision

- 8.17 The scale of unauthorised encampment activity in Milton Keynes is considerable. The scale of activity has been sustained since 2022/23 and a range of groups visit Milton Keynes for various reasons including work and seeking a place to live.
- 8.18 The 2024 Transit study presented a series of recommendations to the council. Building upon these, it is recommended that the council identifies land to accommodate encampments of up to 5 caravans, encampments of between 6 and 10 caravans and encampments of more than 10 caravans using negotiated stopping arrangements.

Future updating

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

Appendix A: Gypsy and Traveller Fieldwork Questionnaire

Date and Time	
Site Reference	
Address	
General Data Protection Regulation (2018) and Data Protection	GDPR came into effect from 25th May 2018. This provides rights of people to control personal data held about them by organisations. This study is being done for City of Milton Keynes 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

1	Pitch/Property Type (and tenure if B&M)	
2	No. Statics/mobiles/chalets or bricks and mortar	
3A	No. tourers/caravans	
3B	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? If so, who	

9	HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS			
		Gender	Age	Relationship to respondent
	Respondent			
	Person2			
	Person 3			
	Person 4			
	Person 5			
	Person 6			
	Person 7			
	Person 8			

10	ETHNICITY	
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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	
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	
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)	
24A	If pitch, single (one static) or double pitch (for two statics/family pitch)	
24B	Would you need any grazing land for any livestock?	Y / N
24C	If you are considering bricks and mortar, what are your reasons	

	IF IN B&M HOUSING	
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 if affects your mental health and makes you unhappy/ depressed)?	Y / N

	EMERGING HOUSEHOLDS	
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

		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 if affects your mental health and makes you unhappy/ depressed)	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N

	ADDITIONAL RESIDENTIAL PITCHES	
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 authorised pitches (for people to live on all the time?) in this part of B81 Shropshire?	Y / N
38	If so, now 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	
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?	

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	
50	How many years have you lived here? <u>Please state number of years</u>	
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	
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 is set out in section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. It placed a legal duty on local planning authorities in England to engage constructive, actively and on an ongoing basis with prescribed bodies on the preparation of a Local Plan. The Duty, as a legal test, has now been rescinded by the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act, which received Royal Assent on 26 October 2023. This has replaced the legal test with a soundness test (in national policy). The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 will revoke the Duty to Cooperate in relation to the reformed plan making system. However, the Duty remains a legal requirement under the current Local Plans system and will continue to apply to Local Plans progressed within the current system.

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 Communities, Housing and Local Government. Previously renamed DLUHC Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities in 2021 from the MHCLG in 2018. The ministry has oversight of policies to meet the needs 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 tend 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 www.negotiatedstopping.co.uk 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, amended 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, 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 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act made it a criminal offence to camp on land without the owner's consent. Unauthorised encampments fall into two main categories: those on land owned by local authorities and those on privately owned land. It is up to the 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 around by some family members.