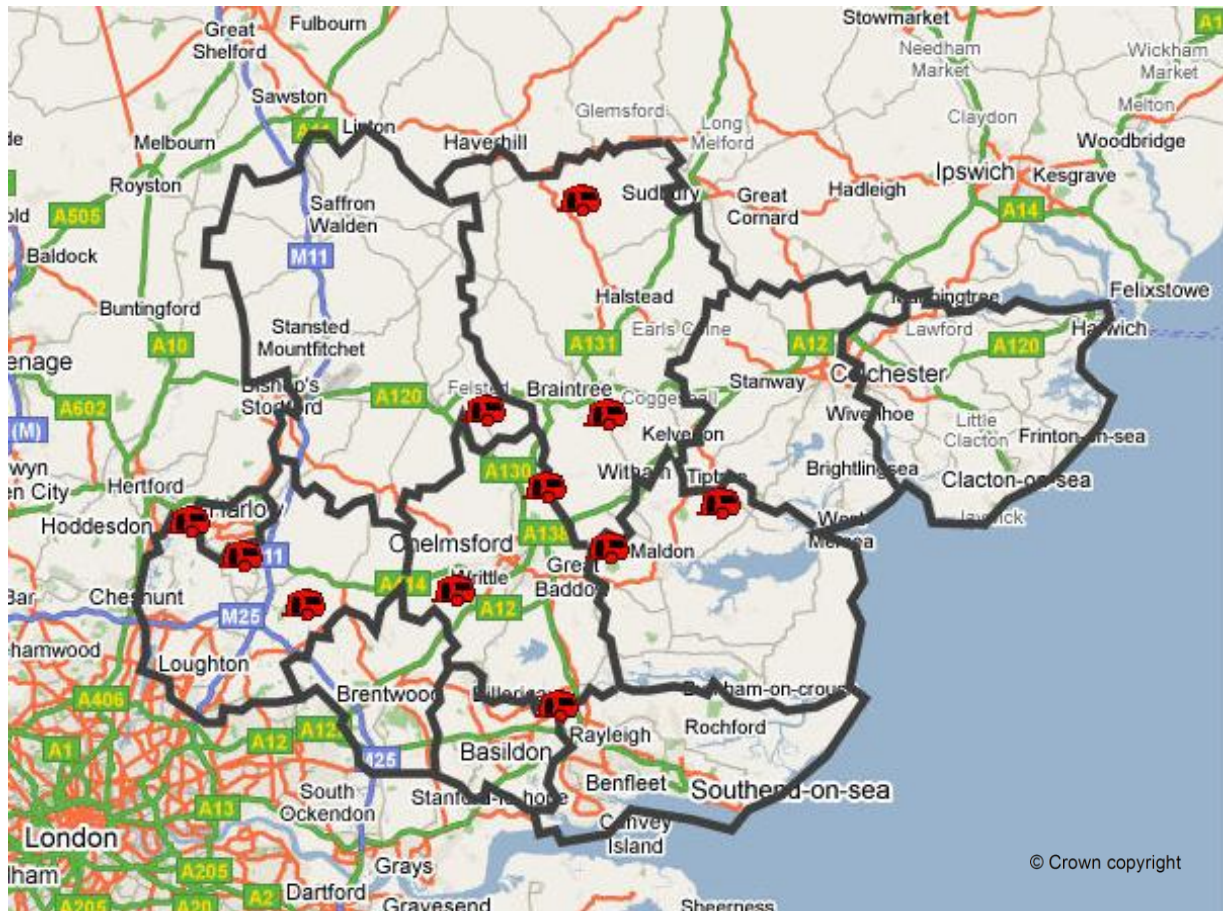


Essex Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment



**Final report
November 2009**

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Executive Summary

Introduction

- S1. The Housing Act 2004 made a major change in requiring that Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs be addressed by local authorities. The present study is one of the results of that initiative and seeks to build on the 2006 GTAA by providing more robust evidence on accommodation need that can be broken down to district level.
- S2. Government guidance on GTAAs notes that housing need for Gypsies and Travellers goes beyond households in unsuitable housing who cannot access suitable accommodation in the market; it also includes Gypsies and Travellers with a psychological aversion to bricks and mortar accommodation and with a consequent need for a pitch.
- S3. The purpose of the assessment is to quantify the accommodation and housing related support needs of Gypsies and Travellers. This is in terms of residential and transit sites, and bricks and mortar accommodation. The results will be used to inform the allocation of resources and as an evidence base for policy development in housing and planning.

The national policy context

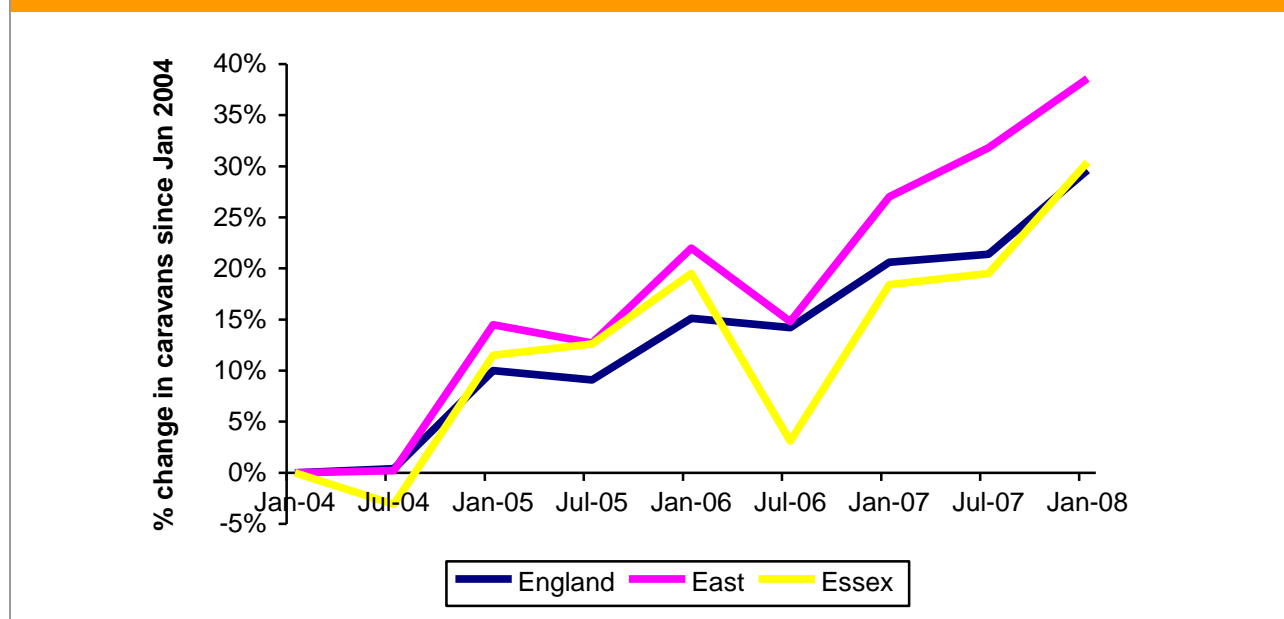
- S4. Although much legislation implemented since the 1960s has negatively impacted on the Gypsy and Traveller community, it is arguable that the 2004 Housing Act and subsequent legislation has sought to address this imbalance. Also, whilst there is still some debate as to what constitutes an adequate definition of 'Gypsy and Traveller', the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 has gone some way to ensuring that some members of the Gypsy and Irish Traveller communities are afforded legal protection against discrimination.
- S5. However, it is apparent that the most pressing issue remains that of insufficient residential and transit site provision. With around one quarter of Gypsies and Travellers residing in unauthorised developments or encampments, the Government has responded with increased funding for site provision. Despite increased powers for local authorities to deal with anti-social behaviour and to evict where necessary, the Government has acknowledged that increased site provision is the most effective means of dealing with unauthorised developments and encampments.

The regional and local perspective

- S6. The East of England RSS Single Issue Review on Gypsy and Traveller sites sets out requirements for an additional 327 residential pitches in Essex. The figure was reached by applying a formula to caravan count data, although the initial total was then reduced and the distribution altered following representations from Essex councils. The Secretary of State's proposed changes reduces the total slightly to 322 additional residential pitches by 2011.

Trends in the population levels of Gypsies and Travellers

- S7. There is only one main source of data on Gypsy and Traveller numbers in Essex that being the national CLG caravan count. It has significant difficulties with accuracy and reliability, especially on a local level or when enumerating unauthorised encampments, tending to underestimate in many cases. The count does not take into account Travelling Showpeople or Gypsies and Travellers who live in housing, for both, little secondary data is available. Nevertheless it is useful for providing comparisons between areas and over time.
- S8. The count indicates that the Essex has a higher number of caravans relative to the settled community compared to the national average, but lower than the average for the East region. A quarter of all caravans in the East of England are located in Essex. It has proportionately higher numbers of caravans on unauthorised developments than the regional and national averages, although fewer on unauthorised encampments and social rented sites.
- S9. Within Essex, the district containing by far the largest proportion of caravans is Basildon. Two-fifths of all caravans in Essex are located here, as are a third of all caravans on authorised sites. Other areas have very low numbers of caravans, including Brentwood, Tendring and Southend-on-Sea (which has none). Overall in Essex, two thirds of caravans are on authorised sites, however there is variety among the districts, with all caravans in Harlow and Maldon on authorised sites, but no authorised provision in Castle Point and Southend-on-Sea, and no social rented sites in Brentwood, Colchester, Rochford and Tendring.
- S10. In terms of changes over time, Essex has followed the national and regional trend for more caravans on authorised sites and fewer on unauthorised sites (Figure S1). This is largely due to increases in caravans on private sites. Not all districts recorded a rise: the numbers in Braintree and Uttlesford have fallen in the past four years. Similarly, several districts have seen an increase in caravans on unauthorised sites since 2004, with large percentage increases in Basildon, Brentwood and Rochford.

Figure S1 Percentage change in number of authorised caravans since January 2004

Source: CLG caravan count January 2008

Population estimates

- S11. In order to produce an estimate of the number of Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople households in each district, data was collected from a range of sources, including a named contact within each district, Traveller Education Services and The Showmen's Guild. It is estimated that there are 895 Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople households in the study area. These estimates were used to construct the sampling frame for 300 interviews.
- S12. There remains a lack of reliable data on Gypsy and Traveller numbers which cannot be overcome through accommodation needs research. We would therefore expect that the estimate of around 900 Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople living in Essex is a conservative figure.

Stakeholder consultation

- S13. A consultation with a range of stakeholders was conducted to provide in-depth qualitative information about the perceived accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Essex¹. It was widely accepted that there had been an increase in the number of Gypsy and Traveller household in the last decade, but that the levels had remained static in recent years. The main concern was with accommodation for hidden and emerging households.

¹ Those organisations in attendance can be seen listed on Table 6.1 in the Stakeholder Consultation section.

- S14. The local authority departments were commonly in the dark with regards to the number of Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar accommodation, often responding that there was no way of knowing. A significant issue for local authority and statutory organisations was that Gypsies and Travellers in housing were only known if they self-identified, which many were reluctant of doing. Stakeholders agreed that there were pockets of housed Gypsies and Travellers living in Essex and these were generally to be found near authorised or long term unauthorised sites.
- S15. Unauthorised encampments were not seen as a significant issue for the majority of stakeholders. Unauthorised encampments are frequently due to those returning to the area on a seasonal basis for employment and those circulating Essex in search of authorised accommodation; however, the council also acknowledges families who reside in the area but do not wish to find authorised accommodation.
- S16. The majority of stakeholders expressed concerns over meeting the need figures presented by the RSS Single Issue Review. The main concerns were with the methodology used and the logical distribution of need. All stakeholders agreed that there was a need to be met, however what that level was and how it should be met was a contentious issue.
- S17. It was felt that services for Gypsies and Travellers were generally good with frontline workers visiting the majority of sites regularly. Education at secondary level was poor in comparison with primary level, and stakeholders disagreed on the best method of overcoming this problem.

Survey methodology

- S18. Based on the estimated Gypsy and Traveller household population, a proportional sampling framework was developed. Four questionnaires were designed for the study, each taking into account the current accommodation needs of the participant. Some 249 interviews took place across all districts and site types.
- S19. The interviews were carried out with a team of interviewers who were either from the Gypsy and Traveller community or had previously worked with this group. Where possible, local support groups and site managers acted as 'gatekeepers' and introduced interviewers to participants.

Gypsies and Traveller living on local authority sites

- S20. Essex County Council own and manage 11 permanent residential sites: interviews were carried out on all sites. In total 68 interviews were completed, comprising 43% of the current total resident households and 27% of the entire sample.

- S21. Levels of satisfaction with the sites were generally good with the majority (66%) reporting that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their site. Sites with the highest levels of satisfaction included Hop Gardens, Hovefields and Ridgewell. Participants were asked to explain what they particularly liked and disliked about their site. Issues surrounding site management, location and facilities, its image and sense of community affected how positively participants viewed where they live. Satisfaction with utility blocks was particularly low on Brickhouse, Cranham Hill, Fern Hill and Sandiacres.
- S22. The majority of participants (66%) did not believe that there were enough pitches for Gypsies and Travellers in Essex. The strongest request was for permanent residential pitches, but participants also raised the issue of short stay sites. Key issues that were felt to be important when selecting a site included its environmental surroundings, neighbouring communities and access to local services.
- S23. A quarter of participants also noted that one or more family member would need their own home within the next five years. In both cases there was a strong preference for site accommodation, although affordability was deemed a barrier to self-ownership.

Gypsies and Travellers living on private sites

- S24. Of the 301 estimated Gypsy and Traveller households living on private sites in Essex, 62 (21%) were included in the survey. The majority of those interviewed had full planning permission (37), but a significant number had temporary (20) or personal (5) planning permission. The average household size of the sample was 4.5.
- S25. Participants were settled on their sites, with the majority (79%) having lived in their current accommodation for over five years and all participants responding that they neither intended nor were likely to move in the next five years.
- S26. In general site satisfaction amongst participants was high with 66% (24) reporting that they were satisfied or very satisfied and 93% (53) said that they felt safe. When participants were asked to expand on what they liked, community, location and the security of having planning permission were emphasised.
- S27. A third of the participants (33%, 19) noted that one or more members of their family would need their own separate home within the next five years, which represented 33 emerging households. It was felt that the majority of this need would be for site accommodation, with a strong preference for private, self-owned sites. None of the participants believed that the emerging households would require bricks and mortar accommodation.

Gypsies and Travellers living on unauthorised sites

- S28. Of the 179 estimated Gypsy and Traveller households living on unauthorised sites in Essex, 39 (22%) were included in the survey, with the average household size recorded at 6.7 – significantly above the average. The majority of the sample consisted of participants living on unauthorised developments (37) and a small number living on unauthorised encampments (2).
- S29. Participants therefore presented a settled account of their life, where they had been living on their property for a significant period of time, and believed that they would remain on their property for the foreseeable future.
- S30. The facilities available to participants were basic and limited and there was a degree of resignation and acceptance in the response of participants to questions relating to their site facilities, however levels of satisfaction with their sites were exceptionally high at 95%. When this question was explored and participants were asked why they liked their sites, three main themes emerged: community, location and ownership.
- S31. The participants agreed that there was a significant need for more sites for Gypsies and Travellers in Essex. In contrast to many of the groups who believed that *'smaller sites are better run and respected'*, participants from Dale Farm argued that there should be larger sites available, of up to 40 to 50 pitches. This is due to the community element that has developed on the site which was discussed earlier: *'if we had to move, we would all like to stay together'*, and also that Dale Farm has a higher concentration of Irish Traveller families who often prefer larger family group living.
- S32. The majority of participants reported that if they were found land that would be granted planning permission they would move, although there was a preference to remain within a 15 mile radius of their current location and within their current district. The most important factors in searching for suitable site location were community cohesion, local services and being in a rural location.

Gypsies and Travellers living in housing

- S33. Some 43 interviews were carried out with Gypsies and Travellers living in housing, comprising over a sixth of all interviews. Almost half of participants currently lived in the social rented sector, although a third owned their home. For 85% of participants, their last home had been on a site, with almost half on a social rented authorised site. Most had moved into housing due to a lack of space on authorised sites or poor conditions on the sites, or to access services more easily.

S34. Almost half were satisfied with their current accommodation, however those who had previously lived on an authorised sites were the least likely to be satisfied. The added comfort and improved security of living in housing were appreciated by some participants, however most spoke negatively of their experience, criticising the lack of community and family close by. Most would return to a site if they had a chance. Participants were prepared to move from their current location to take up a pitch on a suitable site, but most wanted to stay in the same district in Essex.

Access to services

- S35. Access to services varied strongly by the type and tenure of accommodation; those on unauthorised sites and to a lesser extent local authority sites tended to have difficulty accessing services if they were not able to drive. This was not true of Gypsies and Travellers in housing, almost none of whom reported problems. As discussed in the previous section, better access to services was one reason some Gypsies and Travellers had moved into housing in the first place.
- S36. Almost all respondents (94%) were registered with a GP. However, many did report discrimination from health services, far more than for any other public service, accounting for 35% of all reports of discrimination in service provision. Four-fifths of those on unauthorised sites reported that they had at some point used Accident and Emergency facilities in Essex because they were unable to get an appointment with a GP. However, only 21% felt that they generally had problems using health services in Essex.
- S37. Asthma and long term illness were the most significant health problems for Gypsies and Travellers in Essex. Few required modifications to their home for reasons of health or disability, but there were more requests for adaptations or services including additional handrails, low level shower units, support services and help maintaining the home.
- S38. A total of 76% of those with children at school age had all children enrolled in school and 88% had some children enrolled. About half had experienced a situation preventing at least one of their children from attending school, the most frequent being bullying and eviction. Additional training was considered likely to be useful by 35% of respondents, particularly in literacy, with by far the most common obstacle to this being the lack of (or expense of) transport to educational facilities.

Travelling Showpeople

- S39. Interviews were conducted with Travelling Showpeople families – 37 took place on 18 of the identified 20 yards in Essex. The survey found a great deal of concern about a lack of space on existing yards, whether for storing equipment or living space for current and future family. Some had moved into housing as a consequence of the lack of space on yards. The main barrier to bringing forward new yards was the difficulty in obtaining planning permission, whether for new yards or for the expansion of existing ones. Affordability was seen as a less significant issue and there was an expectation that Travelling Showpeople would be able to provide the extra accommodation themselves should land be made available to develop. Participants stressed their close connections to their local area and community, suggesting that, where possible, existing yards should be expanded.
- S40. Two-thirds of participants said that someone lived all year round on their yard, rather than using it as traditional winter quarters. The fact that almost all had lived there over five years and were well-integrated into the local community is one reason why satisfaction with where they lived was very high. This would also help explain why there was a strong preference for staying in the same area of Essex.

Accommodation need

The following table summaries the estimated number of Gypsy and Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots required. It shows that, in addition to the 33 new pitches being planned, a further 405 residential pitches are required by 2021, along with 36 short stay sites and 27 plots for Travelling Showpeople.

Table S1 Summary of requirements			
Period	Gypsies and Travellers		Travelling Showpeople
	Residential pitches	Short stay sites	Plots
Total 2008-13	310	32	19
Total 2013-21	95	4	8
Total 2008-2021	405	36	27

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Conclusions

- S41. If the identified accommodation need is to be met, a substantial increase in current provision is required: 90% in residential pitches and 50% in Travelling Showpeople plots by 2021. The amount is significantly swayed by the number of unauthorised developments, particularly in a handful of districts. Breakdowns of need for each district show how much the estimated requirement would fall should any unauthorised developments be granted planning permission. Nevertheless limited spare capacity on council-owned sites and new family formation means increases in pitch provision are required for areas even where unauthorised developments are not a major issue.
- S42. The notable trend in Essex of Gypsies and Travellers buying agricultural land to establish their own sites suggests that much of the total need could be met through the private sector, by offering families help and advice with the planning process and by identifying land in local planning documents that would be suitable for site development. Such an approach would mean minimal capital expenditure for local authorities and meet Gypsies' and Travellers' preferences for family-sized sites. Remaining residential need will have to be met through the social rented sector, either through expanding existing sites or establishing new ones. A network of short stay sites will also need to be provided in the social rented sector. For Travelling Showpeople, the issue is one of identifying land for them to buy which is likely to obtain planning permission.
- S43. The accommodation assessment is based on identifying need where it arises and does not make recommendations on how it can be distributed across Essex. However two alternative scenarios are offered based on each district providing at least one extra site (as used in the RSS Single Issue Review) and need from authorised sites being met in the same district while that from unauthorised sites and housing being distributed evenly. Both approaches lead to reductions for the districts with the largest amount of need, while districts with smaller need estimates take on a greater share of the Essex total.

1. Introduction

Study context

- 1.1 In June 2008 Fordham Research was commissioned to conduct an assessment of the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Essex. The study area includes the 12 districts within Essex County Council and the unitary authority of Southend-on-Sea. (Thurrock Council was excluded from the commissioning of this project). For the purpose of this report we refer to this study area as Essex.
- 1.2 The purpose of the assessment is to quantify until 2015 the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers (including Travelling Showpeople) in terms of residential and transit sites, and bricks and mortar accommodation. The results will be used to support development plan policies and will be a material consideration in the review and development of other local authority strategies affecting Gypsies and Travellers.
- 1.3 Data collection and analysis has followed Guidance set out in CLG's *Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments (2007)* and *Local Housing Assessment: A Practice Guide (2005)*, obliging local authorities to assess the level of need for Gypsy and Traveller sites.
- 1.4 This is the second GTAA to be carried out in Essex. The first, by Salford University in 2006, was carried out before CLG draft guidance on the subject was published.² It is largely qualitative in scope and does not contain a breakdown of pitch requirements to district level. Producing figures for pitch need at district level is a principal output of this assessment, as is providing a robust evidence base for planning and housing documents relating to Gypsies and Travellers. While the study has not taken place in time to inform the Examination in Public of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) Single Issue Review on Gypsies and Travellers, it will provide evidence for local planning documents.
- 1.5 This report draws on several different research elements:
 - **Review of secondary information** including a review of Essex councils' strategies and the national policy context
 - **Secondary data analysis** of the Caravan Count and council information on Gypsies and Travellers
 - **Population estimates and sampling frame** for the survey of Gypsies and Travellers living on sites and in bricks and mortar accommodation
 - **Survey of Gypsies and Travellers**, across accommodation types and including Travelling Showpeople

² Ahmed, A., Brown, P. and Steele, A. (2006) *Looking Back, Moving Forward: Assessing the housing needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Essex*, Essex Planning Officers Association, Chelmsford.

- **Assessments of need**, broken down for each district, for residential and short stay sites, and Travelling Showpeople plots

1.6 Section A sets the background for the research and analyses the secondary data. Data from the primary research and the accommodation assessments are in Section B, along with a concluding chapter.

Policy background

- 1.7 There is a national shortage of sites for Gypsies and Travellers. A study for CLG by Pat Niner³ stated that, between 2003 and 2007, 1,000-2,000 additional residential pitches would be needed, as would 2,000-2,500 additional short stay sites. In 2003 and 2004, only 130 pitches were provided per year – equivalent to only 15%-25% of the need identified by Niner; if continued at this rate, it will take over thirty years to reach the target.⁴
- 1.8 The Government is committed to ensuring that members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities should have the same access to decent and appropriate accommodation as every other citizen and that there are sufficient resources available to meet their needs. To meet this aim, the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers have been mainstreamed within the wider housing and planning systems. The Housing Act 2004 requires local authorities to assess the needs of Gypsies and Travellers in the area and develop strategies to meet the needs. It also states that, where the shortage of sites is a particular problem, local authorities are expected to make this a priority, with the Secretary of State able to direct them if necessary.
- 1.9 Following the Housing Act, a new Planning Circular 01/2006 was produced. It contains a new definition of Gypsies and Travellers for planning purposes based on “nomadic habit” and includes those who are too ill or old to still travel, but specifically excludes Travelling Showpeople (who are covered by their own Circular, 04/2007). Its intention is to significantly increase the number of authorised Gypsy and Traveller sites (in recognition of the failure of the previous Circular 01/94 to deliver adequate sites) and reduce the number of unauthorised encampments and developments. It details how data collected during GTAAs should inform overall pitch levels in the Regional Spatial Strategies and Development Plan Documents outlining specific site locations.

³ Pat Niner (2003), *Local Authority Gypsy/Traveller Sites in England*, Centre for Urban and Regional Studies, University of Birmingham.

⁴ Robert Home and Margaret Greenfields (2006), *Cambridge Sub-Region Traveller Needs Assessment*, Anglia Ruskin University and Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College.

- 1.10 With such policies in place in Local Development Frameworks there will be more certainty for all concerned when planning applications are determined by local planning authorities or appeals are considered by the Secretary of State. Better understanding of needs should ensure that provision meets the requirements of the Gypsy and Traveller community and that it is fully used. In turn it is intended that this will help to avoid future unauthorised camping and development.
- 1.11 In conjunction with Circular 01/2006, the CLG also released in February 2006 draft guidance on conducting GTAAAs⁵, finalised in October 2007.⁶ The guide stresses the importance of consulting with Gypsies and Travellers, their representative bodies and support groups in how the assessment is conducted. It recommends that steering groups should be formed to include members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities, and that questionnaires should be drawn up with input from Gypsies and Travellers. The practice guidance contains a slightly wider definition of Gypsies and Travellers than the Planning Circular and includes Travelling Showpeople.
- 1.12 The Guidance contains important statements on the nature of need in this context:

In Planning Policy Statement 3, housing need is defined as ‘...households who are unable to access suitable housing without financial assistance’ (para. 14).

[...] the distinctive accommodation requirements of some Gypsies and Travellers will give rise to similar types of need, but in a different context, for example: caravan dwelling households who have no authorised site anywhere on which to reside;... bricks and mortar dwelling households whose existing accommodation is overcrowded or unsuitable (‘unsuitable’ in this context can include unsuitability by virtue of [a] proven psychological aversion to bricks and mortar accommodation) (para. 15).

It should also be recognised that the shortage of sites and local hostility, as well as lack of income, may prevent Gypsies and Travellers exercising their free choice in the accommodation market – and that there may in fact be no ‘local accommodation market’ in sites (para. 16).

- 1.13 Although the Guidance does not quite complete the thought process to a single short definition of housing need in the context of Gypsies and Travellers, the trend of thought seems clear enough. Gypsy and Traveller accommodation need goes beyond financial constraints and the standard categories of unsuitability; it also includes accommodation made unsuitable due to the psychological effects brought about by giving up the traditional, caravan-based life.

⁵ ODPM [CLG] *Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments: Draft practice guidance*, 2006.

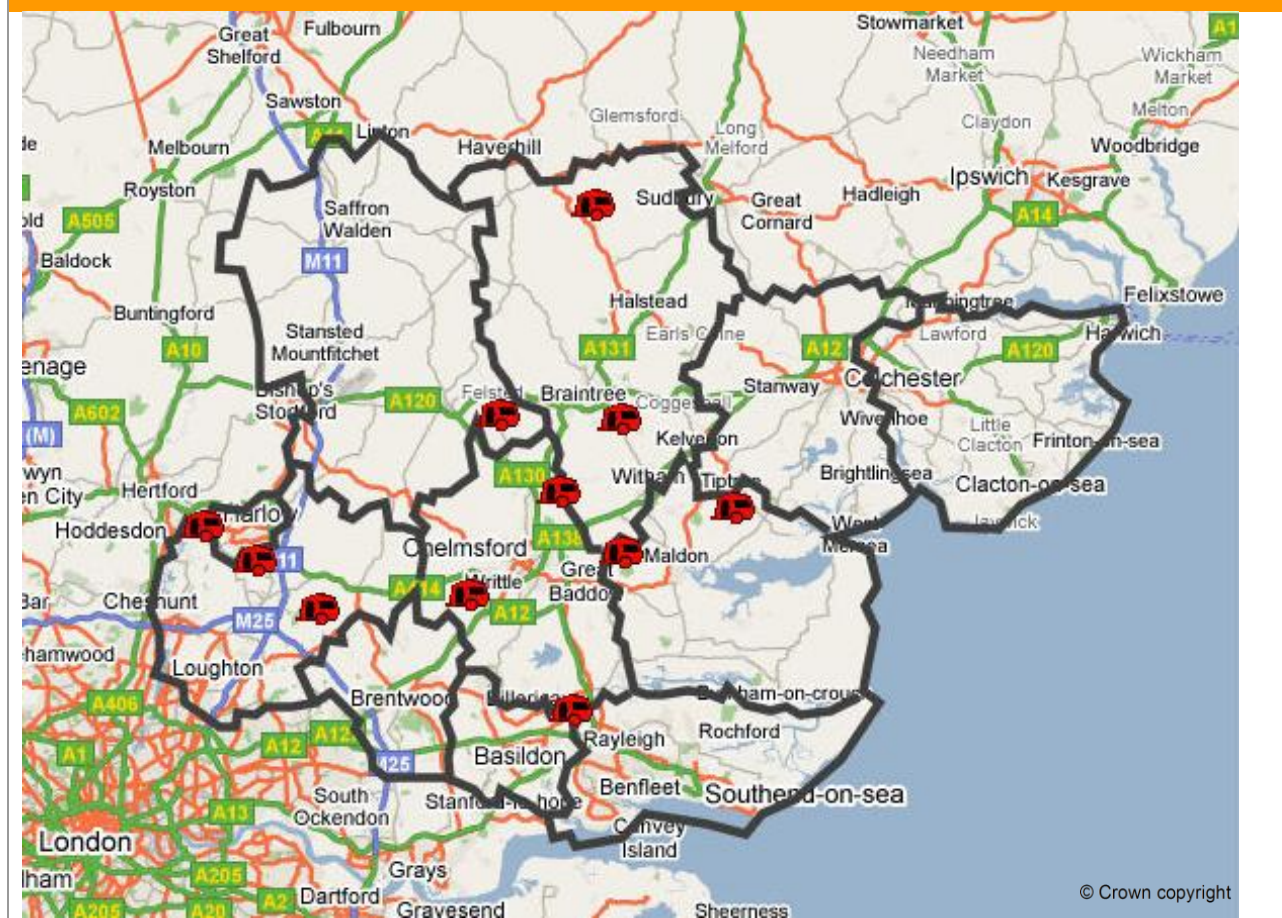
⁶ CLG, *Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Need Assessments: Guidance*, 2007.

- 1.14 New funding arrangements have also been introduced. Since April 2006 funding for local authority and RSL (Registered Social Landlord) sites can be accessed from the Regional Housing Boards' budgets and part of the Gypsy Site Refurbishment Grant can be used to develop new authorised sites.
- 1.15 Local authorities will also need to have regard to their statutory duties, including those in respect of homelessness under Part VI of the Housing Act 1996 and to their obligations under the Race Relations (Amendments) Act 2000 which prohibits racial discrimination by planning authorities in carrying out their planning functions.

Gypsies and Travellers in Essex

- 1.16 Gypsies and Travellers have a long history of living in Essex and, as shown in Chapter 4, the County has a significantly higher proportion of caravans than the national average. While the majority of caravans are on authorised sites, there appears to be a disproportionately high number of unauthorised developments. This is partly due to Dale Farm, the substantial unauthorised development near Cray's Hill in Basildon. It is one of Europe's largest Gypsy and Traveller sites and has been subject to numerous court appeals to avoid enforced eviction.
- 1.17 There is an established Travelling Showpeople population, mainly in the west of Essex, although the largest population in the country is in Thurrock and outside the study area. There are approximately 50 Travelling Showpeople yards in the study area.
- 1.18 There are eleven social rented residential sites in Essex, owned and managed by the County Council. Their locations are shown on the map below. There is currently no local authority owned transit sites in the study area.

Figure 1.1 Social rented sites in Essex



Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

- 1.19 At a regional level, a planning process was recently completed to determine the number of Gypsy and Traveller pitches that should be developed in the East of England. Following an RSS Single Issue Review on Gypsy and Traveller accommodation, the Government published a response in July 2009 which set out the minimum number of pitches each local planning authority is required to provide between 2006 and 2011.⁷ The total for the Essex study area is 322 residential pitches for Gypsies and Travellers, with each district providing at least 15 pitches. For Travelling Showpeople, 103 plots are required for the Essex districts and the unitary authorities of Southend and Thurrock (the latter is not included in this GTAA's study area). No breakdown is provided of where the extra plots should be provided but, as with Gypsies and Travellers, recommends broadening the choice available to families by 'providing some pitches in all parts of the region which will assist delivery by ensuring all areas contribute' (5.13).

⁷Government Office for the East of England, *Accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the East of England: A Revision to the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England*, July 2009.

Who does the Essex GTAA study cover?

- 1.20 There are two definitions of who can be included as a Gypsy or Traveller for legislative purpose. As stated previously, the planning definition is narrower and excludes Travelling Showpeople. However it is the broader, housing definition which is the basis of the Essex GTAA. This therefore includes Travelling Showpeople.

Project management

- 1.21 The research was commissioned by Essex County Council on behalf of the local authorities in the study area. A Steering Group is overseeing the work and comprises members of the Essex Planning Officers Association, the Essex Housing Officers Group, Traveller Education Services, the Racial Equality Council and community members.

Summary

- 1.22 The Housing Act 2004 made a major change in requiring that Gypsies and Travellers accommodation needs be addressed by local authorities. The present study is one of the results of that initiative and seeks to build on the 2006 GTAA by providing more robust evidence on accommodation need that can be broken down to district level.
- 1.23 Government guidance on GTAAs notes that housing need in mainstream cases means households in unsuitable housing who cannot access suitable accommodation in the market. In the case of Gypsies and Travellers, the guidance notes that the same principle can be applied but extended to also include those with a psychological aversion to bricks and mortar accommodation and with a consequent need for a pitch.
- 1.24 The purpose of the assessment is to quantify the accommodation and housing related support needs of Gypsies and Travellers. This is in terms of residential and transit sites, and bricks and mortar accommodation. The results will be used to inform the allocation of resources and as an evidence base for policy development in housing and planning.

SECTION A: CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

The first section of the Essex GTAA contains results from analysis of secondary data. Chapters 2 and 3 contained in this section originally appeared in an interim report prepared for the Steering Group in 2008. The chapters draw on a range of secondary data:

- Current plans and strategies relating to Gypsies and Travellers
- CLG Caravan count data and information collected from the Councils on population levels and accommodation patterns

These are considered in turn. Section A starts, however, by describing the national policy context in which Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs should be addressed.

2. The national policy context

Introduction

2.1 This section examines previous literature and research relating to Gypsies and Travellers in the area. It discusses the impact of legislation on the Gypsy and Traveller community and recent legislative measures to improve site provision. The aim is to provide the reader with a background on Gypsy and Traveller issues and the policy context in which the Essex GTAA is situated.

Definitions

2.2 Before discussing how legislating has impacted upon Gypsies and Travellers it is essential to clarify who is covered by the term. According to the [then] Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM), there is no comprehensive source of information about the number or characteristics of Gypsies and Travellers in England. As such, definitions are an obvious obstacle to collecting comprehensive information about Gypsies and Travellers. Approaches based on ethnicity, lifestyle and self-ascription would produce different figures. Some Gypsies and Travellers, in some contexts, might be unwilling to acknowledge their origins. A consequence of all this is the frequent 'invisibility' of Gypsies and Travellers in service planning, delivery and monitoring.⁸

2.3 According to Niner⁹, there are three broad groupings of Gypsies and Travellers in England: traditional English (Romany) Gypsies, traditional Irish Travellers, and New Travellers. There are smaller numbers of Welsh Gypsies and Scottish Travellers. Romany Gypsies were first recorded in Britain around the year 1500, having migrated across Europe from an initial point of origin in Northern India. Irish Travellers, generally thought to have developed indigenously, came to England in the 19th century (around the time of the potato famine) and in greater numbers from 1960 onwards. New Travellers are extremely varied and are on the road for a wide variety of economic, environmental, social and personal reasons. Some have built up a tradition of travelling, with a generation of children born on the road.¹⁰

⁸ Morris (2000) cited in ODPM, *Counting Gypsies & Travellers: A Review of the Gypsy Caravan Count System*, February 2004, Pat Niner, University of Birmingham.

⁹ Pat Niner (2004), op cit.

¹⁰ Pat Niner, *Ibid.* page 143.

- 2.4 As explained in the first chapter, there are however separate definitions in housing and planning contexts. According to sections 225 and 226 of the Housing Act 2004, the definition of Gypsies and Travellers is:

*Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, and all other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism and/or caravan dwelling.*¹¹

- 2.5 The definition used in Planning Circular 01/2006 however specifically excludes 'members of an organised group of travelling show people or circus people travelling together as such.'¹² Travelling Showpeople are recognised in their own Planning Circular, 04/2007.

- 2.6 Importantly, Gypsies and Irish Travellers have been recognised by the courts to be two distinct ethnic groups, so have the full protection of the Race Relations Act. The courts made clear that travelling is not a defining characteristic of these groups, but only one among others. This is significant, because the majority of Britain's estimated 300,000 Gypsies and Travellers are thought to live in conventional housing, some by choice, and some because of the severe shortage of sites.¹³ However, unlike Gypsies and Irish Travellers, New Travellers are not considered to be an ethnic minority. The same is true for Travelling Showpeople. Although some Gypsies and Travellers may earn a living as 'travelling showpeople', Travelling Showpeople as a group do not consider themselves to belong to an ethnic minority¹⁴.

- 2.7 Finally, in relation to Travelling Showpeople, a circular issued by the Communities and Local Government (CLG) in August 2007 defined them as "*members of an organised group of Travelling Showpeople or circus people (whether or not travelling together as such). They include such persons who on the grounds of their own 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 excluding Gypsies and Travellers*"¹⁵. Also, for the purposes of Gypsies and Travellers Accommodation Assessments (GTAA's), Travelling Showpeople are included under the definition of 'Gypsies and Travellers' in accordance with *The Housing (Assessment of Accommodation Needs) (Meaning of Gypsies and Travellers) (England) Regulations 2006*. It recommends that Travelling Showpeople's own needs and requirements should be separately identified in the GTAA.¹⁶

¹¹ Ibid, page 6.

¹² CLG, *Planning for Gypsies and Travellers*, Circular 01/2006, page 6.

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

¹⁴ CLG *Planning for Travelling Showpeople*, Circular 04/2007, page 4.

¹⁵ CLG, *Consultation on revised planning guidance in relation to Travelling Showpeople*, January 2007, page 8.

¹⁶ Ibid.

2.8 Most recently, *Statutory Instrument 2006 No. 3190*, issued in January 2007, offers a similar definition as used in housing legislation. It defines Gypsies and Travellers as:

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

2.9 It is this definition that is used in the Essex GTAA.

It is evident from the above discussion that it is extremely difficult to satisfactorily define complex ethnic and social groupings such as Gypsies and Travellers. However, such definitions have important implications such as whether or not particular groups are afforded legal protection under the Race Relations Act. Also, this issue may have important implications for GTAAs which seek to accurately assess the current provision and future needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community.

Legislation relating to Gypsies and Travellers

2.10 Since the 1960s three Acts of Parliament have had a major impact upon the Gypsy and Traveller way of life. The *Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act* of 1960 made it difficult for Gypsies and Travellers to buy and winter on small plots of land, unless they had a licence that could only be gained through planning permission. This law led to the closure of many sites traditionally used by Gypsies and Travellers. Even those staying on the private land of farmers they were working for, could no longer do so. The effect of this was to push even more Gypsies and Travellers on to the roadside. A survey in 1965 showed that 60% of the families had travelled in the previous year, mainly as a result of harassment from police and council officials. Few children received regular schooling. Only 33% of the families had access to a water supply. The report concluded that there were too few local authority sites.¹⁷

¹⁷ Friends, Family & Travellers located at: <http://www.gypsy-Traveller.org/law/historical/>

- 2.11 The *Caravan Sites Act 1968 (Part II)* required local authorities 'as far as may be necessary to provide adequate accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers residing in or resorting to their area'. It empowered the Secretary of State to make designation orders for areas where he was satisfied that there was adequate accommodation, or on grounds of expediency. By 1994 a third of local authorities had achieved designation, and thus became exempt from making further provision and given additional powers against unauthorised encampment. The 1994 *Criminal Justice and Public Order Act* repealed most of the 1968 Act, abolished any statutory obligation to provide accommodation, discontinued government grants for such sites, and made it a criminal offence to camp on land without the owner's consent. Since the 1994 Act the only places where Gypsies and Travellers can legally park their trailers and vehicles are as follows:
- i) Council Gypsy caravan sites. By 2000 nearly half of Gypsy and Traveller caravans were accommodated on council sites, although new council site provision stopped with the end of the statutory duty.
 - ii) Privately owned land (usually by a Gypsy and Traveller) with appropriate planning permission, now accommodating a third of Gypsy caravans in England. Sites can be occupied solely by the owning family, or have pitches rented to other Gypsies and Travellers.
 - iii) Some land with established use rights, other caravan sites or mobile home parks by agreement or licence, and land required for a seasonal farm worker (under site licensing exemptions).¹⁸
- 2.12 However, by the late 1990s, pressure was being exerted upon the Government over the damaging effects of the 1994 Act. A Home Office study found that groups of Travellers were being 'chased...from one bit of land to another bit of land, to another bit of land to another bit of land...you just chase them around' (in the words of a police officer).¹⁹ Travellers were tending to group together into larger bands on fewer sites, leading in turn to higher public anxiety over their presence and further rounds of evictions.

¹⁸ Robert Home and Margaret Greenfields (2006) op cit., page 9.

¹⁹ Cited in Ibid, page 9.

- 2.13 A major review of policy resulted in the replacement of *Circular 01/94* by *Circular 01/2006* (discussed below), and guidance on accommodation assessments. Part 6 of the Housing Act 2004 contains several provisions designed to mainstream the provision of accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers alongside that of the settled community, and to ensure that local authorities take a strategic approach to assessing and meeting the needs of Gypsies and Travellers as they do for the rest of the community. Importantly, the Housing Act 2004 requires local authorities to include Gypsies and Travellers in their local housing needs assessments. As well as this Act, local authorities also need to have regard to their other statutory duties, including those in respect of homelessness under the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) and to their obligations under the Race Relations (Amendments) Act 2000.
- 2.14 *Planning Circular 01/2006 Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites* set out guidance stating that local planning authorities need to identify appropriate land for Gypsy and Traveller sites through the planning system in line with need in their area, to deal with the growing shortage of sites and prevent unauthorised sites in problem locations. The Gypsy and Traveller Sites Grant made up to £56 million available nationally over the years 2006/7 and 2007/8 to fund new provision and refurbish existing sites. A further £97m has been made available for 2008-11. The grant is distributed through the Regional Housing Boards. The extension of the permissible purposes of RSLs has enabled them to provide and manage Gypsy and Traveller sites and access funding from the Gypsy and Traveller Sites Grant to do so, although take-up has been limited.

It is evident that much past legislation negatively impacted on Gypsies and Travellers. However, more recent legislation has more positively attempted to respond to the needs of Gypsies and Travellers by placing duties on local authorities to assess, and provide, accommodation needs. Perhaps reflecting Government desire for increased social inclusion and community cohesion, legislation has also placed greater emphasis on encouraging Gypsy and Traveller community participation in local decision-making processes.

Current provision of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation

Introduction

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

Types of sites

2.16 Nationally there are six different types of site accommodation in use by Gypsies and Travellers including: local authority sites, privately owned commercial sites, family owned private sites, Gypsy-owned land without planning permission (also known as unauthorised developments), unauthorised encampments and transit accommodation²⁰:

i. Local Authority sites

2.17 According to Niner²¹, the great majority of local authority sites are designed for permanent residential use. In January 2008 only 277 pitches were intended for transit or short-stay use in England (and not all of these are actually used for transit purposes). Most sites were built during the period 1970 to 1994 when local authorities (latterly County Councils, Metropolitan Boroughs and London Boroughs) had a duty to provide site accommodation for Gypsies 'residing in and resorting to' their areas.²² The latest caravan count undertaken in January 2008 suggests that at that time local authority sites in England had a capacity for 7,953 caravans. Management arrangements can vary greatly, with some sites having onsite wardens and others off-site managers. Site rules are generally laid out in licenses or agreements; tenancies are rare.

ii. Privately owned commercial sites

2.18 The majority of privately owned commercial sites are Gypsy and Traveller owned and managed. Most are probably used for long-term residence, but there is also an element (extent unknown) of transit use. The site owner/manager determines site rules and allocation policies. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the latter can be highly selective, meaning that pitches are only available for extended families and acquaintances. There is no comprehensive information on rules on private sites.²³

2.19 Unfortunately, the caravan count does not distinguish between family owned caravan sites and other forms of privately owned sites. In January 2008, the caravan count recorded 7,351 caravans on privately owned sites.

²⁰ This section draws extensively on research undertaken by Pat Niner in 2003 on behalf of the then Department for Transport, Regions and the Environment (DETR) on the provision of Gypsy and Traveller sites in England and later incorporated into her paper on *Accommodating Nomadism? An Examination of Accommodation Options for Gypsies and Travellers in England* (2004), op cit.

²¹ Pat Niner (2004), op cit.

²² Ibid. Page 145.

²³ Ibid. Page 146.

iii. Family owner-occupied private sites

2.20 As Niner states, family sites are seen as the ideal by many Gypsies and Travellers in England.²⁴ They are also often seen as unattainable. There are two major obstacles: money/affordability and getting the necessary planning permission and site licence. While the former is clearly a real barrier to many less well-off Gypsies and Travellers, getting planning permission for use of land as a Gypsy caravan site (and a 'site' in this context could be a single caravan) is currently a major constraint on realising aspirations among those who could afford to buy and develop a family site. Research has found, the vast majority of local planning policies are criteria-based and do not identify possible site locations.²⁵ It has also been found that Gypsies and Travellers are less likely to obtain planning permission than the settled population.²⁶ Planning permission for family owner-occupied private sites is sometimes given in the form of a personal planning permission. This entitles a named family, or members of the family, to live on the land only.

iv. Gypsy-owned land without planning permission

2.21 In January 2008 2,287 caravans were recorded as being on unauthorised sites on Gypsy-owned land consisting of 1,054 'tolerated' and 1,233 'not tolerated' by local authorities in England. Again, according to Niner, while evidence is lacking, there is a strong impression from local authority officers and parliamentary questions that the number of Gypsies and Travellers moving onto their own land without planning consent is increasing. This has contributed to dissatisfaction with planning enforcement powers on the part of the settled community.²⁷

v. Unauthorised encampment

2.22 In May 2006 the CLG published local authority guidelines for dealing with unauthorised encampments. Whilst much of the discourse of this document refers to legislative powers local authorities hold in order to remove unauthorised campers, it nonetheless recognises that such unauthorised camping is at least partly the consequence of too few permanent sites. This is again acknowledged by the CLG²⁸ who underline the view that enforcement against unauthorised sites can only be used successfully if there is sufficient provision of authorised sites. They argue that the scale of the problem is small (when compared to the general housing shortage) and a sustained programme supported by a grant system which will need to continue for some years, should enable most areas to provide permanent sites with a network of transit sites, sufficient to meet the present requirement of pitches for 4,000 caravans and future growth.²⁹ The January 2008 caravan count suggests that there are 1,564 on unauthorised encampments.

²⁴ Ibid. Page 146-7.

²⁵ Wilson, M. (1998), *A Directory of Planning Policies for Gypsy Site Provision in England*. The Policy Press: Bristol.

²⁶ Williams, T. (1999), *Private Gypsy Site Provision*. Advisory Council for the Education of Romanies and Travellers.

²⁷ Ibid. Page 147.

²⁸ CLG, *Gypsy and Traveller Task Group on Site Provision and Enforcement: Interim Report to Ministers*, March 2007.

²⁹ Ibid. Page 7.

vi. 'Transit' accommodation

2.23 It is the option for accommodation for full-time Travellers and for seasonal and occasional Travellers while away from 'home' or base that is most inadequate. As stated above, there are only 271 transit or short stay pitches (not all used for short-term purposes) in England.³⁰ At present unauthorised encampments 'accommodate' the great majority of 'transit' mobility in an almost totally unplanned manner. No national record is kept of the number of actual 'sites' affected, but extrapolation from local records in different areas suggests that it must be thousands each year. As noted above, conditions for Gypsies and Travellers on unauthorised encampments are very poor and such 'accommodation' cannot be considered satisfactory by any measure. Both the frequency and geography of movement are affected by variable responses of local authorities, landowners and police to unauthorised encampments. Rapid evictions increase the apparent rate of movement; very strict policies may deter some Gypsies and Travellers from an area so long as there are economic opportunities in other areas where it is easier to stop.³¹

2.24 To summarise the figures noted above:

- In January 2008, data from CLG for the number of caravans show that there are 17,898 in the England
- 14,047 or around 78% of these are on authorised sites (6,696 on local authority sites and 7,351 on authorised private sites)
- 3,851 or 22% are on unauthorised developments or encampments – 2,287 or 13% on unauthorised developments (where Gypsies and Travellers own the land but do not have planning permission) and 1,564 or 9% on unauthorised encampments (where Gypsies and Travellers do not own the land and planning consent has not been given for use as a site)
- Between January 2006 and January 2008 the total number of caravans recorded increased from 15,746 to 17,898; the number of caravans on authorised council and private sites increased, while the number of caravans on unauthorised developments decreased (although proportionately more of these are now tolerated)

³⁰ Pat Niner *Local Authority Gypsy / Traveller Sites in England*, ODPM, 2003, page 190.

³¹ ODPM (2004) *op cit.* Page 151.

- 2.25 From the above it is clear that, despite powers given to local authorities under the 2004 Housing Act, there remains a lack of suitable residential and transit site provision. Indeed, the Government acknowledge that whilst around three-quarters of Gypsy and Traveller caravans are on authorised sites, most of which are well-run and an established part of the community, the remainder do not have an authorised place to stop and that the continuing increase in unauthorised sites is likely to contribute to increasing community tensions between Gypsies and Travellers and the settled community. Research undertaken by the Commission for Racial Equality shows that over two-thirds (67%) of local authorities say they have had to deal with tensions between Gypsies and Travellers and other members of the public. They gave three explanations for this: 94 per cent of these authorities stated that unauthorised encampments were one of the chief problems, 46 per cent pointed to planning applications and enforcement and 51 per cent spoke of general public hostility. The community tensions mainly took the form of complaints by local residents to the council (61%), and hostile media coverage (43%). The most significant overall consequence of these tensions was public resistance to providing any more public or private sites.³²
- 2.26 In response, the Government is providing £56m for site provision in 2006-08. However, according to the CLG, this amount constitutes both a very small percentage of the overall social housing budget, and that a similar level of funding is required over the next few years in order to maintain the baseline. They also acknowledge that more consideration needs to be given to refurbishment and new sites and whether the level of grant available for this work should be changed.³³ Interestingly, they also acknowledge that the costs of enforcements against unauthorised developments and encampments demonstrate that providing sites may be more cost effective in the medium term as well as being more socially and economically satisfactory for both Travellers and the settled community. For example, Bristol spent around £200,000 per annum on enforcement before building a transit site which cost £425,000, after which their enforcement costs fell to around £5000 per annum)³⁴. Finally, CLG underline the importance of undertaking GTAAAs, and emphasising the contribution that these make towards estimating site provision need.

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

³² CRE (2006), op cit., page 7.

³³ CLG (2006), op cit., page 4.

³⁴ CLG (2007) op cit., page 5.

Travelling Showpeople accommodation

- 2.27 Accommodation for Travelling Showpeople differs from Gypsies and Travellers. For one, it is privately provided, with a 'yard' either owner-occupied by a family or rented to other Travelling Showpeople (each with their own 'plot'). Each plot contains an area for accommodation (typically caravans and mobile homes) and a separate space for storage, maintenance and testing of equipment. Traditionally, yards were used as 'winter quarters' and only occupied out of the fairground season. However, increasingly yards are permanently occupied by some members of the family, especially older family members and children.
- 2.28 The combination of land for residential and business uses means that yards do not conveniently fit into existing land-use categories. Site-splitting is not acceptable for Travelling Showpeople as there is a reluctance to store valuable fairground equipment on a separate yard. This is one reason why, like Gypsies and Travellers, Travelling Showpeople have struggled to obtain planning permission for land, giving rise to unauthorised developments. The shortage of accommodation is also due to rising land values and competition from residential developers for peripheral brownfield sites typically used for yards.

Summary

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

3. The regional and local perspective

Introduction

- 3.1 As explained in the previous chapter, the new statutory arrangements mean the local housing assessment process will be the key source of information enabling local authorities to assess the level of provision that is required for Gypsies and Travellers. To facilitate this, strategies are required which outline how any identified need will be met as part of their wider housing strategies.
- 3.2 The Essex GTAA will of course be the main policy basis for councils to establish the required level of provision. However to assess the current state of play, existing documents have been examined to see what reference is made to Gypsy and Traveller issues. The intention is to highlight areas of effective practice in Essex, and examine the extent to which authorities are currently addressing the issue. Furthermore, understanding the current position will be important in the development of future strategies intended to meet accommodation and housing related support need among Gypsies and Travellers.

The East of England Plan

- 3.3 Planning Circular 01/2006 explains the role of the Regional Planning Body (RPB) in the provision of Gypsy and Traveller sites. Following completion of a GTAA, the figures are checked at a regional level and, if necessary, modified from a regional perspective (e.g. to ensure provision is distributed equally across the region).
- 3.4 The East of England Regional Assembly (EERA) have been designated the Regional Planning Panel (RPP) for the East of England, and as such they are responsible for the production of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), which gives the regional planning context up to 2021.
- 3.5 The current RSS was published in May 2008, and consequently in December 2008 a revised draft policy was published based upon the EiP held by the Secretary of State in response to the RSS. The EiP Report of the Panel, *RSS Single Issue Review: Planning for Gypsies and Travellers* outlined how Gypsy and Traveller accommodation need should be addressed in the East of England.
- 3.6 The Single Issue Review accounts for provisions until 2011 and outlines that:
- Recent government policy has focused upon promoting privately owned sites and facilitating this is a priority for councils.

- The needs of Travelling Showpeople need to be accounted for more, especially in the provision of short stay transitory sites.
- There is current underestimation regarding the housing needs of New Travellers and Gypsy and Travellers in bricks and mortar accommodation, those in bricks and mortar accommodation frequently express an interest in returning to living on a site and this should be considered by councils as a more cost effective use of resources.
- An approach of wider distribution of sites is accepted, in opposition to more specific site locations as a product of GTAA findings. Generalised distribution of sites is seen to provide more choice to Gypsy and Travellers and distribute the balance of sites away from the most heavily populated districts, Basildon and Epping Forest.

3.7 In July 2009 the Government published a response.³⁵ This gave the minimum additional pitches required for Gypsies and Travellers in each district between 2006 and 2011, based on each district providing a minimum of 15 pitches and a redistribution of pitches away from the districts which currently have the largest provision. It also gave a total number of Travelling Showpeople plots required in Essex (including Thurrock, which has the largest Travelling Showpeople population) but does not state how this should be distributed, beyond restating the principle of distributing provision to all parts of the area. The provision for Essex is shown below.

³⁵ Government Office for the East of England, *Accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the East of England: A Revision to the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England*, July 2009.

Table 3.1 Minimum site provision for Essex, 2006-2011

District	Authorised, 2006	Minimum additional, 2006-2011	Minimum by 2011
<i>Gypsies and Travellers residential pitches</i>			
Basildon	112	62	174
Braintree	25	25	50
Brentwood	10	15	25
Castle Point	0	15	15
Chelmsford	35	46	81
Colchester	5	25	30
Epping Forest	94	34	128
Harlow	34	15	49
Maldon	39	15	54
Rochford	3	15	18
Tendring	2	15	17
Uttlesford	37	25	62
Southend-on-Sea	0	15	15
Total	396	322	718
<i>Travelling Showpeople residential plots</i>			
Essex*	166	103	269

* Including Thurrock

Source: Government Office for the East of England.

3.8 In terms of meeting the additional need, The Government response encourages joint-working between neighbouring authorities to meet the pitch requirements. It also makes the following points about meeting the need:

- The provision of residential Gypsy and Traveller pitches contributes towards meeting local housing targets
- Delivery of the required pitches by 2011 will provide for the existing backlog. A 3% compound increase in provision should be applied to meet needs after 2011
- Accommodation is concentrated in certain parts of the region. The distribution aims to balance, providing most additional pitches in those parts of the region where most Gypsies and Travellers currently live with broadening the choice available to families by providing some pitches in all parts of the region
- Development Plan Documents should consider the need for rural exception sites and the alteration of Green Belt boundaries, where necessary, to meet the required provision.

Local documents

Basildon District Council, Gypsy and Traveller Sites Monitoring Report, January 2008

- 3.9 The Planning Services of Basildon District Council have compiled a Gypsy and Traveller Sites Monitoring Report, which presents information on the provision and demand for Gypsy and Traveller Sites in the area. In response to the Draft Policy the report states that Basildon has not agreed to the figures due to the fact that the formulaic approach *'runs contrary to the DCLG guidance which aims to separate need from demand and aspiration'*.
- 3.10 The report describes how Basildon has a higher needs figure than other districts in the study area due to 63 unauthorised pitches at Dale Farm and Hovefields. It is argued that if *'the Judicial Review finds in favour of the Council and these 63 pitches are cleared, then there will be 18 unauthorised pitches in the District'*.
- 3.11 It is further argued that the 32 caravans on 18 unauthorised pitches is a more realistic picture of the level of unauthorised activity in Basildon as it is equal to the level of unauthorised pitches in 2000. It then follows that this figure of underlying level of unauthorised pitches should be used to calculate need rather *'than using the disproportionately high level of demand as currently exists'*.

Brentwood District Council, Gypsies and Travellers Development Plan Document, Issues and Options Stage 2 Consultation – Suggested Site Options, May 2008

- 3.12 Brentwood District Council is being required by the Government to address the issue of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation through a DPD. As the first stage, an Issues and Options paper was subject to public consultation in July 2007 and, as a result, a second document outlines which sites have been suggested. Following further public consultation, the document will progress to the next stage, the Preferred Options.
- 3.13 In total 18 sites or general locations are suggested as possible residential sites, both to meet current need and future requirements. None of these sites have been put forward by the owners of the land or are promoted by them.
- 3.14 The report comments that there is no agreed level of need for pitches in Essex and states that the Council is not convinced that the level of unauthorised encampments is an accurate reflection of required provision.

Epping Forest District Council, Consultation on Options: Development Plan Provision for Gypsies and Travellers in Epping Forest District, November 2008

3.15 Epping Forest District Council was directed by the Secretary of State in September 2007 to prepare a planning document specific to Gypsy and Traveller sites. The Direction required the submission of a DPD by the end of September 2009. Consultation on Options was carried out between November 2008 and February 2009. The exercise was controversial from the outset, with ill-feeling being stirred up by coverage in the local and national media. There were over 10,000 responses, some of which are very lengthy and complex, and several threats of judicial challenge. The workload resulting from the consultation has meant that it was not possible to meet the Direction deadline. Negotiations are continuing (September 2009) with GO-East about a revised timetable.

Summary

3.16 The draft East of England RSS Review on Gypsy and Traveller sites sets out requirements for an additional 322 residential pitches in Essex. The figure was reached by applying a formula to caravan count data, although the initial total was then reduced and the distribution altered following representations from Essex councils.

4. Trends in the population levels of Gypsies and Travellers

Introduction

- 4.1 This chapter examines Gypsy and Traveller numbers in Essex and population trends using secondary data. The primary source of information for Gypsies and Travellers in the UK as a whole is the CLG caravan count. This was introduced in 1979 and places a duty on local authorities in England to undertake a twice yearly count for the CLG on the number of Gypsy and Traveller caravans in their area. The CLG caravan count was intended to estimate the size of the Gypsy and Traveller population for whom provision was to be made and to monitor progress in meeting need.
- 4.2 Although the duty to provide sites was removed in 1994, the need for local authorities to conduct the count has remained. There are, however, several weaknesses with the reliability of the data. For example, across the country counting practices vary between local authorities, and the practice of carrying out the count on a single day ignores the rapidly fluctuating number and distribution of unauthorised encampments. Concerns have also been raised over a lack of commitment on the part of some local authorities to detect Gypsies and Travellers (particularly on unauthorised sites), since this minimises the apparent need for new sites and services.³⁶
- 4.3 Travelling Showpeople are excluded from the CLG caravan count, as are New Travellers by some local authorities. Significantly, the count is only of caravans and so Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar accommodation are excluded. It should also be noted that pitches often contain more than one caravan, typically two or three.
- 4.4 However, despite fears about accuracy, the CLG caravan count is valuable because it provides the only national source of information on numbers and distribution of Gypsy and Traveller caravans. It is therefore useful for identifying trends in the Gypsy and Traveller population, if not determining absolute numbers.
- 4.5 The CLG caravan count distinguishes between socially rented authorised sites, private authorised sites, and unauthorised sites. Since January 2006 unauthorised sites have been broken down between unauthorised developments (where the site is on Gypsy or Traveller owned land) and unauthorised encampments (on land not owned by the inhabitants), and specifies whether the sites are tolerated by the council or are subject to enforcement action. The analysis in this chapter includes data from January 2004 to January 2008, so some data predates the more detailed figures provided since 2006.

³⁶ Pat Niner, *Local Authority Gypsy and Traveller Sites in England*, ODPM, 2003.

- 4.6 The analysis in this chapter starts by placing the overall situation in Essex in a regional and national context. It then compares the number of caravans in each Essex district, both in absolute terms and in relation to the size of its settled population. Finally it looks at changes in caravan numbers since January 2004.

Total population

- 4.7 The total Gypsy and Traveller population living in the UK is unknown, although it is estimated that 90,000 to 120,000 live in England³⁷. There are uncertainties partly because of the number of different definitions that exist, but mainly because of an almost total lack of information about the numbers of Gypsies and Travellers now living in houses or flats. Estimates produced for the CLG suggest that at least 50% of the overall Gypsy and Traveller population are now living in permanent housing.
- 4.8 The January 2008 Count (the most recent figures available) indicated a total of 17,898 caravans. Applying an assumed three person per caravan multiplier³⁸ would give a population of just under 53,700. Again applying an assumed multiplier and doubling this to allow for the numbers of Gypsies and Travellers in housing,³⁹ this gives a total population of around 107,500 for England. However, given the limitations of the data, this figure can only be very approximate and is likely to be significantly underestimated.

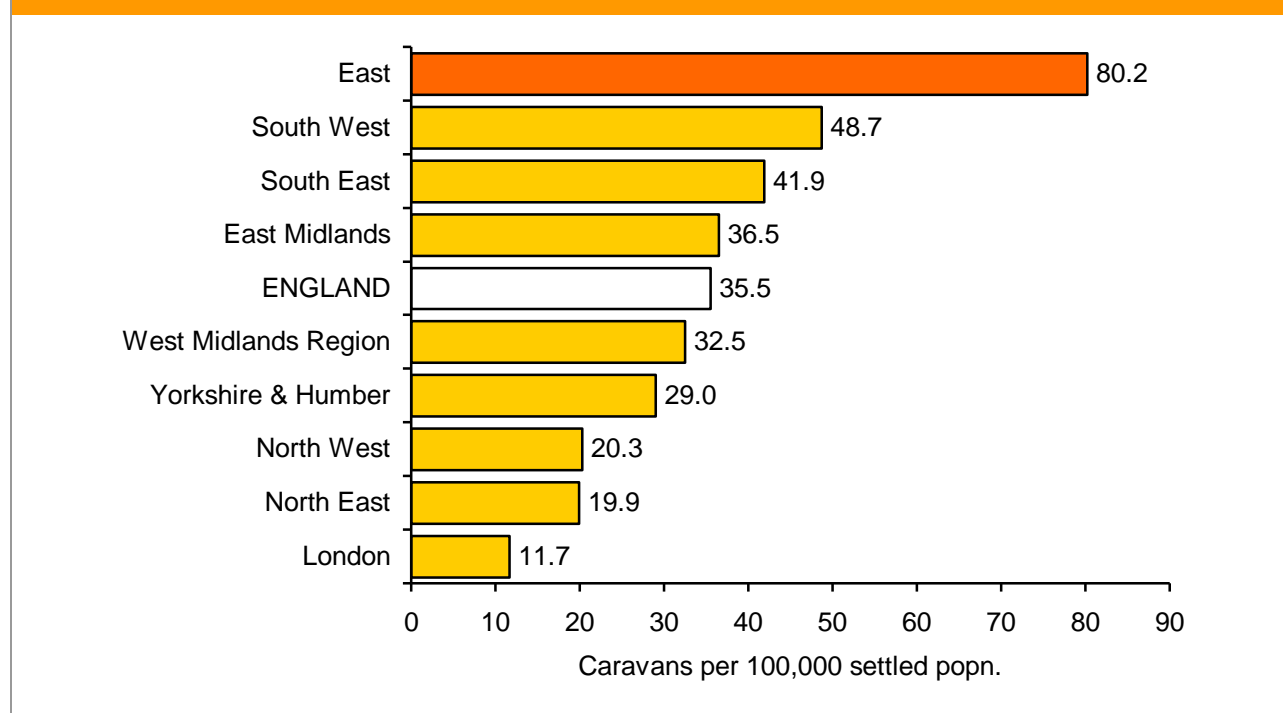
Regional perspective

- 4.9 Having looked at some of the basic characteristics of the Gypsy and Traveller population, we now examine these features in slightly more detail. Given that one of the distinctive characteristics of the population is its mobility, it is first of all necessary to consider the national situation as this will help put the situation in Essex into context.
- 4.10 The figure below shows the results from the caravan count in January 2008 for each region of England. Due to the differing sizes of the English regions, the values have been adjusted for population to create useful comparative figures. The table below then shows the absolute number of caravans.

³⁷ J. P. Liegeois, (1994) *Romas, Gypsies and Travellers* Strasbourg: Council of Europe. This is equivalent to 0.15% to 0.21% of the total population.

³⁸ Pat Niner (2003), *op. cit.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*

Figure 4.1 Caravans in regions of England (per population), January 2008

Source: CLG caravan count (January 2008) / National Statistics (mid-2005 population estimates)

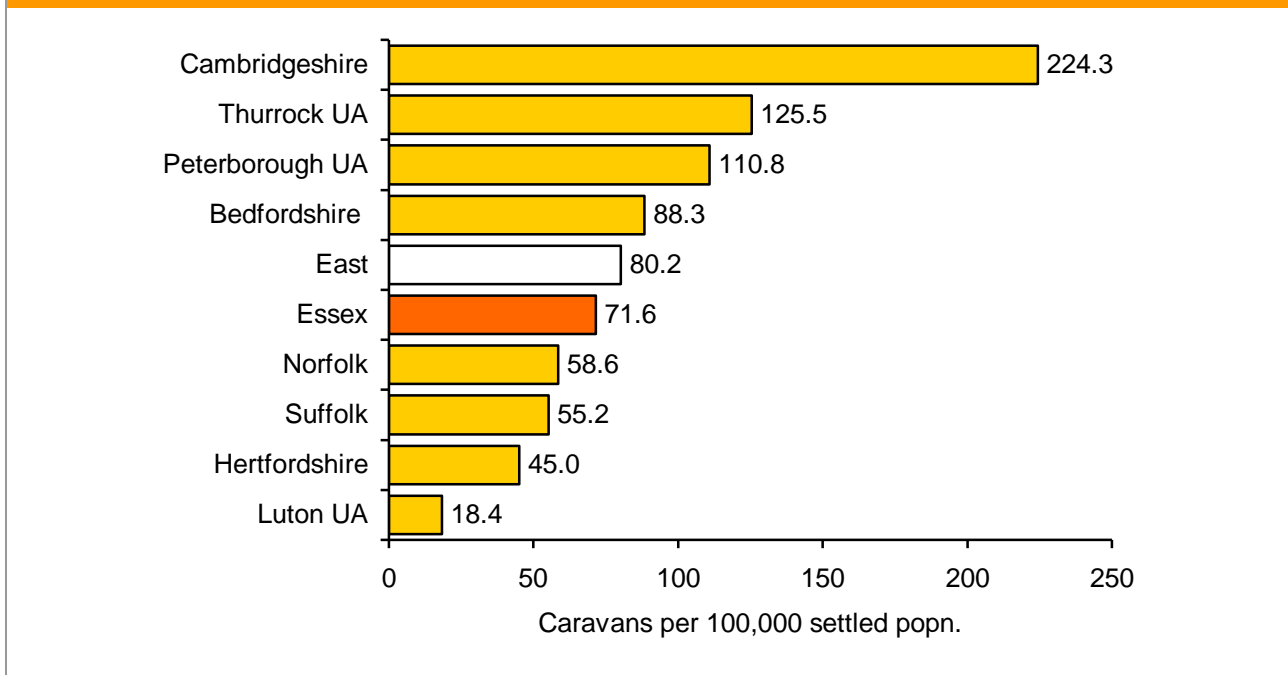
Table 4.1 Caravans in regions of England, January 2008

South West 2,470 (13.8%)	South East 3,420 (19.1%)	London 883 (4.9%)	East 4,443 (24.8%)	West Midlands 1,745 (9.7%)
East Midlands 1,571 (8.8%)	Yorkshire & Humber 1,469 (8.2%)	North West 1,389 (7.8%)	North East 508 (2.8%)	ENGLAND 17,898

Source: CLG caravan count (January 2008)

- 4.11 It can be seen that the Eastern Region has by far the largest number of caravans of any region in England, with over twice the national average. A quarter of all caravans in England are in the East, with a total number of almost 4,450 recorded in January 2008.
- 4.12 The following figure and table show how the East of England caravan population is broken down among counties and unitary authorities. It can be seen that, relative to the size of the settled population, Essex has slightly less than the regional average, and significantly less than Cambridgeshire, which has three times the East of England average. In absolute terms however, the table shows that Essex has almost a quarter of all the caravans in the region.

Figure 4.2 Caravans in East of England county areas (per population) January 2008



Source: CLG caravan count (January 2008) / National Statistics (mid-2005 population estimates)

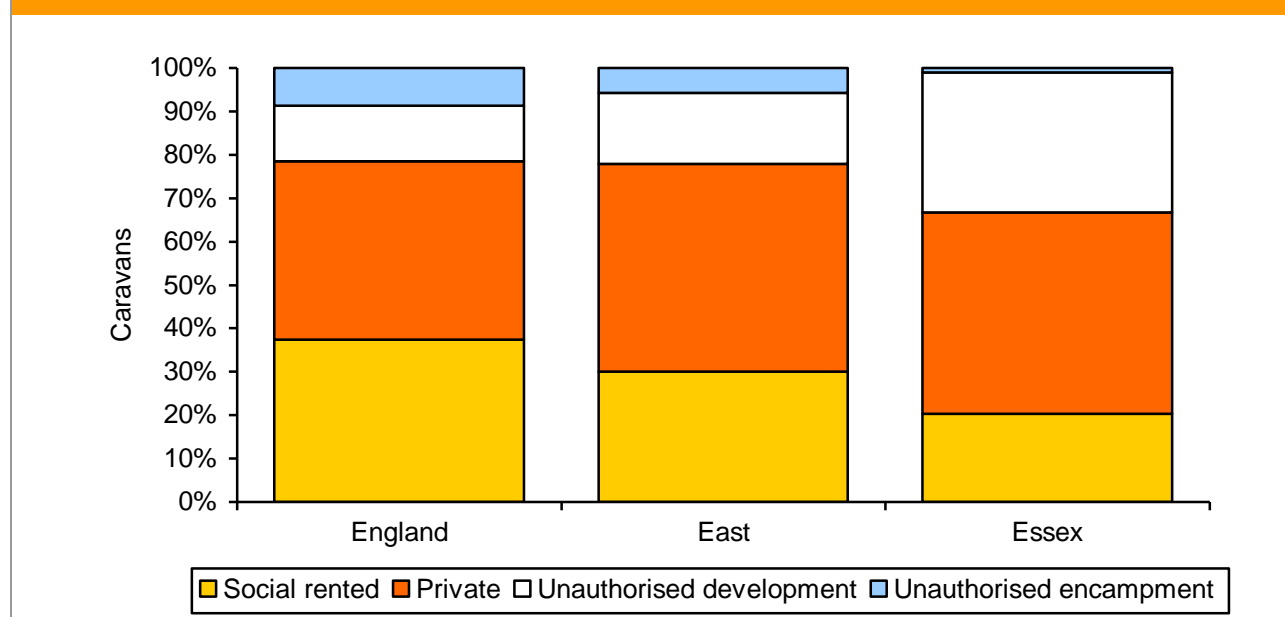
Table 4.2 Caravans in East of England counties, January 2008

Bedfordshire 351 (7.9%)	Cambridgeshire 1,321 (29.7%)	Essex 1,074 (23.4%)	Hertfordshire 472 (10.6%)	Luton UA 34 (0.8%)
Norfolk 483 (10.9%)	Peterborough UA 177 (4.0%)	Suffolk 382 (8.6%)	Thurrock 184 (4.1%)	East of England 4,443 (100.0%)

Source: CLG caravan count (January 2008)

4.13 Finally we consider how the breakdown of site types in Essex compares with the regional and national picture. The figure below shows that Essex has proportionally higher number of caravans on unauthorised developments (32% compared to 16% regionally and 13% nationally), although relatively few on unauthorised encampments (just 1%). The proportion of caravans on authorised sites (67%) is below the regional (78%) and national (79%) average, and only 20% are on social rented sites, compared to 30% regionally and 37% nationally.

Figure 4.3 Caravan types, January 2008

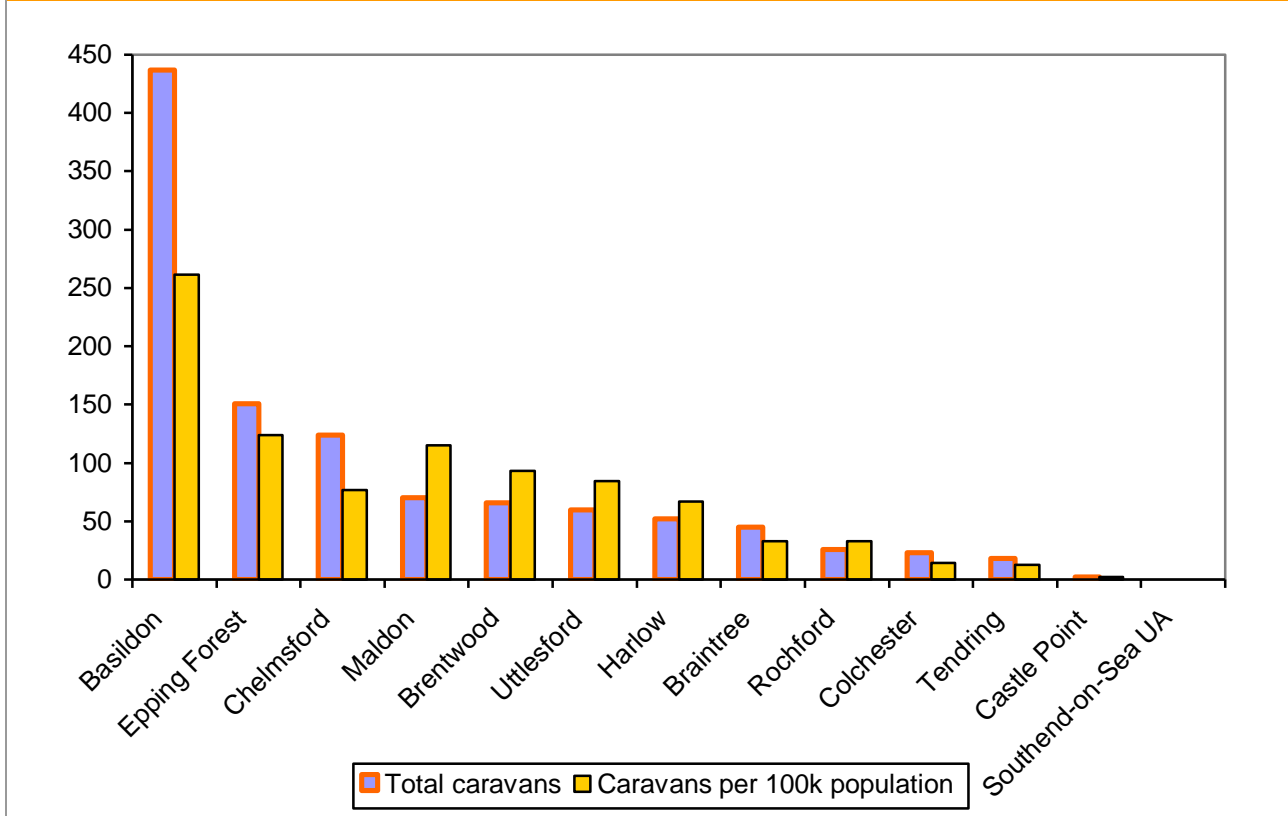


Source: CLG caravan count (January 2008)

Areas within Essex

- 4.14 The tables below show the location of caravans, according to the CLG caravan count, in the individual local authority areas in Essex. The columns show numbers in absolute and relative terms. (NB: for Basildon the January 2008 count states there are no social rented pitches in the District. This is an error and we have used the July 2007 figures of 35 caravans).
- 4.15 Overall there is a great range in numbers of caravans in each district. As can be seen, Basildon has by far the highest number of caravans. Compared to Epping Forest (the second highest district), Basildon has almost three times as many in absolute terms and over twice as many relative to its population. It contains 41% of the total number of caravans in Essex. In contrast three areas have fewer than 20 caravans – Brentwood, Tendring and Southend-on-Sea (which has none).

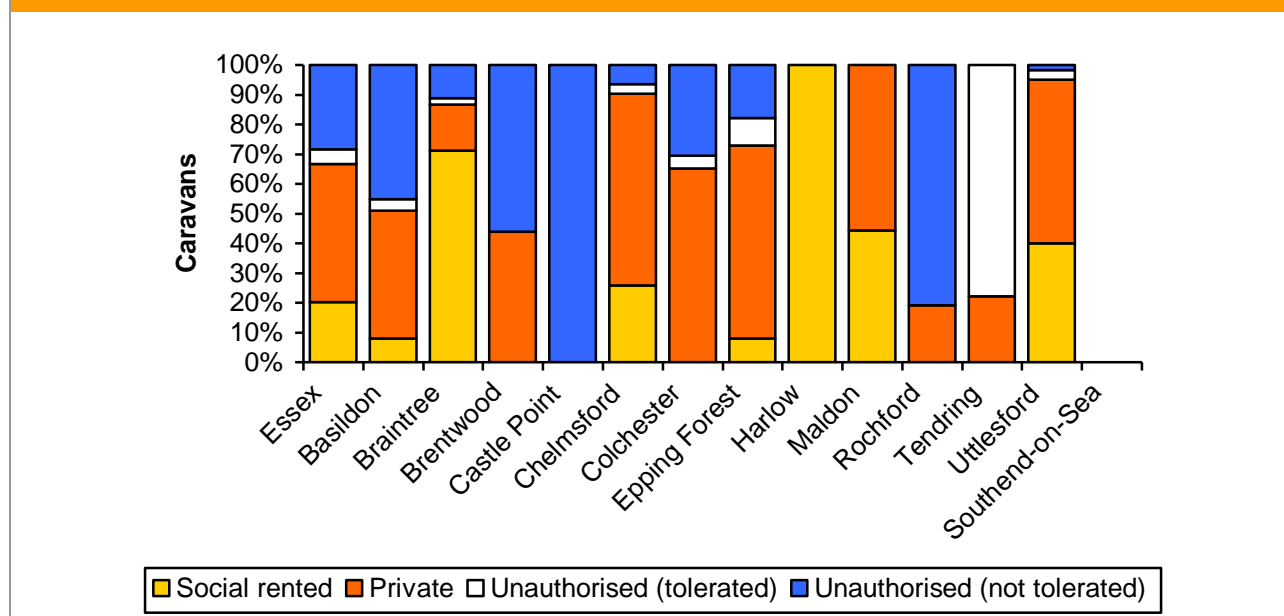
Figure 4.4 Caravans in Essex areas, total and per 100,000 population, January 2008



Source: CLG caravan count (January 2008) / National Statistics (mid-2005 population estimates)

4.16 In terms of all caravan types, the following figure show the percentage of social rented, private and unauthorised sites, both tolerated and not tolerated. Given that only 1% of caravans are on unauthorised encampments, we have grouped the unauthorised sites into those which are tolerated by the local planning authority and those that are not. Overall in Essex, just over half (46%) of caravans are on private sites, with a further fifth on social rented. Over a quarter (28%) are unauthorised with only 5% tolerated by the local authority. Again we see a wide difference in caravan type profiles among the Essex local authorities. All the caravans in Harlow and Maldon are on authorised sites, as are large majorities in Basildon, Braintree, Chelmsford and Uttlesford. Castle Point however has no authorised provision, and caravans on unauthorised sites form the majority in Brentwood, Rochford and Tendring (although here they are tolerated by the Council).

Figure 4.5 Caravan types in Essex districts, January 2008

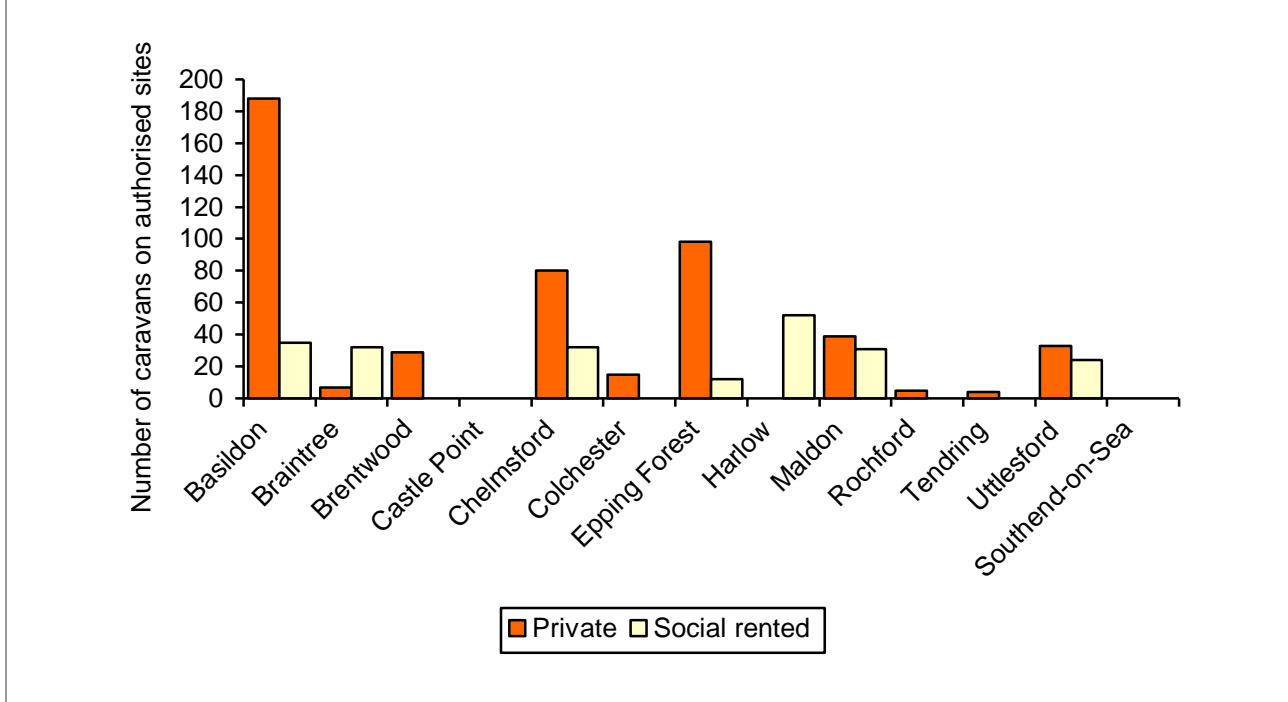


Source: CLG caravan count (January 2008)

Authorised sites

4.17 With regards to authorised provision only, the figure below shows the total number of social rented and private pitches in each district. Again, Basildon has significantly more caravans than any other district, with almost twice as many on private sites than the next highest (Epping Forest). Almost a third (31%) of all caravans on authorised sites in Essex are in Basildon. In contrast, there is no authorised provision in Castle Point and Southend-on-Sea, and no caravans on social rented sites in Brentwood, Colchester, Rochford and Tendring.

Figure 4.6 Caravans on authorised sites in Essex, January 2008

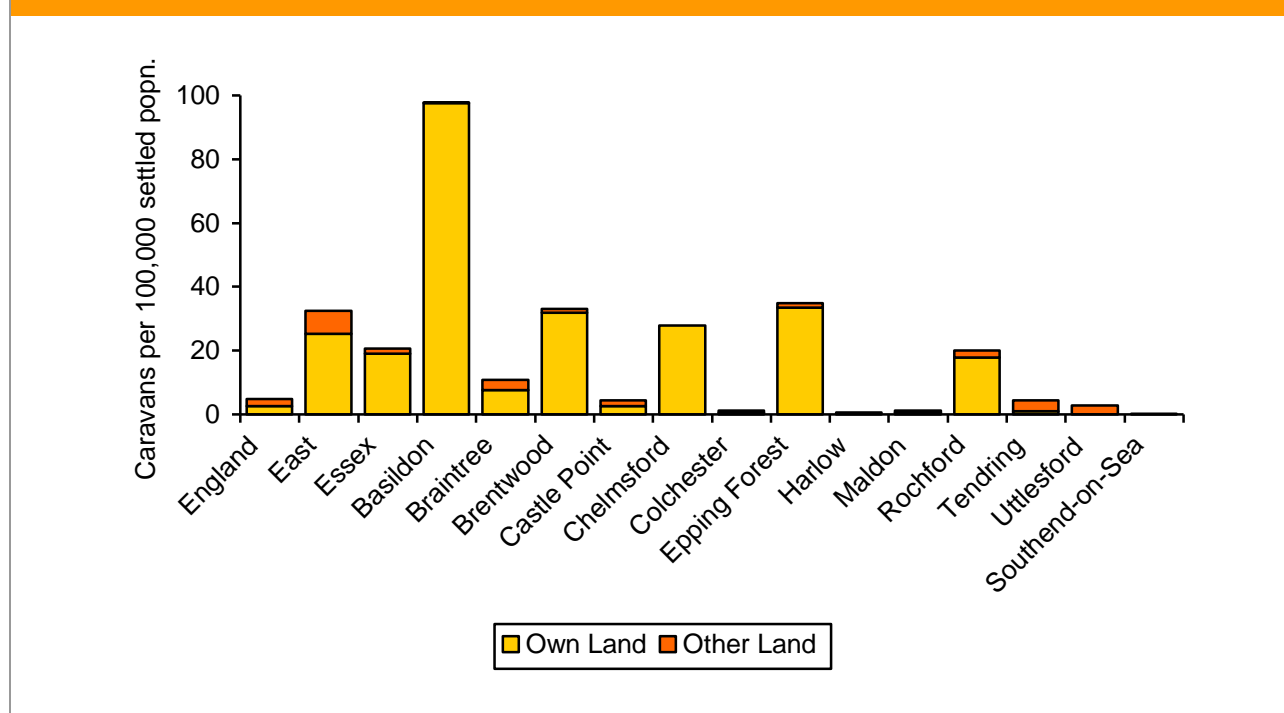


Source: CLG caravan count January 2008

Unauthorised encampments

- 4.18 As has previously been noted, the CLG data for individual districts in relation to caravans which are not tolerated by the local authority tends to fluctuate dramatically since it is based on a single day. However, by averaging the data across the past four years, a general comparison can be made between levels of unauthorised encampments and developments in Essex and other areas.
- 4.19 As with the total number of caravans, Essex has a much higher number of unauthorised caravans per 100,000 settled population than the national average (20.6 compared to 4.8), but significantly less than the regional average (32.5). Experience in other areas of the country suggests this could potentially be subject to distortion due to local reporting practices or by a limited level of monitoring elsewhere in the country.
- 4.20 When comparing districts, the figure below shows that Basildon again has a vastly higher level of unauthorised caravans, which can be attributed to the large unauthorised development at Dale Farm. Brentwood, Chelmsford and Epping Forest have a relative number of unauthorised caravans higher than both the county and regional average. Seven authorities however have unauthorised levels relatively lower than the national average (Castle Point, Colchester, Harlow, Maldon, Tendring, Uttlesford and Southend-on-Sea). This suggests that caravans on unauthorised encampments are disproportionately concentrated in the south west of the County.

**Figure 4.7 Caravans in districts (not tolerated), adjusted for population:
Jan 2004 – Jan 2008**

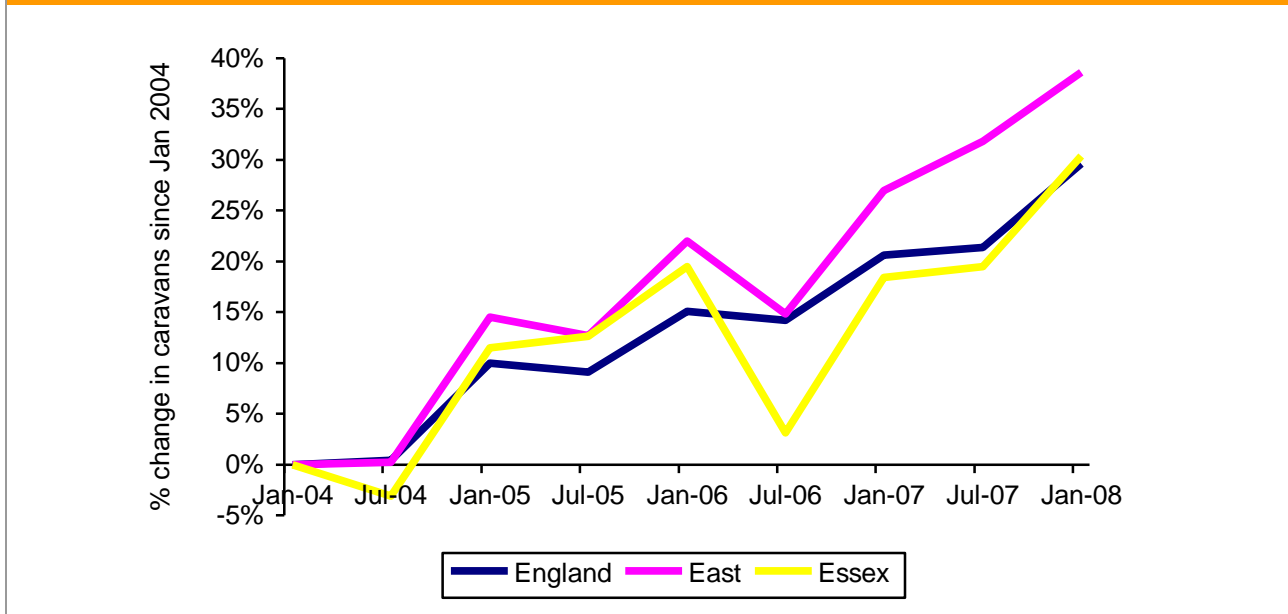


Source: CLG caravan count (January 2008) / National Statistics (mid-2005 population estimates)

Recent population trends

4.21 It is also useful to know how the population of Gypsies and Travellers and distribution of sites and encampments have changed in recent years. As can be seen in the chart below, the number of caravans on authorised sites in Essex has increased since January 2004 by 30% (from 549 to 716 caravans), although it has fluctuated during that time, while it has held more or less steady in the rest of the UK. Since authorised sites are almost always filled to capacity, this is likely to reflect an increase in levels of provision over the four year period. The increase therefore follows matches the national trend (30% increase) although is at a slightly lower rate than the East region (39% increase).

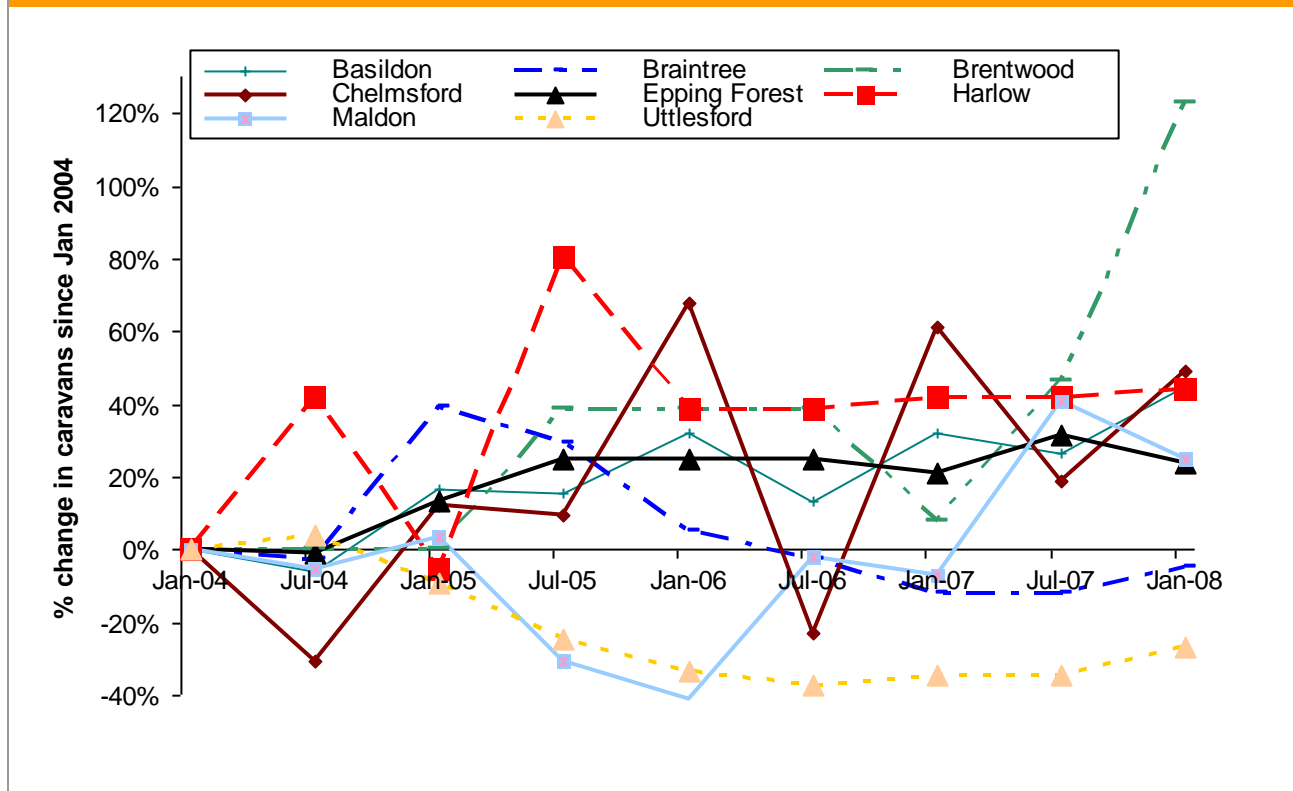
Figure 4.8 Percentage change in number of authorised caravans since January 2004



Source: CLG caravan count January 2008

- 4.22 The upwards trend has not however been uniform in all Essex districts. The following figure shows percentage change in authorised caravan levels since January 2004 for eight Essex local authorities with the largest population. Local authorities with fewer than ten authorised caravans in the January 2004 count (Castle Point, Rochford, Tendring, Southend-on-Sea and Colchester) have been excluded as percentage comparisons are less useful at small levels.
- 4.23 It shows that in most districts the level of caravans on authorised sites has increased, with the exception of Braintree (where there has been a 5% decrease) and Uttlesford (a fall of 27%). In both these districts the decrease can be accounted for the drop in the number of caravans on private sites; the number on social rented sites has broadly remained constant.
- 4.24 The largest increase in caravans is found in Brentwood, where the number has more than doubled, admittedly from a small base. Other large increases can be seen for Chelmsford (49%), Basildon (45%) and Harlow (44%). Harlow is the only district whose increase is due to a rise in caravans on social rented sites, although the sites are not currently full to capacity.

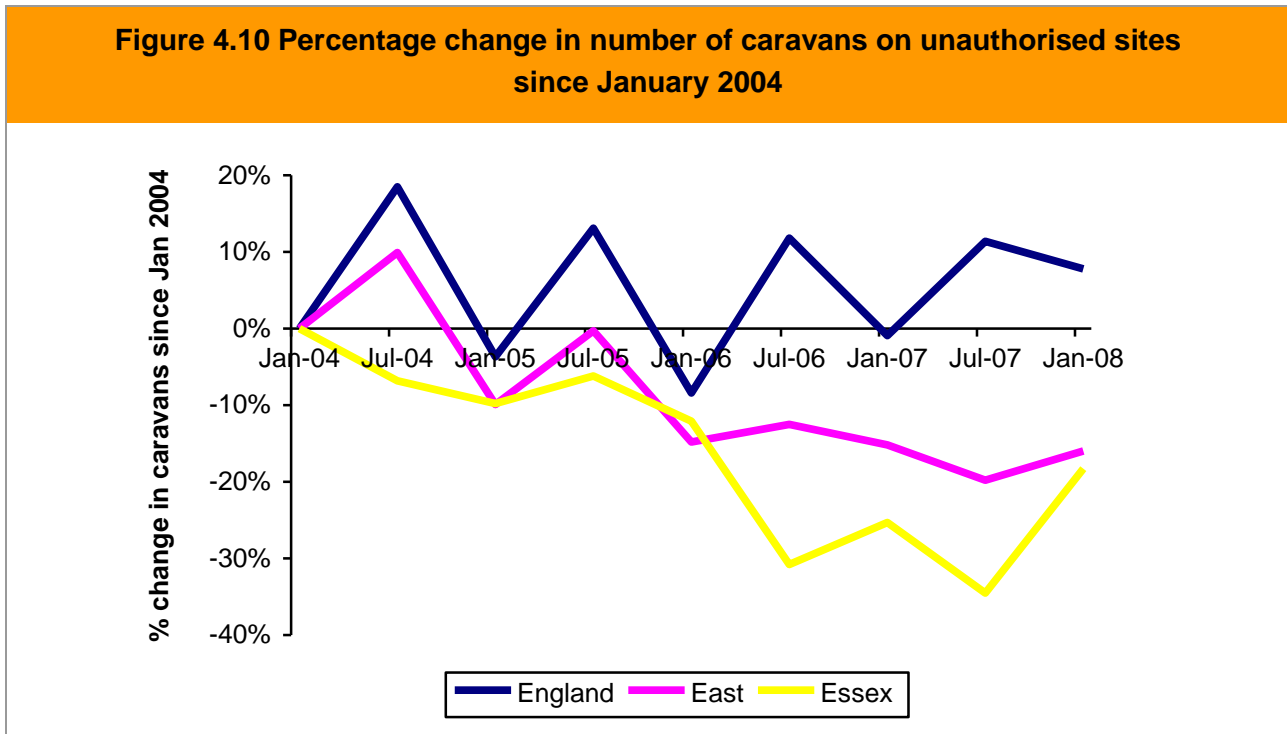
Figure 4.9 Percentage change in number of caravans on authorised sites since January 2004



Source: CLG caravan count January 2008

- 4.25 An interesting trend at a national level has been the rapid increase in unauthorised but tolerated caravans since 2005, by around 30% nationwide. Although not shown here graphically, a large proportion of this increase has been from unauthorised developments, which are situated on land owned by the occupier but without planning permission. This category has increased by 72% across England since January 2004. In the East of England the rise has been 35%. Interestingly the trend is not replicated in Essex, which has seen a fall of 31% in the number of caravans on tolerated unauthorised developments. There has not, however, been a corresponding increase in unauthorised developments that are not tolerated by the local planning authority. While this has remained steady nationally, it has fallen by a third in the East and by 14% in Essex. The number of caravans on unauthorised developments is therefore falling in Essex. It is not clear at this stage whether this is because the sites have gained planning permission and become private authorised sites, or because residents have moved into different accommodation.
- 4.26 Considering caravans on all types of unauthorised sites, the following shows percentage changes since January 2004 at national, regional and county levels. The first discernable trend is the seasonal variation nationally and regionally, with higher numbers for the July Count. This is consistent with the greater frequency of travelling by Gypsies and Travellers in the summer months, whether for work or cultural reasons. Given the shortage of authorised short stay sites nationally, many stay short-term on unauthorised encampments. However this trend is less apparent in Counts from the past two years in Essex.

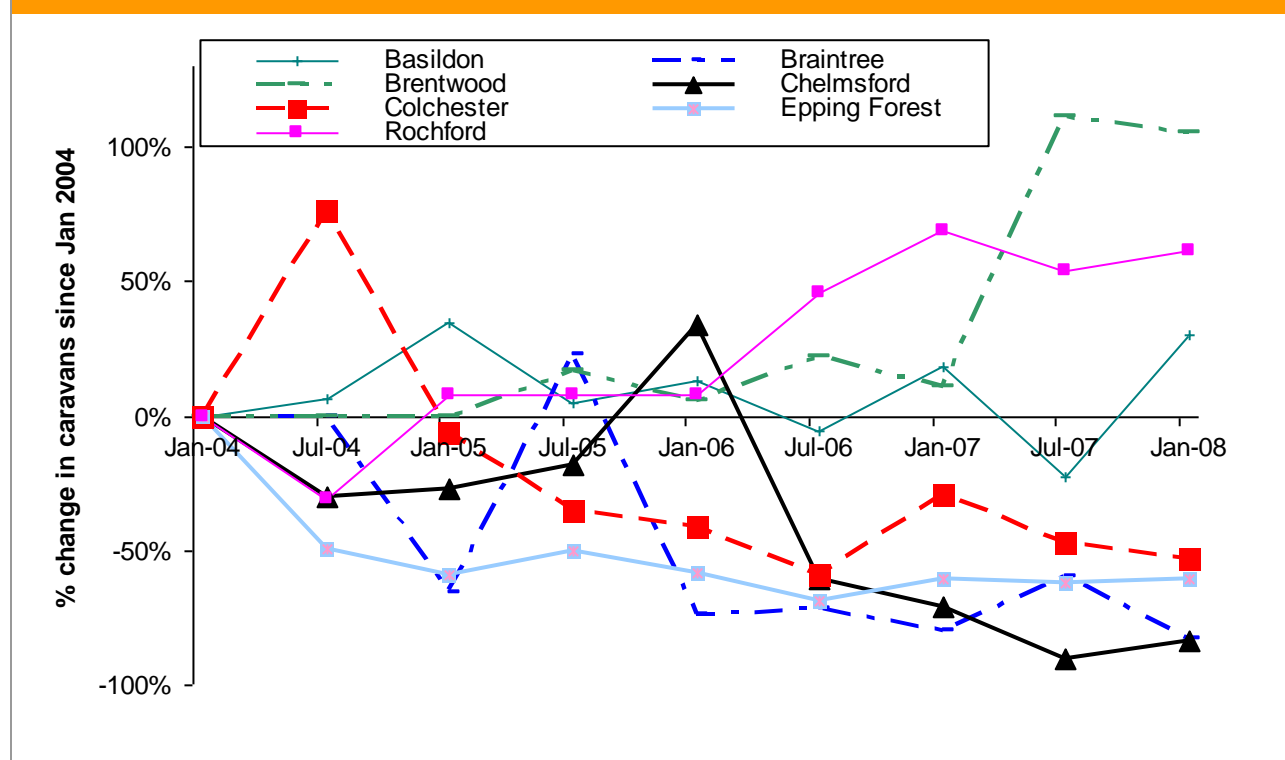
4.27 While nationally there has been an 8% increase of caravans on unauthorised sites, regionally there has been a 16% drop and an 18% decrease in Essex. The increased authorised provision suggested in Figure 4.8 is likely to be one reason for the fall, although Gypsies and Travellers leaving the area or moving into housing cannot be discounted.



Source: CLG caravan count January 2008

4.28 Finally we look at how this breaks down among Essex districts. Again, to allow meaningful comparison we have excluded areas with fewer than ten caravans in January 2004 (Castle Point, Harlow, Maldon, Tendring, Uttlesford, and Southend-on-Sea). There is a noticeable divide between the four selected districts where levels have fallen quite dramatically (from 52% in Colchester to 84% in Chelmsford), and the remaining three showing large increases (31% in Basildon, 62% in Rochford and 106% in Brentwood). There is some evidence then of a geographical pattern, with the countywide trend of decreasing levels of caravans on unauthorised sites not being replicated in the south of Essex.

Figure 4.11 Percentage change in number of unauthorised caravans since January 2004



Source: CLG caravan count January 2008

Travelling Showpeople

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

Summary

- 4.31 There is only one main source of data on Gypsy and Traveller numbers in Essex that being the national CLG caravan count. It has significant difficulties with accuracy and reliability, especially on a local level or when enumerating unauthorised encampments, tending to underestimate in many cases. The count does not take into account Travelling Showpeople or Gypsies and Travellers who live in housing, for whom both no secondary data is available. Nevertheless it is useful for providing comparisons between areas and over time.
- 4.32 The count indicates that Essex has a higher number of caravans relative to the settled community compared to the national average, but lower than the average for the East region. A quarter of all caravans in the East of England are located in Essex. It has proportionately higher numbers of caravans on unauthorised developments than the regional and national averages resulting from Dale Farm, the largest unauthorised site in Europe being located in Basildon, although fewer on unauthorised encampments and social rented sites.
- 4.33 Within Essex, the district containing by far the largest proportion of caravans is Basildon. Two-fifths of all caravans in Essex are located here, as are a third of all caravans on authorised sites. Other areas have very low numbers of caravans, including Brentwood, Tendring and Southend-on-Sea (which has none). Overall in Essex two thirds of caravans are on authorised sites, however there is variety among the districts, with all caravans in Harlow and Maldon on authorised sites, but no authorised provision in Castle Point and Southend-on-Sea, and no social rented sites in Brentwood, Colchester, Rochford and Tendring.
- 4.34 In terms of changes over time, Essex has followed the national and regional trend for more caravans on authorised sites and fewer on unauthorised sites. This is largely due to increases in caravans on private sites, with Harlow the only district where the number on social rented sites has increased. Not all districts recorded a rise: the numbers in Braintree and Uttlesford have fallen in the past four years. Similarly, several districts have seen an increase in caravans on unauthorised sites since 2004, with large percentage increases in Basildon, Brentwood and Rochford.

5. Population estimates

Introduction

5.1 To help construct a sampling frame for the survey and to use as the basis for the accommodation assessments, we have produced estimates for the number of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople families living in the study area, and the type of accommodation they live in. As discussed in Chapter 4, there is a lack of reliable secondary data on Gypsies and Travellers. This is especially so for Gypsies and Travellers who live in bricks and mortar accommodation: they are not included in the caravan count, are often not known to local housing departments (since they are not usually included as a distinct ethnic category when collecting data) and, in any event, may not self-identify as a Gypsy or Traveller.

Data collection

- 5.2 Data has been collected from a range of sources and, where possible, cross-checked to help ensure accuracy. In the first instance questionnaires were sent to each district asking for numbers of Gypsies and Travellers living on private and unauthorised sites, and in housing. This exercise revealed that many districts relied on caravan count figures, whilst a minority had comprehensive monitoring systems for private and unauthorised sites. Only one district held information on the estimated number of Gypsies and Travellers living in housing within their district.
- 5.3 In the second place, Essex Traveller Education Service (TES) was contacted for the same information and cross-checked with the boroughs' figures. While TES data includes Gypsies and Travellers in housing and is generally broken down by community group, it only has details on families with children of school age and from families who have moved into housing within the past two years. We have not been able to gather TES information broken down by district (except for Southend-on-Sea where the separate TES provided an estimate). How we estimated the breakdown by district is described later in the chapter.
- 5.4 For Travelling Showpeople, the Showmen's Guild of Great Britain provided information on the number of families registered in Essex.
- 5.5 The previous GTAA estimated that there were 575 Gypsy and Traveller households in Essex living on sites. This was based on caravan count data and information collected from the survey regarding average caravan occupancy level and average household size. This figure does not take into account Gypsies and Travellers living in housing, or the Travelling Showpeople population.

Population estimates in the study area

5.6 Based on data gathered from councils and the TES, we estimate that there are 895 Gypsy and Traveller households living in Essex. We stress however that these are estimates and based on data sources that are not all wholly reliable. Furthermore a central aim of this GTAA is to gain a better understanding of population levels for Gypsies and Travellers in Essex.

The table below gives a breakdown for each district across accommodation types. The paragraphs following give explanation of how figures for each column were derived.

Table 5.1 Household estimates based on secondary data

	Social rented site	Private site	Unauthorised encampment	Unauthorised development	Housing	Travelling Showpeople	Total
Basildon	25	94	-	107	15	19	260
Braintree	21	6	-	21	12	1	61
Brentwood	-	32	8	13	6	-	59
Castle Point	-	-	-	1	8	1	10
Chelmsford	19	43	4	3	14	24	107
Colchester	-	7	-	1	15	-	23
Epping Forrest	16	49	-	9	11	10	95
Harlow	36	-	-	-	7	-	43
Maldon	23	29	-	-	5	3	60
Rochford	-	6	-	8	7	1	22
Southend	-	-	-	-	77	-	77
Tendring	-	3	-	1	13	2	19
Uttlesford	17	32	3	-	6	1	59
Total	157	301	15	164	196	62	895

Figures in bold italics are those that have been calculated from caravan or pitch figures using a formula approach given in Table 5.2.

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Social rented sites

5.7 Social rented sites are managed by Essex County Council and information regarding the number of households was supplied by the management. It is not believed that overcrowding is an issue on these sites however, following the survey this may alter should 'doubling up' be found.

Private sites

5.8 The number of households on private sites is taken from information from the district questionnaires. Where the district is not aware of the number of households on private sites but has information on the number of caravans, or where site visits during the survey fieldwork found a different number of pitches on the site, a formula from the 2006 survey devised by Salford University based on survey responses is used. Our survey data found that the assumptions on occupancy level and household size used in the 2006 GTAA remain broadly true. The table below describes the formula:

Table 5.2 Formula for estimating current household formation level

Caravan count x average caravan occupancy level (2) = estimated Gypsy and Traveller population
 Estimated Gypsy and Traveller population ÷ average household size (4) = number of Gypsy and Traveller households

Sources: Essex GTAA 2006 – Salford University; Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

5.9 This approach was applied for Basildon, Braintree, Brentwood and Epping Forest districts.

Unauthorised encampments

5.10 Information on the number of households on unauthorised encampments was collected through the questionnaire sent to all districts.

Unauthorised developments

5.11 The number of households living on unauthorised developments was collected through the questionnaire sent to all districts. Where the district has information on the number of caravans rather than the number of households, the formula described above is used.

5.12 Basildon was unable to supply us with the number of caravans on unauthorised developments. Therefore data from the January 2008 caravan count was used and the formula applied to the number of caravans to estimate the number of households living on unauthorised developments.

5.13 Braintree and Epping Forest were unable to supply the number of households living on private sites, therefore the formula was used on caravan or pitch numbers supplied.

Bricks and mortar accommodation

5.14 Information relating to Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar accommodation was supplied to Fordham Research through Traveller Education Services (TES).

- 5.15 The first step was to take into account that children registered by TES may be from the same household. TES figures were therefore reduced by 60% to ensure that the housed household estimate is not an over-estimate.
- 5.16 Next, the distribution of the number of households between the districts was achieved by relating these figures to the distribution of the settled population in Essex. This method was chosen in preference to proportioning the total by existing site populations as districts with a smaller site population may still have a significant housed population (as is the case for Southend-on-Sea). Using data from the ONS mid-2005 population estimates the following distribution was achieved:

Table 5.3 Distribution of estimated households in bricks and mortar accommodation by population proportion		
	Population proportion	Housed estimate
Basildon	12%	15
Braintree	10%	12
Brentwood	5%	6
Castle Point	6%	8
Chelmsford	12%	14
Colchester	12%	15
Epping Forest	9%	11
Harlow	6%	7
Maldon	5%	5
Rochford	6%	7
Tendring	11%	13
Uttlesford	5%	6
<i>Total (Essex districts)</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>119</i>
Southend	-	77
Study area total	-	196

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

- 5.17 As a Unitary Authority, Southend-on-Sea has a separate Traveller Education Service: from their data it is estimated that there are 77 Gypsy and Traveller households living in bricks and mortar accommodation in the area. This is higher than any other district's estimated figure.
- 5.18 In total, it is estimated that there are 196 Gypsy and Traveller households living in bricks and mortar accommodation in Essex.

Travelling Showpeople

5.19 Information regarding the number of Travelling Showpeople households in Essex was derived from information collected from The Showmen's Guild. As an interim measure, the addresses of those registered were searched using Google Earth to identify the size of the yard and how many plots were on each yard. This information was then used to estimate the number of households on each yard. Yard visits are currently taking place which will ascertain more accurately how many households live at each yard. Where the address registered was a residential bricks and mortar or caravan site address, it was assumed that there was one household at the address.

The sampling frame

5.20 The study has 300 interviews to distribute throughout the study area and across each accommodation type. A proportional sample, where the number of interviews is a relation to the total population, would mean that districts with smaller populations would have insufficient interviews to assess accommodation need. Consequently it was decided that that a proportional sample be used as a base which would then be adjusted to ensure the following criteria:

- At least one interview would take place at all sites (authorised and unauthorised)
- 40% of local authority site households would be interviewed

5.21 Where the sample is boosted, interviews are redistributed from those living in bricks and mortar accommodation, ensuring that enough interviews take place within this tenure to ensure robustness in the findings.

5.22 The following table is the resulting sample framework:

Table 5.4 Sampling framework

	Social rented site	Private site	Unauthorised encampment	Unauthorised development	Housing	Travelling Showpeople	Total
Basildon	10	24	-	32	2	8	76
Braintree	10	2	-	6	4	2	24
Brentwood	-	12	3	4	2	-	21
Castle Point	-	-	-	1	3	2	6
Chelmsford	9	13	1	1	4	9	37
Colchester	-	6	-	-	4	-	10
Epping Forest	7	13	-	1	4	4	29
Harlow	17	-	-	-	2	-	19
Maldon	11	9	-	6	2	2	30
Rochford	-	-	-	2	2	2	6
Southend-on-Sea	-	-	-	-	9	-	9
Tendring	-	3	-	1	3	3	10
Uttlesford	7	11	1	-	2	2	23
Total	71	95	5	54	43	34	300

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

5.23 The distribution of Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar accommodation is a crude estimate. If during the fieldwork period it is believed that a district's target is unachievable their outstanding interviews will be redistributed to Southend-on-Sea or other districts with a larger housed Gypsy and Traveller population. The availability of this data can be improved through central record keeping and sharing of Gypsy and Traveller housing information between local agencies.

Summary

5.24 In order to produce an estimate of the number of Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople households in each district, data was collected from a range of sources, including a named contact within each district, Traveller Education Services and The Showmen's Guild. It is estimated that there are 884 Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople households in the study area. These estimates were used to construct the sampling frame for 300 interviews.

5.25 There remains a lack of reliable data on Gypsy and Traveller numbers which cannot be overcome through accommodation needs research. We would therefore expect that the estimate of almost 900 Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople households living in Essex is a conservative figure.

SECTION B: PRIMARY DATA

This section describes the primary research elements of the study. These consisted of a consultation with stakeholders and a survey of Gypsies and Travellers living on sites and in housing. The data is therefore qualitative; it is based on participants' views and experience of accommodation provision and wider service issues. Also contained in this section are the accommodation need assessments for each district and a concluding chapter.

6. Stakeholder consultation

Introduction

- 6.1 A consultation with a range of stakeholders was conducted to provide in-depth qualitative information about the perceived accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Essex. The aim was to obtain both an overall perspective of issues facing Gypsies and Travellers and an understanding of local issues that are specific to Essex and each district.
- 6.2 Themes covered in the interviews included: the need for additional provisions and facilities; travelling patterns, the availability of land; accessing services, and work taking place to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers. This chapter presents brief summaries of the consultations and highlights the main points that were raised.
- 6.3 All districts were contacted to take part. The consultation took the form of telephone interviews with the following organisations:

Table 6.1 Stakeholder consultation participants

Basildon District Council – Planning Department
Brentwood Borough Council – Planning Department
Castle Point Borough Council – Housing Department
Chelmsford Borough Council – Planning Department
Dale Farm Housing Association
Gypsy and Traveller Services – Essex County Council
Harlow District Council – Planning Department
Maldon District Council – Housing Department
Rochford District Council – Planning Department
Southend-on-Sea Borough Council – Planning Department
Tendring District Council – Housing Department
Traveller Education Service
Uttlesford District Council – Housing Department

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Population

- 6.4 Stakeholders reported that the Gypsy and Traveller population in Essex had remained the same in recent years. It was suggested that there had been periods over the past decade where there had been a significant increase, but this had now levelled out.

- 6.5 Views on the Gypsy and Traveller population were mainly gained through analysis of the caravan count, which a small number of stakeholders pointed out were flawed. Caravan count practices were felt to have improved over recent years, and therefore analysis over a period of time could be misleading.
- 6.6 The Traveller Education Service had a more detailed understanding of the Gypsy and Traveller population size which was based on their own experiences and records, rather than relying on the caravan count data.

Authorised accommodation

- 6.7 The County owned and managed sites tended to have been built some years ago and it was felt that they did not meet the standards set today in terms of location and layout. Local authority departments had little or no involvement in the management of the County sites and it was often the case that local departments only got involved when there were issues: *'the [district] Council only get involved when there are problems, otherwise all management issues are dealt with by the County Council'*.
- 6.8 Local authority departments had very little contact with those living on private, authorised sites and did not report any significant management issues. It was believed that the majority of sites were small, family owned sites. Sub-letting of pitches was not known to be common, although some pitches were known to be used seasonally.
- 6.9 It was reported that the rise in the number of authorised private sites was a consequence of the unauthorised sites gaining temporary and personal planning permission. These were often granted by courts which had dismissed a full planning application.
- 6.10 The planning department had the majority of contact with these residents and reported that enforcing planning permission condition, such as the number of caravans on sites was the only reported issue with these sites. It was often the case that these conditions were due to health and safety regulations and therefore upholding the conditions was a priority.
- 6.11 Stakeholders reported that doubling up on authorised pitches was a common occurrence and believed that the majority of future housing need would result from hidden and emerging households.

Gypsies and Travellers in bricks and mortar accommodation

- 6.12 The local authority was commonly in the dark with regards to the number of Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar accommodation. A common response was '*we have no way of knowing*'. Ethnic monitoring of housed residents often did not include Gypsies and Travellers, and there were concerns that where it did or the council had considered adding the option, Gypsies and Traveller would not identify themselves. There was therefore a feeling of uncertainty about how the council could gather this information.
- 6.13 This was also a problem for non-council departments and organisation, which were only able to offer their services to those who self-identified as a Gypsy or Traveller. It was explained that '*it is known that housed Travellers often keep their identity hidden, and it is therefore difficult to estimate the true number of Travellers living in bricks and mortar accommodation*'.
- 6.14 It was assumed by stakeholders that there were Gypsies and Travellers living in housing. Those who had direct experience of working with Gypsies and Travellers in housing had mixed experiences. In the majority of cases it was felt that the housed Traveller population was relatively settled with only a small number of known new families making the move, generally due to '*a lack of alternative accommodation*'.
- 6.15 Stakeholders agreed that there were pockets of housed Gypsies and Travellers around Essex, acting as a community, and that these were generally to be found near authorised or long term unauthorised sites.

Unauthorised sites

- 6.16 Unauthorised encampments were not seen as a significant issue for the majority of stakeholders. Some stakeholders reported that they had very little known unauthorised encampments, whilst others knew of families who were being moved from one encampment to another within the Essex area, the County Council has reported that the majority of unauthorised encampments were either passing through for work, or just looking for short term accommodation. Other unauthorised encampments were comprised of regulars who moved around Essex, but were not thought to want to stay on a residential site with other Gypsies and Travellers, this group were either looking for bricks and mortar accommodation or were prepared to live on unauthorised encampments.
- 6.17 Others knew of certain families or groups that travelled through or to the area for work purposes on a seasonal basis, travelling in groups of up to 20 caravans. For these stakeholders it was felt that a transit site would be beneficial to the local authority as it would introduce a tool which could be used to manage these encampments.

Meeting the need figure

- 6.18 Two main themes emerged over concerns with the need figures presented to each District which were: issues with the methodology and logical distribution of need.
- 6.19 A number of stakeholders doubted the robustness of the initial GTAA and the more recent RSS Single Issue Review formula approach. The main concern expressed is over the use of aspiration and unauthorised developments as evidence of need: *'Should unauthorised figures be used as a reflection of need? Or is it simply a case of desire?'*.
- 6.20 The second concern raised was with regards to the logical distribution of need. It was reported that many of the council areas were restricted in their availability of suitable land for the development of Gypsy and Traveller sites. Factors affecting the availability of land included Green Belts areas, flood risk areas, British nature reserves and highly urbanised centres. Stakeholders explained that this problem also extended to providing accommodation for the settled community and planning urban extension areas for employment and education purposes.
- 6.21 These two concerns resulted in a number of stakeholders preferring a distribution of the needs figure for Essex between the districts based on quotas and a logical approach taking into account land availability.
- 6.22 This approach was criticised by other stakeholders who saw it as highly unethical: *'A policy to distribute an ethnic group among a county's districts does not meet with today's standard'*. The distribution of households was viewed as treating humans *'as commodities'*. There was also a concern that if households were distributed they would be moved to areas where they had no social network or employment opportunities to support them.
- 6.23 There was some uncertainty with regards to how new sites would be brought forward, with some stakeholders reporting that they currently worked from a criteria based policy and others being in the process of specific site selection. Many stakeholders would be looking to the GTAA for guidance on the affordability split for sites. Some stakeholders thought the majority of sites should be in the social rented sector, however others argued that there would be more interest in private sites as demonstrated by the increase in unauthorised developments.
- 6.24 In term of management, it was envisaged that any social sites would be managed by Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) rather than the Local or County Council. A suggestion was made for a regional Trust to be established to co-ordinate services for Gypsies and Travellers, including the management of mixed sites.

Summary

- 6.25 A consultation with a range of stakeholders was conducted to provide in-depth qualitative information about the perceived accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Essex. It was widely accepted that there had been an increase in the number of Gypsy and Traveller households in the last decade, but that the levels had remained static in recent years. The main concerns focused upon hidden accommodation and emerging households.
- 6.26 The County Council own and manage the socially rented sites in Essex and there was some disagreement between stakeholders regarding the effective management of these sites in relation to individual site management and environmental issues. However, the majority of councils had very little knowledge of how the sites were managed and what potential issues they might have.
- 6.27 The local authority departments were commonly in the dark with regards to the number of Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar accommodation, commonly responding '*we have no way of knowing*'. A significant issue for Council and non-Council organisation was that Gypsies and Travellers in housing could only be identified if they identified themselves, which many Gypsies and Traveller living in housing were reluctant to do. Stakeholders agreed that there were pockets of housed Travellers living in Essex and these were generally to be found near authorised or long term unauthorised sites.
- 6.28 Unauthorised encampments were not seen as a significant issue for the majority of stakeholders. Unauthorised encampments were mainly due to those returning to the area on a seasonal basis for employment, and those circulating Essex in search of authorised accommodation.
- 6.29 The majority of stakeholders expressed concerns over meeting the needs figures that they had been presented by the RSS Single Issue Review. The main concerns were with the methodology used, and the logical distribution of need. All stakeholders agreed that they had a need, however what that level was and how it should be met was a contentious issue.
- 6.30 It was felt that services for Gypsies and Travellers were generally good with frontline workers visiting the majority of sites regularly. Education at secondary level was poor in comparison with primary level, and stakeholders disagreed on the best method of overcoming this problem.

7. Survey methodology

Introduction

7.1 As explained in the first chapter, the Essex GTAA has been conducted in line with Government practice guidance. This chapter provides details on how it was conducted to meet the requirements.

The questionnaire

7.2 A pilot questionnaire was designed in consultation with the Steering Group. There were in fact four questionnaires used in the survey tailored for different groups and accommodation circumstances:

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

The sample and data gathering

7.3 As discussed in Chapter 5, a proportional sampling framework for 300 interviews was devised based on Gypsy and Traveller household estimates. A total of 249 interviews were completed, with the shortfall mainly due to residents on smaller private sites being reluctant to take part. Nevertheless the distribution of the interviews was sufficient to allow robust analysis and assessments of need.

Project management

7.4 A group of interviewers with previous experience of working with Gypsies and Travellers was recruited and trained for the project. The questionnaires were checked for quality by Fordham Research. Interviews took place between October and November 2008.

7.5 Where possible, local support groups and site managers acted as 'gatekeepers' and introduced interviewers to participants; this is particularly important for Gypsies and Travellers living in housing who may conceal their identity. A briefing note was distributed to Gypsies and Travellers through gatekeepers and post, explaining the purpose of the research and encouraging participation (see Appendix 2).

- 7.6 The approach proved successful, with the interviewers able to survey several sites where tensions exist between residents and authorities.

Summary

- 7.7 Based on the estimated Gypsy and Traveller household population, a proportional sampling framework was developed. Four questionnaires were designed for the study, each taking into account the current accommodation needs of the participant.
- 7.8 The interviews were carried out with a team of interviewers who were either from the Gypsy and Traveller community or had previously worked with this group. Where possible, local support groups and site managers acted as 'gatekeepers' and introduced interviewers to participants.

8. Gypsies and Travellers living on local authority sites

Introduction

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

The sites and sample

8.2 Essex County Council own and manage 11 permanent residential sites in Essex. They have a combined total of 166 pitches and represent 51% of the authorised provision in the County (the remainder being privately owned). In all, 68 interviews were carried out with households living on local authority owned sites, comprising 41% of the current total resident households and 27% of the entire survey sample. The following table shows where the interviews were conducted.

Table 8.1 The sample of local authority sites

Local Authority	Site name	Occupied pitches	Interviews completed	%
Basildon	Hovefield Caravan Site	25	10	40%
Braintree	Sandiacres Caravan Site	12	5	42%
	Ridgewell Caravan Site	12	5	42%
Chelmsford	Cranham Hall Caravan Site	10	4	40%
	Ladygrove Caravan Site	12	5	42%
Epping Forest	Hop Gardens	16	4	25%
Harlow	Fernhill Caravan Site	15	7	47%
	Elizabeth Way Caravan Site	21	9	43%
Maldon	Brickhouse Gypsy Site	6	2	33%
	Woodcorner Caravan Site	20	8	40%
Uttlesford	Felsted Caravan Site	17	9	53%
Total		166	68	41%

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

8.3 From our sample of participants, the average household size was 3.2. This figure does however hide some variation, as can be seen from the table below.

Table 8.2 Household size		
Households size	Frequency	Percentage
1	15	22%
2	14	21%
3	9	13%
4	11	16%
5	12	17%
6	4	6%
7	2	3%
8	1	2%
Total	68	100%

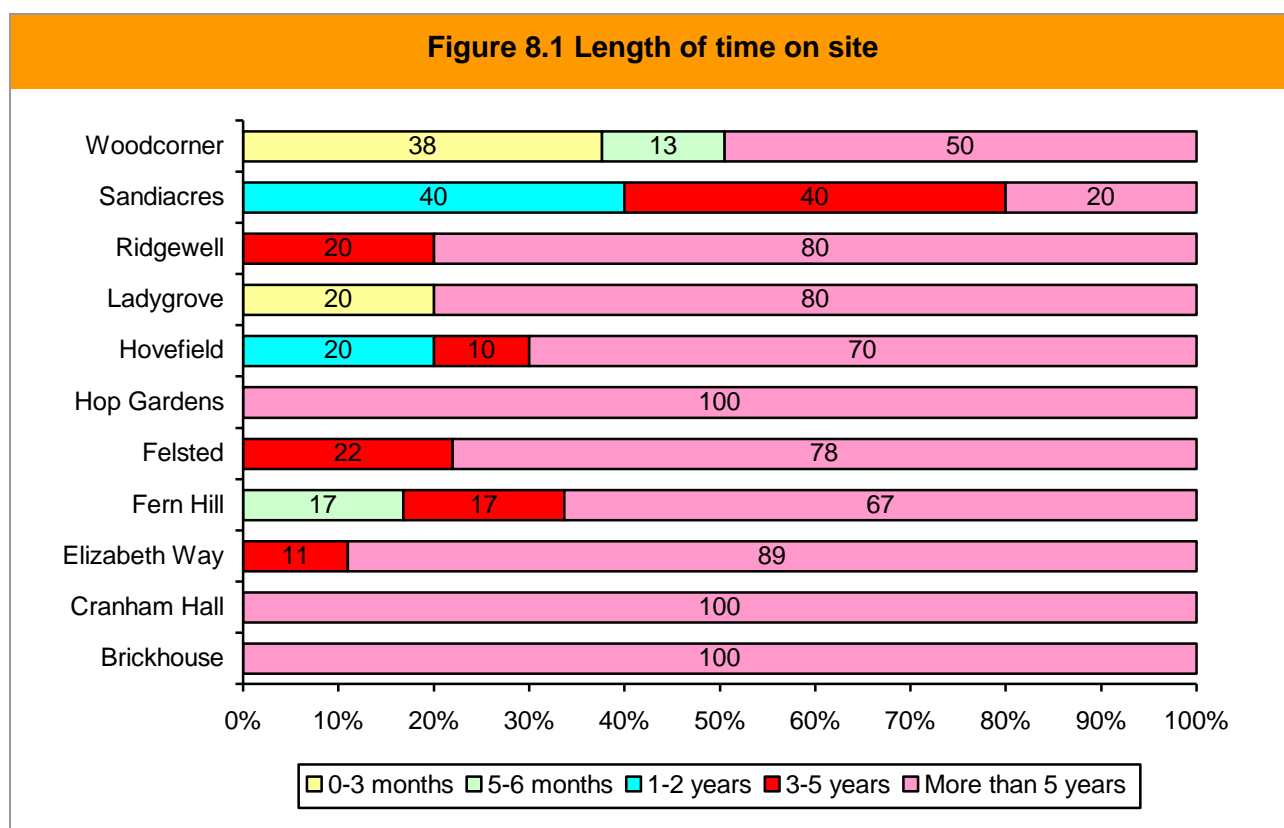
Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

8.4 The majority of the sample (77%) described their ethnic origin as Romany / Gypsy, as can be seen from the table below.

Table 8.3 Ethnicity		
Ethnicity	Count	Percentage
Romany / Gypsy	52	77%
Irish Traveller	6	9%
New Traveller	2	3%
Other background	3	4%
Refused	5	7%
Total	68	100%

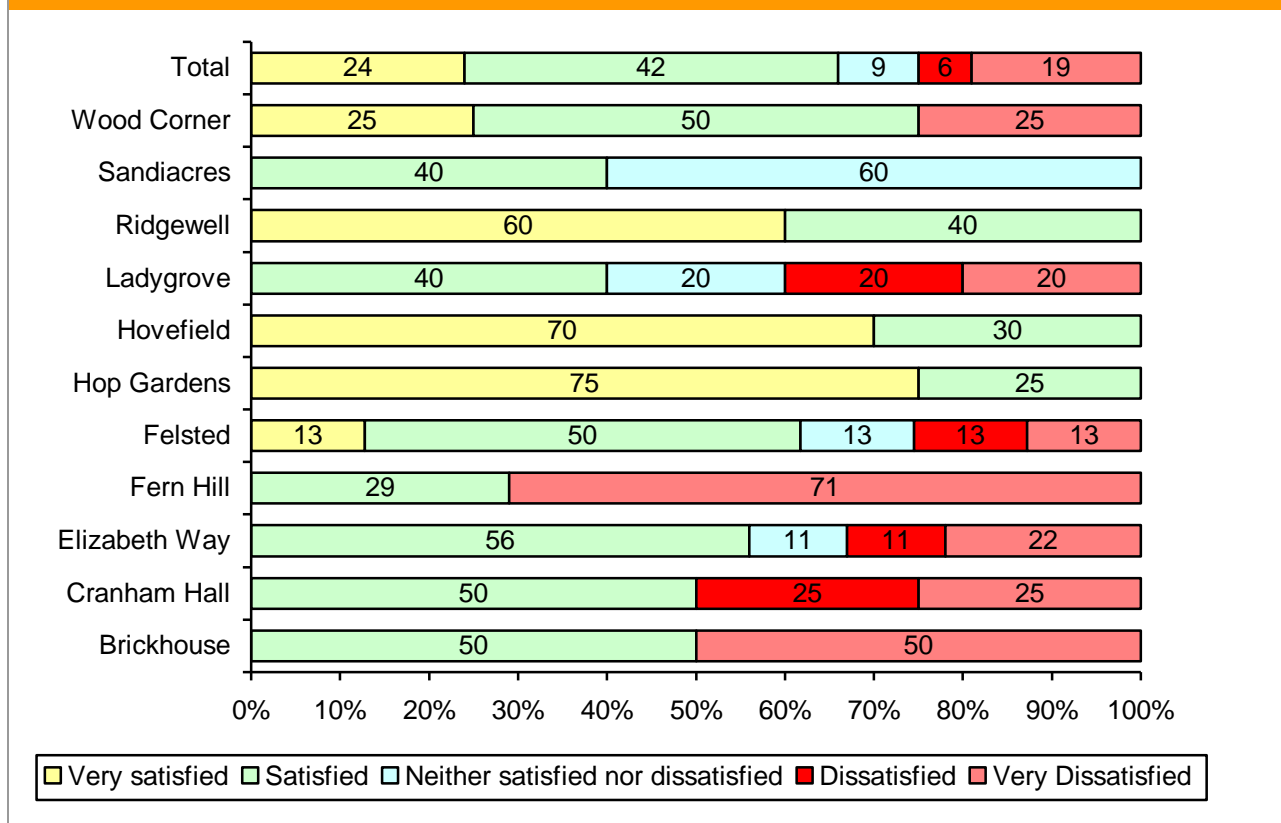
Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

8.5 Just under half the participants (49%) had been living on their site for more than five years. The table below illustrates that the majority of those interviewed from nearly all sites (the exception being Sandiacres) were settled on the sites.



- 8.6 The majority of participants (78%) responded that they did not intend to move from their current accommodation; this percentage increased to 100% in Ridgewell and Sandiacres, but fell to 20% of those interviewed from Ladygrove.
- 8.7 Experiences of finding their current site accommodation were evenly mixed; approaching half of the sample (43%) found the experience easy or very easy and a considerable proportion (35%) reported the experience as difficult or very difficult. This pattern was evident for those having moved onto the site less than two years ago, and for those who had moved on more than two years ago.
- 8.8 Levels of satisfaction with local authority sites was generally good with the majority of participants (66%) reporting that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their site, as illustrated in Figure 8.2. The figure also demonstrates that satisfaction levels were higher on some sites than on others: participants living in Hop Gardens, Hovefields and Ridgewell reported the highest levels of satisfaction, whilst those in Brickhouse, Cranham Hill, Fern Hill and Ladygrove reported the highest levels of dissatisfaction.

Figure 8.2 Level of satisfaction with site

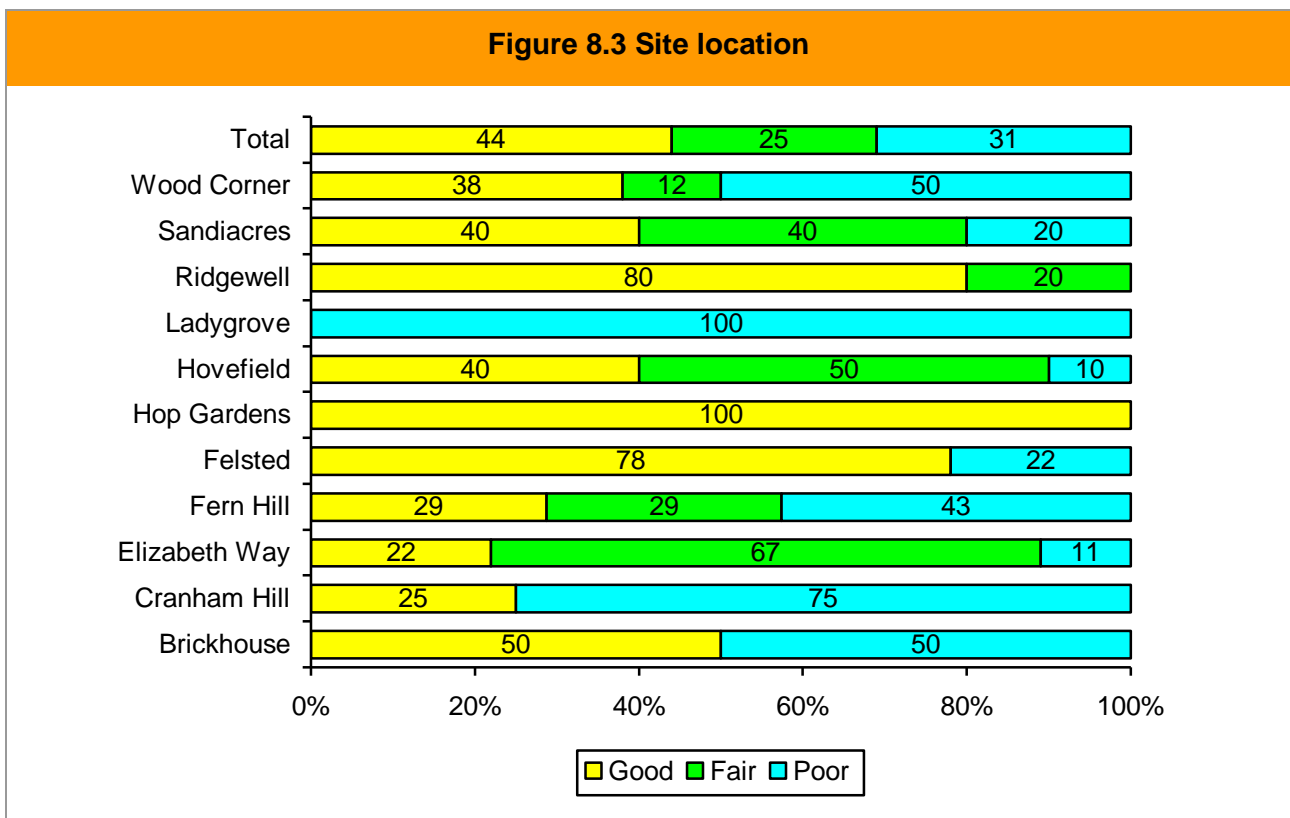


Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

- 8.9 Participants were asked to explain what they particularly liked and disliked about their site. The themes that emerged include site management, site location, facilities within and beyond the site, the image of the site and the importance of community. Each of these themes is explored in turn.
- 8.10 The standard and type of site management had a direct impact on the lives of the respondents. Within this theme issues were raised regarding the ability of wardens to uphold site regulations and the reporting and handling of faults and repairs.
- 8.11 Where these issues did not represent a problem, the site managers were highly praised: *'The way the warden keeps on top of everything [is good]. It's very clean . . . the people, the warden; it's peaceful'*. Respondents displayed a preference for a style of management that was strong but fair, with regular visits, transparent processes and sense of community.
- 8.12 Participants explained that wardens needed to uphold site regulation more efficiently, and with all site residents. A common complaint related to the number of *'wild dogs'* that existed on the sites: one respondent explained that *'there are dogs running free all over the site, the Council should be stricter with tenants'*.

- 8.13 The reporting and handling of faults and repairs was an issue evident in responses: *'Trying to get anything fixed here is a problem'*. There appeared two ways of dealing with this issue. Some respondents reported waiting for long periods of time, whilst others took matters into their own hands due to the lack of assistance, as demonstrated by the following quotes: *'My electric meter and hook up need fixing and I have been waiting for two months to get it fixed'* and *'when I arrived I had to sort out my plot, which needed two skips for the rubbish which we had to do ourselves'*. In response to this Essex County Council has outlined that such issues were of a temporary nature and that under Health and Safety guidelines they are obliged to fix such problems immediately. The Council also outlined that clearance of sites was in normal circumstances the responsibility of the Council, however in some cases, with the agreement of the new tenant, sites were let and the responsibility given to the new tenant in order to make use of the site as soon as possible.
- 8.14 Issues with the repair and maintenance of the site were not restricted to occupied pitches. There were issues with drains that led to rats on nearly all sites: *'We have complained about the rats but nothing is being done'*. A number of complaints were also made about the lack of lights on sites which was explained to be due to *'a fault that has just never been fixed'*. This has been addressed by the Council who currently are attempting to work with residents to ensure better handling of rubbish and sensible management of animals such as horses which can be seen to encourage rats. The Council also assure that the longstanding issues on the Felstead site have now been resolved.
- 8.15 The location of the site was another key factor influencing what participants liked and disliked about their sites. This theme combined issues relating to local transport, the environmental surroundings, local facilities and site landscaping.
- 8.16 The lack of public transport routes near sites had a negative effect on how participants felt in relation to the location of their sites. Many reported that they were too far from shops and services and that *'you can't walk anywhere, it's too dangerous. There are fast cars and no pavements'*. In some instances children had missed out on educational services due to the location of the site and lack of transport to local schools.
- 8.17 The environmental surroundings were given as key drivers for liking or disliking a site and produced strong reactions from participants. Peaceful sites in quiet areas were greatly praised: *'It's peaceful and quiet and looks out over the fields'*. Less desirable locations included areas in close proximity to settled estates (*'... stuck too close to private housing – Gauja are not very friendly'*) and industrial areas (*'Because we live by an industrial estate we get charged industrial fees'*).

- 8.18 Facilities and services within and beyond the sites had a direct impact on the lives of residents, and therefore on how they perceived their sites. Isolated sites had no local transport routes to local services and participants felt that they could not access these services: *'We're too far from the shops and doctors, and there's no bus route.'* In more than one case access to education had been prohibited by lack of local transport, as one participant explained that her child *'missed years of school because [there was] no transport provided [to the site] because the site is less than three miles – but the main road is extremely dangerous, especially in the winter'*.
- 8.19 The importance placed on good community relations, both with other Gypsies and Travellers and with the settled community, was significant. It was felt that a negative of living on the County Council site was 'the stigma' attached to it by both the settled community and the Gypsy and Traveller community.
- 8.20 Participants agreed that there was a strong 'community atmosphere' on the majority of sites, where *'people leave you alone, but if you need them are always there for you'*. Some participant felt extremely close to the local community: *'I have been here for 25 years. My son is buried in the graveyard and my son died here in a road traffic accident'*.
- 8.21 In a separate questions, participants were asked to rate their sites location. Over half of the participants on Ladygrove and Cranham Hill reported that their sites were poorly located, whilst over a half living on Ridgewell, Hop Gardens and Felsted reported that their site location was good.



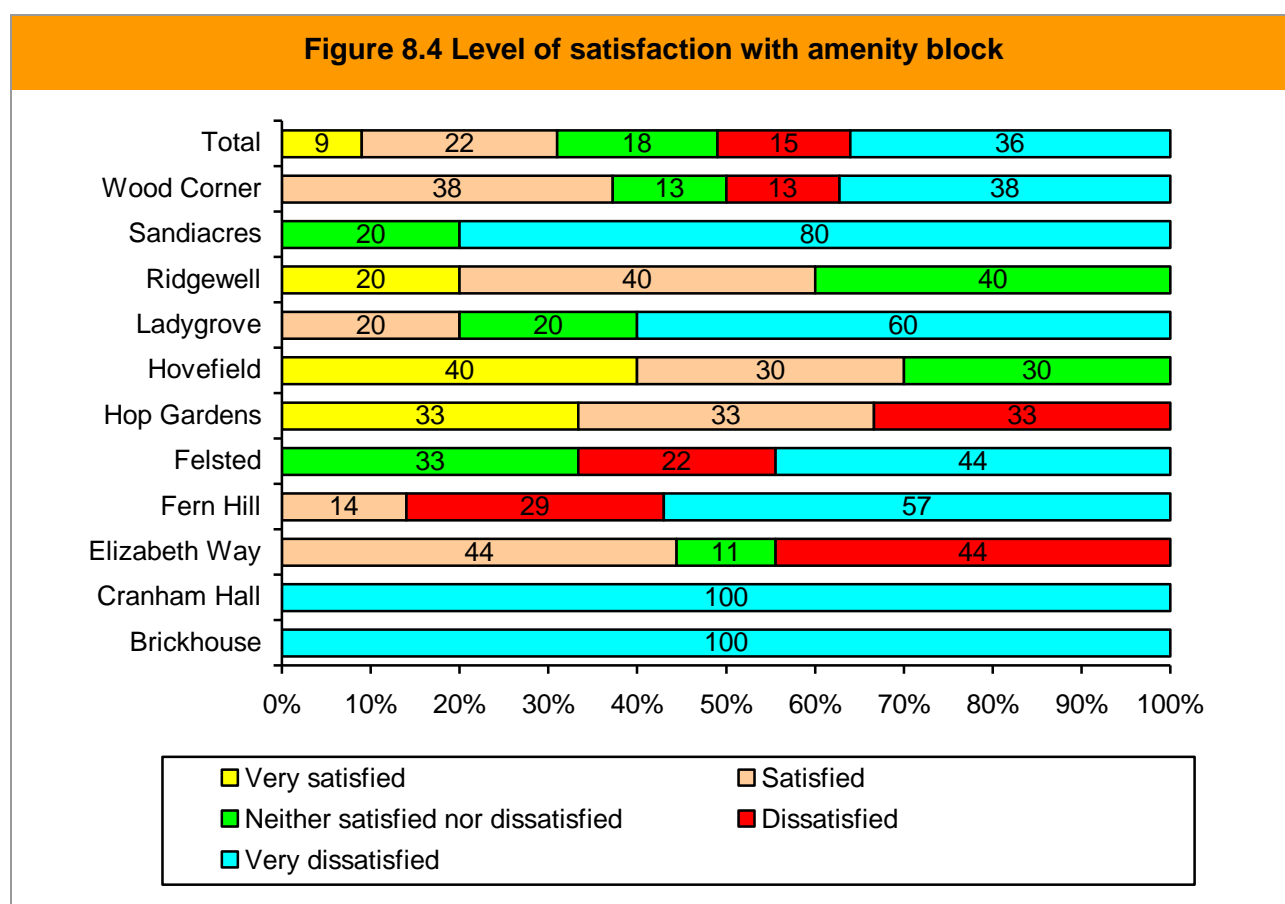
Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

8.22 The majority of participants (73% on average) on all sites reported that they felt safe living on their pitch.

Site facilities and condition

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

8.23 All but one participant on Hop Gardens reported that they had an amenity block on their pitch, although only a minority reported that they were satisfied with their amenity block. The following graph illustrates that participants from Brickhouse, Cranham Hall, Fern Hill and Sandiacres were particularly unsatisfied with their amenity block.



8.24 New guidance on site design includes 'essential' features for amenity blocks.⁴⁰ Participants were asked whether they had each of these facilities and, if not, whether they were seen as necessary. Table 8.3 below represents the number of participants from each site who responded that they were in need of these 'essential' facilities.

⁴⁰ Tribal, CLG and the Housing Corporation, *Guidance for the Design of Sites for Gypsies and Travellers*, April 2007, page 19.

8.25 The survey found that there were participants in need of at least one or more of these essential facilities on all sites. The largest deficit was in the provision of a kitchen and dining room, secure storage for medicine, and enclosed areas for food and cleaning products and space for a cooker and fridge/freezer.

8.26 A very small proportion (4%) reported an issue with access to hot and cold water in their amenity block: this was a problem at Cranham Hall, Felsted and Ladygrove.⁴¹ The most significant need reported was for a separate WC, where 40% of the sample reported that they were in need of this facility (on Brickhouse, Cranham Hall, Felsted, Hovefield, Ladygrove and Wood Corner).

Table 8.3 Participants in need of 'essential' facilities

	Hot & cold water	Separate WC	Bath/shower room	Kitchen & dining room	Electricity supply	Secure storage for medicine etc.	Enclosed storage for food & cleaning products	Space for cooker & fridge/freezer
Brickhouse	-	100% (2)	-	100% (2)	-	100% (2)	100% (2)	100% (2)
Cranham Hall	25% (1)	100% (4)	50% (2)	75% (3)	25% (1)	100% (4)	75% (3)	100% (4)
Elizabeth Way	-	-	-	11% (1)	-	33% (3)	22% (2)	11% (1)
Fern Hill	-	-	-	86% (6)	-	100% (7)	100% (7)	71% (5)
Felsted	22% (2)	100% (9)	11% (1)	-	11% (1)	89% (8)	78% (7)	89% (8)
Hop Gardens	-	-	25% (1)	-	-	-	-	-
Hovefield	-	30% (3)	10% (1)	30% (3)	-	40% (4)	-	-
Ladygrove	20% (1)	100% (5)	-	40% (2)	20% (1)	100% (5)	20% (1)	100% (5)
Ridgewell	-	-	-	40% (2)	-	40% (2)	40% (2)	20% (1)
Sandiacres	-	-	-	20% (1)	-	20% (1)	20% (1)	20% (1)
Wood Corner	-	50% (4)	-	-	-	100% (8)	100% (8)	63% (5)
Total	6% (4)	40% (27)	7% (5)	43% (29)	5% (3)	65% (44)	22% (33)	22% (32)

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

⁴¹ Essex County Council outlines that all pitches on Essex sites have access to hot and cold running water, this anomaly figure of 4% suggests that this is a rare instance/fault, faults and repairs to the hot water system would take priority. Alternative reason for no hot and cold running water includes no credit / payment on electricity meter.

8.27 Using data on the number of bedrooms and the profile of the family, a third of pitches were assessed as being overcrowded. Participants were also asked whether they shared their pitch with any other families who would ordinarily require a separate pitch, termed 'doubling up'. The level was very low, with just three participants (4.5%) saying they did.

Accommodation expectations

8.28 The majority of participants (66%) did not believe that there were enough pitches for Gypsies and Travellers in Essex. Participants were also asked to explain what they thought should be provided.

8.29 The strongest request was made for permanent residential pitches. The advocated size of sites varied, but there was a general agreement that sites should not exceed 20 pitches and that a small site should have approximately seven pitches.

8.30 It emerged that participants tended towards small local authority sites, and slightly larger private sites. This could be due to the different management styles required on the sites, as one participant clarified: *'travellers would look after their own site'* and on *'smaller sites...the people get on better with each other'*.

8.31 On the theme of site size, participants noted that the size of pitches and amenity blocks was important; *'chalets should be bigger with big kitchens and day rooms with space for a sofa. A good sized bay [pitch], there should be room for at least three trailers'*.

8.32 Participants also raised the issue of transit sites. Transit sites were seen as occupying two functions; firstly as a place where visiting friends and family could stay, and also as a means to support those who wished to continue the nomadic lifestyle into which they were born. Common explanations included: *'We need transit sites, lots of them, so that people can keep moving if they want'* and *'There should be room for family to come and stay nearby.'*

8.33 Participants had no specific location recommendations but were clear regarding on which criteria a site should be judged. Key issues that were felt to be important in the selection of a site included its environmental surroundings, neighbouring communities and access to local services. The following comment sums up the main points made: *'[Sites] should be in rural areas; close to amenities but not too close to towns' people so as to cause trouble'*.

8.34 Eleven participants reported that they would need or are likely to move to a different home within the next five years, with a strong preference for private sites. However, when participants were asked if they could afford land in Essex the overwhelming majority (94%) could not afford this option.

- 8.35 All those who reported that they needed or were likely to move within the next five years reported that this was mainly due to harassment (11), although it was not clear if this was from other site residents or the settled community. Other reasons given included; a lack of space (6), affordability (6), too far from school and other services (6) and for employment (6).
- 8.36 A quarter of the participants (25%) noted that one or more family member would need their own home within the next five years, which culminated in 39 emerging households. The majority of these households are believed to require site accommodation, with only two participants noting that the emerging households would consider moving into bricks and mortar accommodation.

Summary

- 8.37 Essex County Council own and manage 11 permanent residential sites: interviews were carried out on all sites. In total 68 interviews were completed, comprising 41% of the current total resident households and 27% of the entire sample.
- 8.38 The average household size of the participant was 3.2, although this figure did however hide some variation (see Table 8.2). The majority of the sample (77%) described themselves as Romany/Gypsy and just under half (49%) had been living on their site for over five years. Levels of satisfaction with the sites were generally good with the majority (66%) reporting that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their site. Sites with the highest levels of satisfaction included Hop Gardens, Hovefields and Ridgewell.
- 8.39 Participants were asked to explain what they particularly liked and disliked about their site. The themes that emerged included site management, site location, facilities within and beyond the site, the image of the sites and the importance of community. These themes directly impacted on the day-to-day lives of participants in both positive and negative ways.
- 8.40 The majority of participants (73% on average) on all sites reported that they felt safe living on their pitch. Those on Ladygrove and Cranham Hill reported that their sites were poorly located. Satisfaction with utility blocks was particularly low on Brickhouse, Cranham Hill, Fern Hill and Sandiacres.
- 8.41 A small proportion (4%) was in need of running hot and cold water in their amenity block: this was a problem on Cranham Hall, Felsted and Ladygrove. The most significant of what could be seen as the basic essential facilities was the need for a separate WC, where 40% of the sample reported that they were in need of this facility (on Brickhouse, Cranham Hall, Felsted, Hovefield, Ladygrove and Wood Corner).

- 8.42 The majority of participants (66%) did not believe that there were enough pitches for Gypsies and Travellers in Essex. The strongest request was for permanent residential pitches, but participants also raised the issue of short stay sites. Key issues that were felt to be important when selecting a site included its environmental surroundings, neighbouring communities and access to local services.
- 8.43 Eleven participants noted that they needed or were likely to move within the next five years. A quarter of participants also noted that one or more family member would need their own home within the next five years. In both cases there was a strong preference for site accommodation, although affordability was deemed a barrier to self-ownership.

9. Gypsies and Travellers living on private sites

Introduction

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

The sites and sample

9.2 Information regarding the estimated number of Gypsies and Travellers living on unauthorised encampments and developments in Essex was gathered by combining information held by local authorities and information from the caravan count. It was estimated that there were 296 Gypsy and Traveller household living on private sites. Of the 296 estimated households, 62 were included in our survey representing 21% of the estimated Gypsy and Traveller population living on private authorised sites.

9.3 The majority of our sample had gained full planning permission, but a significant number had other forms which are presented in the table below:

Table 9.1 Sample and site ownership	
Site ownership	Count
Self-owned with planning permission	37
Self-owned with temp. planning permission	20
Self-owned with personal planning permission	5
Total	62

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

9.4 From our sample of participants, the average household size was 4.5.

9.5 A significant majority of the participants (79%, 48) had been living on their site for more than five years, as can be seen from Table 9.2. All participants responded that they either did not intend to move, or that they would stay for more than five years.

9.6 Participants therefore presented a settled account of their life, where they had been living on their sites for a significant period of time, and believed that they would remain there for the foreseeable future.

Table 9.2 Length of time on site	
Length of time	Count
Less than 3 months	1
3 months – 1 year	1
1 – 3 years	4
3 – 5 years	7
More than 5 years	48
Total	61

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Living on sites

- 9.7 In general site satisfaction amongst participants was high with 78% (24) reporting that they were satisfied or very satisfied and 93% (53) felt safe an ‘always’. When participants were asked to expand on what they liked and disliked about living on their site the following themes emerged; community, location and planning permission.
- 9.8 Community was a very strong theme and impacted both positively and negatively on the experiences of the participants. Community cohesion within the sites was good with respondents noting that they were surrounded by friends and family, one respondent explained that the site offered them an opportunity to see their *‘children playing outside without fear of anyone hurting them, [and] being able to look after my mum’*.
- 9.9 However the relationship with the local settled community varied, and impacted on how participants viewed their accommodation. In cases where community cohesion was not an issue it was given as the primary reason for liking their site: *‘We are from Essex areas, this is home to us. We feel like part of the community here.’* In other instances community relationships were strained and this was given as the primary reason for disliking a site: *‘We have occasional problems with local people’s prejudices against Travellers.’* There were examples of how poor community cohesion could escalate: *‘The place was recently attacked by men wearing balaclavas and carrying clubs. [They] smashed up the chalet and vehicles, and we’ve been very nervous ever since.’*
- 9.10 The location of the sites impacted on the ability of participants to access services. A number of participants felt that they had achieved the ideal balance between achieving a rural way of life whilst retaining the ability to access local services and work opportunities, as one respondent explained: *‘It’s peaceful and we get left alone. [There is] easy access to [the local town] and schools.’*
- 9.11 The planning status that the sites had achieved impacted on the lives of participant, with those achieving full planning permission encountering less issues with the amenities available to them on their sites.

- 9.12 Those who had temporary or personal planning permission felt that there was an ongoing emotional and financial battle with the Council for their right to remain on their land; *'[I don't like] the stress related to planning, and finding the money for court fees. Now I am on Benefits, before I came here I didn't need Benefits.'*
- 9.13 Other households felt that the conditions included in their planning permissions were too restrictive and didn't allow them what could be considered as basic facilities: *'We share a bathroom with two other families. We've got conditions [with the planning permission] so we can't have any other mobile homes or chalets... There is open sewer running across the entrance to the site; if we got permanent planning permission it would be good if it were blocked in or buried. It smells in the summer and is very dangerous.'*
- 9.14 Households who had been granted full planning permission felt that this offered them a sense of ownership, belonging and safety which they hadn't been able to achieve at other accommodation types. Some participants simply responded that they liked their site because *'it's ours'*, whilst others described how this affected their lives in a positive manner: *'not having to move everyday. Knowing when me and my family go away my caravan will be there when I get back...it's our own place and we like it here.'*

Previous accommodation

- 9.15 A small number (12) of participants had previously lived in bricks and mortar accommodation. There were various reasons for having lived in settled accommodation including marriage, settled Romany parents, curiosity and lack of alternatives. However, similar themes emerged when participants were asked to explain why they had moved out of bricks and mortar accommodation.
- 9.16 The main theme was isolation. One participant who had moved into housing after her caravan was stolen described that *'I missed my family who were still out on the road.'*
- 9.17 A number of participants had been roadside travellers before buying their own land. The experience was described as difficult, as one participant explains: *'When we moved to the site we'd had years of harassment from the police. We couldn't stay anywhere [and] were moved on constantly. [We] couldn't get any education or appointments with doctors. There was police and council harassment everywhere we went.'*

Travelling patterns

- 9.18 Half of the participants had travelled over the past 12 months. When asked why they travel, the majority explained that travelling was a part of their culture and they did so to attend fairs ‘such as Stow, Epsom and Appleby’, to ‘mainly work these days’ and also to visit family. One participant explained, ‘It’s just our way of life, we work, we visit family and we go to fairs.’
- 9.19 The majority of those who still travelled stayed roadside when they did so, this resulted in evictions: ‘We were asked to leave a lay-by that we have used many times before because it’s large and hidden from the road. It was very disappointing and we were angry’. For those that travelled for work the evictions created barriers to employment opportunities: ‘We moved because we could not get work in this area. We had to return as we were getting moved on too often and could not get any work done. It made me feel like a piece of dirt.’
- 9.20 For those that had stopped travelling, the following table represents reasons as to why they no longer traveller:

Table 9.3 Reasons for no longer travelling		
Reason	Percentage	Count
Lack of transit sites / places to stay	87%	27
Threat of evictions	77%	24
Age / too old	58%	18
Safety / harassment	52%	16
Employment	35%	11

Source: Essex GTAA Fordham Research

- 9.21 When asked if there was a need for transit sites in Essex a quarter replied positively with regards to visiting friends and family, and a further quarter said they were necessary for their own needs. When discussing the preferred location of transit sites, no exact locations were described. However, a theme that did emerge was the need for a network of transit sites across the country, including Essex.
- 9.22 Those who needed sites for their own needs explained that they lived and travelled around Essex for work, and therefore needed transit sites in the County; ‘They need to be anywhere we can find work. We mostly stay in Essex as we know all the areas well.’

Accommodation expectations

- 9.23 Whilst the majority of participants felt that they had no need and were unlikely to move to a different home within five years, five participants believed that they would be moving. These households showed a preference for site accommodation, with two reporting that they would consider moving to a detached house, preferably a bungalow.

- 9.24 The main reason participants gave to needing to move home was due to harassment, proximity to local services such as schools and a lack of space on their current land. The majority of participants reported that they did not need to move to supported or sheltered accommodation (54%, 31) or a floating support services to stay where they were (56%, 32). A minority (5) did however express an interest in finding out more about these services.
- 9.25 A third of the participants (33%, 19) noted that one or more member of their family would need their own separate home within the next five years, which represented 33 emerging households. It was felt that the majority of this need would be for site accommodation, with a strong preference for private, self-owned sites. None of the participants believed that the emerging households would require bricks and mortar accommodation.
- 9.26 The majority of the participants felt that the emerging households would prefer to stay on their current site, or move to a site within the same district. Only one participant noted that the household would be moving outside of the County area.

Summary

- 9.27 Of the 296 estimated Gypsy and Traveller households living on private sites in Essex, 62 (21%) were included in the survey. The majority of those interviewed had full planning permission (37), but a significant number had temporary (20) or personal (5) planning permission. The average household size of the sample was 4.5.
- 9.28 Participants were settled on their sites, with the majority (79%) having lived in their current accommodation for over five years and all participants responding that they neither intended or were likely to move in the next five years.
- 9.29 In general site satisfaction amongst participants was high with 78% (24) reporting that they were satisfied or very satisfied and 93% (53) felt safe as 'always'. When participants were asked to expand on what they liked and disliked about living on their site the following themes emerged; community, location and planning permission.
- 9.30 Whilst the majority of participants felt that they had no need and were unlikely to move to a different home within five years, five participants believed that they would be moving. These households showed a preference for site accommodation, with two reporting that they would consider moving to a detached house, preferably a bungalow.
- 9.31 A third of the participants (33%, 19) noted that one or more members of their family would need their own separate home within the next five years, which represented 33 emerging households. It was felt that the majority of this need would be for site accommodation, with a strong preference for private, self-owned sites. None of the participants believed that the emerging households would require bricks and mortar accommodation.

10. Gypsies and Travellers living on unauthorised sites

Introduction

10.1 This chapter starts by outlining the profile of participants living on unauthorised sites: this includes those on unauthorised developments and encampments. The conditions on the sites are then discussed followed by participants' accommodation history and travelling patterns. Views on the sites are those of the participants and it was beyond the scope of this study to assess conditions on sites. Finally the accommodation expectations of participants and other family members are described.

The sites and sample

10.2 Information regarding the estimated number of Gypsies and Travellers living on unauthorised encampments and developments in Essex was gathered by combining information held by the Council and information from the caravan count. It was estimated that there were 179 Gypsy and Traveller household living on unauthorised sites. Of the 179 estimated households, 39 were included in our survey representing 22% of the estimated unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller population.

10.3 The majority of the sample consists of participants living on unauthorised developments (37), with a small number of participants living on unauthorised encampments (2). They will be analysed together for the purpose of this chapter, but where differences do exist due to the form of ownership this will be commented on.

10.4 From our sample of participants, the average household size was 6.7, significantly above the average.

10.5 A significant majority of the participants (76%) had been living on their site for more than five years, as can be seen from Table 10.1. With the exception of those living on unauthorised encampments who were uncertain of what their future held, all participants responded that they believed they either did not intend to move, or that they would stay for more than five years.

10.6 Participants therefore presented a settled account of their life, where they had been living on their property for a significant period of time, and believed that they would remain on their property for the foreseeable future.

Table 10.1 Length of time on site	
Length of time	Frequency
Less than 3 months	2
3 months – 1 year	1
1 – 3 years	2
3 – 5 years	4
More than 5 years	29

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Living on sites

- 10.7 The facilities available to participants were basic and limited and there was a degree of resignation and acceptance in the response of participants to questions relating to their site facilities. Participants felt that they needed *‘decent toilets and washing facilities but until we have full planning permission we can’t do anything’...‘We’d like to put hard standing down but we’re trying not to fall out with the planners.’*
- 10.8 Levels of satisfaction with sites were exceptionally high, with 95% of participants reporting that they were very satisfied with their site. When this question was explored and participants were asked why they liked their sites, three main themes emerged: community, location and ownership.
- 10.9 The proximity of friends and family made a significant impact on the way participants described their sites, a typical explanation was as follows *‘I feel like I’ve won the lottery! I am so happy to be here with my friends and family all around me who I trust. We are all one, we are a community’.*
- 10.10 The rurality of site locations was also an important factor contributing to a feeling of *‘privacy, peace and quiet’*. These themes contributed to a high level of satisfaction on the unauthorised sites, as summed by one participant: *‘I like it here because of the countryside, the peace and the quiet; a good school for my grandchildren.’*
- 10.11 Whilst ownership of the land was seen as a positive (*‘It’s mine and I love it’*), not being able to obtain planning permission to live on their own land was viewed as a strong negative factor. Frustration over the planning status of the land was expressed through two main themes – the lack of facilities available to participants and the insecurity they felt.

- 10.12 As discussed earlier, the lack of planning permission means that participants could not acquire basic facilities for their sites: *'We have a lack of facilities on the site because we don't have planning permission.'* The lack of planning permission also contributed towards a feeling of insecurity and uncertainty about the future which was felt to have a detrimental affect the health of participants. A participant explained that *'the lack of planning permission, consent to be here, makes me feel angry, depressed and insecure...it gives me a migraine'*.
- 10.13 A small number (5) of participants had previously lived in bricks and mortar accommodation, two of whom said they would consider moving back into this form of accommodation if they found a property which was safe and secure.
- 10.14 The reasons for moving into accommodation were varied and included affordability, lack of alternative accommodation and discrimination on the road.

Travelling patterns

- 10.15 The vast majority of participants had not travelled within the last 12 months.
- 10.16 Those who had travelled did so for *'work, family, church festivals – it's what we've always done'* and commonly stayed on private family sites, land owned by themselves but which had no planning permission or by the roadside.
- 10.17 For those that had stopped travelling, the following table represents reasons as to why they no longer travel:

Table 10.2 Reasons for no longer travelling	
Reason	Count
Lack of transit sites / places to stay	24
Threat of eviction	22
Health and / or support needs	19
Safety / harassment	19
Employment	11
Age	10

Source: Essex GTAA Fordham Research

Accommodation expectations

- 10.18 The participants agreed that there was a significant need for more sites for Gypsies and Travellers in Essex. There was a desire for a mixture of different site ownership and management types in order to create choice for the community: the different types included private family sites, private rented sites, local authority (social) sites and transit sites. This was reflective of affordability issues, with only a third of participants reporting that they would be able to afford their own land in the Essex. This may be an underestimate however. It is notoriously difficult to gather accurate information relating to finances in Gypsy and Traveller surveys, and as the high level of unauthorised developments indicates, many Gypsies and Travellers are finding ways to buy land for development in Essex.
- 10.19 The idea that dominated discussions of what was needed in the area was how to bring these sites forward. The main concern was that *'there needs to be the freedom for people to gain planning permission for land that they've bought'*.
- 10.20 In contrast to many of the groups who believed that *'smaller sites are better run and respected'*, participants from Dale Farm argued that there should be larger sites available, of up to 40 to 50 pitches. This is partly due to the strong sense of community that has developed on the site which was discussed earlier: *'If we had to move, we would all like to stay together.'* It should also be noted that Dale Farm is comprised of Irish travellers whom prefer larger sites compared to English/Roma travellers.
- 10.21 The majority of participants reported that if they were found land that would be granted planning permission they would move, although there was a preference to remain within a 15 mile radius of their current location, and within their current local authority.
- 10.22 Participants were asked to list the three most important factors that they felt made an area a suitable location for a site. The following table represents the strongest themes that emerged; community, local services and rurality:

Table 10.3 Factors influencing good locations

Community cohesion – within the site and with the local community
Services – including health and education
Rurality – in rural areas with good public transport links

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

- 10.23 A significant minority of the participants had individuals in their households who would need their own separate accommodation within the next five years, all of whom would require a pitch on the same or neighbouring site.

Summary

- 10.24 Of the 179 estimated Gypsy and Traveller households living on unauthorised sites in Essex, 39 (22%) were included in the survey, with the average household size recorded at 6.7 – significantly above the average. The majority of the sample consisted of participants living on unauthorised developments (37) and a small number living on unauthorised encampments (2).
- 10.25 Participants therefore presented a settled account of their life, where they had been living on their property for a significant period of time, and believed that they would remain on their property for the foreseeable future.
- 10.26 The facilities available to participants were basic and limited and there was a degree of resignation and acceptance in the response of participants to questions relating to their site facilities, however levels of satisfaction with their sites were exceptionally high at 95%. When this question was explored and participants were asked why they liked their sites, three main themes emerged: community, location and ownership.
- 10.27 The participants agreed that there was a significant need for more sites for Gypsies and Travellers in Essex. In contrast to many of the groups who believed that *'smaller sites are better run and respected'*, participants from Dale Farm argued that there should be larger sites available, of up to 40 to 50 pitches. This is due to the community element that has developed on the site which was discussed earlier: *'If we had to move, we would all like to stay together.'*
- 10.28 The majority of participants reported that if they were found land that would be granted planning permission they would move, although there was a preference to remain within a 15 mile radius of their current location, and within their current district. The most important factors in searching for suitable site location were community cohesion, local services and rurality.

11. Gypsies and Travellers living in housing

Introduction

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

The sample

11.2 A sixth (17%) of the total interviews were conducted with Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar accommodation. The following table shows where the 43 interviews took place, along with estimates of the total number of housed Gypsy and Traveller families. More interviews took place in Southend than in other areas, consistent with Southend having the largest estimated housed population.

Table 11.1 Sample of interviews with Gypsies and Travellers living in housing			
Local authority	Number Interviewed	Estimated population	Percentage interviewed
Basildon	2	15	13.3%
Braintree	4	12	33.3%
Brentwood	2	6	33.3%
Castle Point	3	8	37.5%
Chelmsford	6	14	42.9%
Colchester	4	15	26.7%
Epping Forest	-	11	0.0%
Harlow	1	7	14.3%
Maldon	5	5	100.0%
Rochford	2	7	28.6%
Southend	9	77	11.7%
Tendring	3	13	23.1%
Uttlesford	2	6	33.3%
Total	43	196	21.9%

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

11.3 The table below shows the ethnic profile. The vast majority were English Gypsies. The average family size was fairly small, at 2.8 people.

Table 11.2 Profile of participants		
Ethnicity	No. of interviews	No. of interviews
English Gypsy	34	79.1%
Irish Traveller	4	9.3%
Scottish Traveller	2	4.7%
Refused	3	7.0%
Total	43	100%

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

11.4 The following table shows where participants had lived prior to moving into housing. It is noticeable that the previous home for a large proportion of participants was on a site; almost half (44%) had previously lived on a social rented site and a quarter on an unauthorised site.

Table 11.3 Previous accommodation		
Accommodation type	Number	%
Social rented site	19	44.2%
Private site	6	14.0%
Unauthorised development	2	4.7%
Unauthorised encampment	9	20.1%
Transit site	1	2.3%
<i>Total Sites</i>	37	85.3%
Owner-occupier	2	4.7%
Socially rented housing	1	3.0%
Private rented housing	3	7.0%
<i>Total Housing</i>	6	14.7%
Total	43	100.0%

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Current accommodation

11.5 The vast majority of participants (88%) lived in houses. The table below also shows that almost two-thirds (65%) rented, with 44% socially. Almost a quarter (23%) owned their home outright.

Table 11.4 Housing profile		
<i>Property type</i>		
	Number	Percentage
Detached house	9	20.9%
Semi-detached house	10	23.3%
Terraced	19	44.2%
Flat	5	11.7%
Total	43	100.0%
<i>Tenure type</i>		
Owens outright	10	23.3%
Owens with mortgage	5	11.6%
Rent from Council / RSL	19	44.2%
Rent privately	9	20.9%
Total	43	100.0%

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

- 11.6 Most participants (64% reported a degree of difficulty in finding their home and only 9% said it was easy. Difficulties mainly related to the length of time it took to buy a home, or to access social housing through waiting lists, with staying in temporary accommodation before finding somewhere permanent often criticised: *'I had a baby at 15 so they wouldn't give me a house. Then I had to wait until 16 before they put me in a B&B that was tiny for 18 months'*.
- 11.7 Two main reasons were given for moving into housing. The most frequent reason was simply the lack of alternatives. For those who had lived on the roadside or on unauthorised developments, the threat of evictions was a factor: *'My wife was fed up of keep getting rejected planning permission for her own land she'd bought'; 'I had no choice. There was a trailer fire - lost everything, so moved from north of England to be near family'; 'I've no other choice. I wouldn't live on site by myself with no other family members. When I was 8 our caravan burnt down and we were forced into housing with family.'* For those who had moved off authorised sites, the conditions and management of the site meant they had little alternative than to move into a house: *'I got sick of living on sites with all the bullying and rowing between different families. There's nowhere else to go now roadside pick-ups are banned'*
- 11.8 The second main reason was to access services, *'for the kids' education, to give them a more stable life and to try and give the kids something we didn't have.'* Finally some participants stressed how they had chosen to move into housing, often due to old age or because of marriage: *'We're getting old and we need the comforts of a house.'* *'I grew up on a site and when I get old enough I ran off to get married to a Gauja and we got a house.'*

11.9 The following table shows satisfaction with the current home by previous accommodation type. Overall almost half (48%) said they were satisfied with their current accommodation. However those who had previously been on sites were less likely to be satisfied, possibly due to the threat of evictions meaning they felt forced to move into housing, and that they were less accustomed to it than those who had a longer history in housing.

Table 11.5 Satisfaction with current home

Previous accommodation	Satisfaction					Total
	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither / nor	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	
Authorised site	24%	12%	8%	22%	34%	100%
Unauthorised site	14%	14%	14%	46%	12%	100%
Housing	28%	56%	16%	-	9%	100%
Total	26%	22%	15%	20%	17%	100%

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

11.10 The most popular benefits of living in housing was the extra comfort and better facilities compared to a site, followed by better security: *'Some things I don't like but other things I do like it's more comfortable, and you've got everything you need here. I wouldn't go back to a trailer.'*, *'It was hard at first but I've grown used to it – it's more comfortable than the old life'*. Having family close by was an important factor in being satisfied with living in housing: *'I don't mind it too much. I've plenty of family around and good Gauja neighbours. Its easier for me now my health is bad.'* The relative stability a home offered was an important factor for those who had previously lived on the roadside: *'It's more settled down for the children and going to school. Now some of my kids have gone back on the road, others are in houses. I miss the old life but we're too old for all the trouble – nowhere to park, trouble at sites and so on.'*

11.11 However most participants gave mainly negative factors when discussing living in housing. The main disadvantages related to the lack of space and a sense of claustrophobia from living in a house: *'I hate it. I've had more illness since I've been here than ever, I can't leave windows open at night, there's no fresh air and you got to keep all the doors locked. It's like being in prison, like being in hell.'*; *'I don't like it much, I feel hemmed in. I miss my family, it's easier because of the kitchen and bathroom but I'd rather find a site somewhere.'*

11.12 A small majority (61%) said they would go back to living on a site if they had the chance. However this should not be confused with a definite need to move back to a site, rather an accommodation preference should a suitable pitch become available. The following table shows that those who had previously lived on an authorised site were the most likely to want to return. This may reflect participants' views that poor site conditions and a lack of space meant they had little choice to move into a house. Those who had previously lived in housing were generally well settled.

Table 11.6 Preference to return to a site

Previous accommodation	Move back	Stay in housing	Total
Authorised site	75%	25%	100%
Unauthorised site	64%	36%	100%
Housing	26%	74%	100%
Total	60.5%	39.5%	100%

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

- 11.13 Overcrowding was fairly high: 14% were assessed as being in overcrowded conditions using the Bedroom Standard, compared to the national overcrowding average of 7.1%.

Accommodation expectations

- 11.14 When asked whether they thought there was enough accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers in Essex, the overwhelming majority (88%) said there was not. Of those who wanted to move to a different type of accommodation, over half (51%) would like a private site on their own land, followed by 40% who would like a social rented site. However only 16% thought they would be able to afford to buy land in Essex.
- 11.15 The questionnaire attempted to establish how far participants would be prepared to move to move to take up a pitch on a site. The results suggest there would be a willingness to move away from the current location but there remains a strong attachment to the current district and Essex generally. On the one hand, 28% said they would be prepared to move anywhere. The remainder all wanted to stay in Essex but there was still willingness to move if it meant finding a safe and secure site: a further 28% said over 15 miles, and 20% between 10 and 15 miles. 12% would not be willing to move more than four miles. However elsewhere in the questionnaire participants stressed the importance of remaining in the local area: 51% wanted to live in their current district, 35% would be prepared to move elsewhere in Essex, and only 14% wanted to move outside Essex.
- 11.16 The importance of local connections was emphasised when participants were asked for the factors that make an area a good place to live. The most popular response, given by 46% of participants, was having family and their community close by. This was followed by access to local services and amenities (37%). Other factors mentioned were specific to the accommodation, such as safety (13%) and large plot sizes (11%).
- 11.17 Almost half (46.5%) said they needed or were likely to move to a different home in the next five years, with a third within the year. Reasons given for moving include: a lack of space and accessibility: *'My house is too small, I'm waiting to be re-housed. I've no money for a trailer or a pitch on any sites, or I would go back to old life.'*; *'I need to move to sheltered accommodation, but they should put it on sites for old people without family or whose family live far away'*.

11.18 Over a third (34%) expected a family member to move into their own separate home within the next five years. The preference for future families was more towards sites than to stay in housing: 21% expected them to want a social rented site and 16% a self-owned site.

Travelling patterns

11.19 A quarter of the sample still travelled, mainly stayed on private sites or on the roadside. Visiting family, horse fairs and work were the main reasons given for travelling. Others said they would like to travel but lack of space of sites and apparent restrictions in their social housing tenancies prevented them: *'I would like to travel but there's nowhere to stay. I'm also frightened of losing the house if we do travel. If we're away for more than two weeks the locks are changed and the house is given to someone else.'*

Summary

11.20 A total 43 interviews were carried out with Gypsies and Travellers living in housing, comprising over a sixth of all interviews. Almost half of participants currently lived in the social rented sector, although a third owned their home. For 85% of participants, their last home had been on a site, with almost half being on a social rented authorised site. Most had moved into housing due to a lack of space on authorised sites or poor conditions on the sites, or to access services more easily.

11.21 Almost half were satisfied with their current accommodation, however those who had previously lived on an authorised sites were the least likely to be satisfied. The added comfort and improved security of living in housing were appreciated by some participants, however most spoke negatively of their experience, criticising the lack of community and family close by. Most would return to a site if they had a chance. Participants were prepared to move from their current location to take up a pitch on a suitable site, but most wanted to stay in the same district in Essex.

12. Access to services

Introduction

12.1 While the focus of the survey was on accommodation requirements, the questionnaire also collected information on access to services, including health and education. Research has found that poor accommodation can prevent access to services and so cannot be seen in isolation.⁴² This chapter outlines the main findings with emphasis on barriers to service uptake and how services can be improved.

Use of services

12.2 Participants were asked about their ability to access local services, including shops, health and education. The results are shown in the three tables below, showing the proportion of respondents reporting difficulties accessing services on foot, by public transport and by car. The main variation was by site type; the majority of those on unauthorised sites and developments found it difficult to access any service on foot, most likely due to the relatively remote locations of many of these sites. Nearly all (about 80%) on these types of site found public transport access to shops and health services to be difficult.

12.3 Those on privately owned sites generally found access to services easier than those on local authority sites; nearly two thirds on local authority owned sites had difficulty accessing any of the services listed by public transport, compared to around a quarter on private sites. In contrast, almost none of those living in housing reported difficulties accessing any services.

Table 12.1 Percentage finding gaining access to local amenities 'hard': on foot

Accommodation type	Shops and Post Office	Health Centre or GP	Primary School	Secondary School
Local authority site	55%	58%	56%	58%
Private site	33%	37%	37%	36%
Unauthorised	60%	70%	71%	71%
Housing	0%	0%	0%	3%
Total	37%	41%	41%	42%

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

⁴² e.g., Glenys Parry, et al, *The Health Status of Gypsies & Travellers in England: Summary of a report to the Department of Health*, University of Sheffield, 2004.

Table 12.2 Percentage finding gaining access to local amenities ‘hard’: using local transport

Accommodation type	Shops and Post Office	Health Centre or GP	Primary School	Secondary School
Local authority site	62%	64%	61%	59%
Private site	26%	27%	25%	24%
Unauthorised	79%	79%	36%	36%
Housing	0%	0%	0%	0%
Total	40%	41%	34%	33%

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Table 12.3 Percentage finding gaining access to local amenities ‘hard’: by car

Accommodation type	Shops and Post Office	Health Centre or GP	Primary School	Secondary School
Local authority site	5%	10%	10%	10%
Private site	0%	0%	0%	0%
Unauthorised	0%	0%	0%	0%
Housing	0%	0%	0%	0%
Total	2%	0%	0%	0%

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

12.4 The questionnaire asked for further information about the practical impact of any transport difficulties. Many people on all types of sites stated that a car was a necessity; this caused significant problems, especially for the elderly and others unable to drive. The lack of pavements on nearby roads was also mentioned by some respondents as a problem:

‘I can’t walk far because of my arthritis. I don’t own a car so I rely on family.’ (local authority site)

‘Teenagers like myself feel very isolated. Nothing to do and can’t get out to anywhere, since we can’t afford taxis.’ (local authority site)

‘I am here on my own with a baby and I can’t drive so I have to rely on others for lifts.’ (private site)

‘Kids can’t walk to the school as the road is dangerous.’ (private site)

12.5 A significant minority (about 10%) of respondents living on sites had no parking provision on their pitch, all of these were on social rented sites. In the light of the level of difficulty experienced by those living on pitches in accessing services without a car, this is clearly likely to be a serious issue for this group. It is currently council policy and condition of the licensing agreement that all sites must have parking provision and that all vehicles must be kept inside the confines of the plot. One possible explanation for the lack of space reported could be that parking space is being used for another purpose.

Health and support needs

- 12.6 Registration with a GP surgery was high, at 94%. This did not vary significantly across the site types or between sites and housing. Respondents who were not registered were also asked if they had ever been refused registration at a GP's surgery; only five of those not registered responded to this question, three of whom stated they had been refused access.

Table 12.4 Registration with a GP surgery

	Permanent	Temporary	None	Total
Local authority site	93%	1%	6%	100%
Private site	95%	5%	0%	100%
Unauthorised	97%	0%	3%	100%
Housing	95%	3%	3%	100%
Total	95%	2%	3%	100%

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

- 12.7 Despite this high level of registration at GP services, 50% had at some point used Accident and Emergency facilities because they were unable to see a GP, ranging from 36% on local authority sites to 80% on unauthorised sites. However, only 21% felt that they had problems generally using health services in Essex.

- 12.8 However, those who were dissatisfied with health services mostly felt that this was due to discrimination against Gypsies or Travellers:

'[Doctors should] see children when they need to see them, and not turn them away because they're Gypsies.'

'The local surgery's receptionist is biased against Travellers so we go further away.'

'[They] could treat Travellers the same as everybody else - I had to lie about my address and identity.'

- 12.9 There were also some other concerns, including a reported reduction in mobile services which used to visit sites:

'Female travellers would prefer to speak to a female doctor.'

'There was a mobile unit before but not now.'

- 12.10 A series of questions were asked about specific disabilities and illnesses. The results are shown in the table below. Respondents could report more than one issue, and so figures do not sum to 100%. Overall, a total of 58% of respondents reported some form of disability or illness, with the most common being asthma, reported by 27% of respondents, with long term illnesses reported by 21%.

Table 12.5 Specific disabilities and illnesses reported by survey respondents	
	Percent of respondents
Age-related health or mobility issues	14%
Non-age-related physical disability	7%
Child with physical disability	3%
Learning disability	6%
Long term illness	21%
Severe sensory impairment	4%
Asthma	27%
Mental illness	13%
Other	8%

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

12.11 Relatively few respondents thought that their disability or illness required housing adaptations; however among those reporting one of the disabilities or illnesses above, 4% required handrails in their home, while 3% required each of the other alterations (e.g. ramps, low level shower units, support services, and help maintaining their home).

12.12 Of those who thought that help from the Council or health service would be relevant to the disability or illness they or a member of their household suffered, slightly less than half (45%) stated that they were already receiving help.

Education and skills

12.13 Of participants with children of school age, about three quarters (76%) said they were all enrolled in school, and 88% had some children enrolled in school. 21% of children attended vocational training outside school; however it should be remembered that these groups overlapped; only two of the respondents who had children not attending school had children attending vocational training.

12.14 Overall, 51% of respondents stating that they had children of school age had experienced a situation that prevented their children from going to school. The following table shows that bullying was the most frequent problem preventing attendance, closely followed by evictions. Non-attendance at school out of parental choice was a factor, but only reported by a relatively small group, as shown in the table below. Respondents could state more than one issue, so the numbers below do not sum to 100%.

Table 12.6 Reasons reported as preventing children from attending school

Reason	Percentage of those with children of school age
Bullying	25%
Evictions or being moved on	23%
Seasonal movement	13%
Lack of permanent address	13%
Prefer to be taught at home	8%
Inappropriate curriculum	6%

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

12.15 35% of those who responded felt that further education or training would help their family in finding work, although not all agreed: *'I already have lots of training and qualifications, but no good at all as prejudice stops me gaining work'*. Among the group interested in such training, the most commonly mentioned forms of training were literacy-based or vocational. Computing, building-related skills and farming skills were among those suggested by respondents.

'Reading, writing and anything else on offer'

'I would like to go back into education and do GCSEs, as I left school at 15'

'A training course to work with animals'

12.16 By far the most commonly mentioned obstacle to training was the difficulty and expense of transport; some suggested that a mobile service should be provided, while others felt that transport improvements would solve this problem.

Someone [could] come to the site and help us with literacy'

'I've paid for taxis so I can attend training courses'

'Help with transport for training and work'

'[Provide] transport or bring a bus or mobile classroom onto the site'

'Broadband access would be good – we are charged business rates which are too expensive'

Employment

12.17 Altogether 39% of respondents believed that they had been denied employment because of their being a Gypsy or a Traveller, in some cases on multiple occasions. In the majority of cases it was believed that the discrimination had come through the means of potential employers recognising their address as a caravan site; also those on unauthorised sites with no official address faced problems in applying.

'As soon as the address is given it's the end of the interview.'

'When I lived on a site, the site address would give my identity away.'

'As soon as your address becomes known, you've no chance of work.'

'We have to lie about our address – I give my sister's instead.'

'I don't have an address which can be a problem.'

12.18 It should be remembered that some of the remaining 61% who had not experienced such discrimination are likely to be self-employed or looking after the household. In addition, three respondents felt that they were unfairly restricted by site rules against business activities or commercial vehicles, and seven mentioned a lack of space to run their business.

Council services

12.19 More than half (51%) of respondents felt that the best way for the Council to keep in touch with Gypsies and Travellers would be via a newsletter, although 24% thought that a voluntary group would also be a useful way of maintaining relations, and 15% favoured visits by liaison officers or support workers. Other suggestions made included an email list or keeping contact via the Gypsy Council.

12.20 Of all respondents, 44% stated that they had suffered discrimination of some sort when trying to access services. Respondents were asked to describe the nature and source of that discrimination. While some respondents did state that they had suffered discrimination from multiple services, each response was classified according to the service given the most emphasis. The results are shown in the table below; healthcare services were by far the most likely to be criticised in this area.

Table 12.7 Sources of discrimination in service provision	
Reason	Percentage of those reporting discrimination
Healthcare services	35%
Education and training	11%
Council services	9%
Postal or courier services	9%
Transport services	9%
Police	2%
Other	13%
Not stated	18%

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Summary

- 12.21 Access to services varied strongly by the type and tenure of accommodation; those on unauthorised sites and to a lesser extent local authority sites tended to have difficulty accessing services if they were not able to drive. This was not true of Gypsies and Travellers in housing, almost none of whom reported problems. As discussed in the previous chapter, better access to services was one reason some Gypsies and Travellers had moved into housing in the first place.
- 12.22 Almost all respondents (94%) were registered with a GP. However, many did report discrimination from health services, far more than for any other public service, accounting for 35% of all reports of discrimination in service provision. Half of respondents reported that they had at some point used Accident and Emergency facilities in Essex because they were unable to get an appointment with a GP, with the figure rising to 80% of respondents on unauthorised sites. However, only 21% felt that they generally had problems using health services in Essex.
- 12.23 Asthma and long term illness were the most significant health problems for Gypsies and Travellers in Essex. Few required modifications to their home for reasons of health or disability, but the more requested adaptations or services included additional handrails, low level shower units, support services and help maintaining the home.
- 12.24 A total of 76% of those with children at school age had all children enrolled in school, and 88% had some children enrolled. About half had experienced a situation preventing at least one of their children from attending school, the most frequent being bullying and eviction. Additional training was considered likely to be useful by 35% of respondents, particularly in literacy, with by far the most common obstacle to this being the lack of (or expense of) transport to educational facilities.
- 12.25 Some 39% believed they had been denied employment opportunities due to being a Gypsy or Traveller, which usually took the form of being refused interviews due to having an address on a caravan site.

13. Travelling Showpeople

Introduction

13.1 Travelling Showpeople are included in the definition of Gypsies and Travellers for the purposes of housing strategies, but are subject to separate planning guidance. Given the presence of Travelling Showpeople in Essex and that they face similar shortages of places to live as Gypsies and Travellers, they have been included in this report. However in recognition of their different cultural identity, separate questionnaires were administered leading to a separate accommodation needs assessment in Chapter 15. The questionnaire (see Appendix 3) was adapted to recognise the different accommodation requirements that Travelling Showpeople can have.

The sample

13.2 Twenty-nine interviews were conducted with Travelling Showpeople families living on yards and eight with those living in housing, equivalent to 15% of the entire sample. They took place on 18 of the 20 yards in Essex. Yards were identified in the first place from the Showmen's Guild of Great Britain, however snowballing also identified a number of yards whose owners were not members of the Guild (for example the Association of Independent Showmen).

Table 13.1 Sample of interviews with Travelling Showpeople

Local authority	Housing interviews	Yard interviews
Basildon	-	11
Braintree	-	3
Brentwood	-	-
Castle Point	1	-
Chelmsford	3	7
Colchester	-	-
Epping Forest	1	4
Harlow	-	-
Maldon	-	2
Rochford	1	-
Southend	-	-
Tendring	2	-
Uttlesford	-	2
Total	8	29

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

- 13.3 The cultural practice of Travelling Showpeople is to live on a plot in a site yard in static caravans or mobile homes, along with smaller caravans used for travelling or inhabited by other family members (for example, adolescent children). Some yards contain several plots with different families living on each, while others are occupied by a single family. Their equipment (including rides, kiosks and stalls) is kept on the same plot. It should consequently be borne in mind that the amount of land needed to live on is greater than for Gypsies and Travellers. For clarity, we refer to Travelling Showpeople 'plots' rather than 'pitches' to recognise the differences in design.

Current accommodation

- 13.4 Most of the yards were fairly small in terms of the number of families living in them, with only one family occupying them. The two largest yards were at Wickford (Basildon) and Hassenwood Writtle (Chelmsford) respectively with six and five families living on separate plots.
- 13.5 The average number of people living on each plot was 4.5. Almost two-thirds (62%) reported that a member of their family lived on the plot all year round, suggesting that yards are commonly no longer solely used for winter quarters, but also as a residential base. All reported that this was their main home and only three respondents (10%) had lived there for less than three years. Only two expected to move within the next five years.
- 13.6 Satisfaction with living on their current yard was very high; 43% of participants noting that they were very satisfied and only three saying they were dissatisfied. All said they felt safe living there, 72% had space on the yard for their children to play safely and all except for two said noisy or dangerous traffic was not an issue. When participants were asked for the benefits of living on their yard answers mainly centred on the surrounding community and access to facilities: *'We've got our friends and family near by, it's peaceful and no one bothers us'*; *'Easy access to the road network, helpful local community, good schools'*.
- 13.7 The main negative aspect of the yard was the lack of space for all members of the family to live or to erect equipment. Just over half of those questioned (52%) reported they did not have enough space on their yard. Extra space was needed for concealed households or future family growth or for storing equipment:

'Family needs are now pending. The kids will require their own accommodation and there is no space for them to live as the yard is and we can't expand it any further'

'I have other equipment but there's no room in the yard to keep it and the council won't let us expand for storage.'

- 13.8 Testing equipment to ensure it complies with safety regulations was critical, but this took up additional space which often wasn't available: *'Explained that had to test the rides when arrived at the fairs but if there's a problem they have to travel back to the yard to carry out the repairs'* (interviewer's notes).

Future accommodation

- 13.9 Only two participants thought that there was currently enough space for Travelling Showpeople in Essex. When asked if extra land was made available for yards in Essex, participants made several suggestions about their design and location. As regards size, at least half an acre was suggested by several participants for each family-sized plot, and around four acres for the total size of the yard, with spare capacity for future family growth. Access to utilities and the road network was stressed, along with perimeter landscaping and hardstanding. In terms of location, the strong preference was for extra space in the same district as local connections were well established.
- 13.10 Many of those interviewed believed that the accommodation shortfall could be met privately by granting planning permission to Travelling Showpeople to expand or buy new yards. Over half (55%) had tried to buy land in Essex but their plans had fallen through for various reasons (e.g. being outbid or the vendor withdrawing from the sale). However twelve participants (52%) had been informed that planning permission would not be granted by the local council. In some case this was because the land was in the Green Belt however in other instances participants were less clear as to why permission was not granted:

'We were looking into buying two acres for winter quarters. We talked to the council about planning permission but as soon as they knew who we were they discontinued the discussion'

'We looked at three acres in [district] and spoke to council but they said they had sufficient yards in the area and look elsewhere'

'Showmen want to buy their own yards but it's impossible to get planning permission'.

- 13.11 Two-thirds thought they would be able to afford to buy additional land in Essex.

Travelling Showpeople living in housing

- 13.12 Eight of the Travelling Showpeople lived in housing. Reasons for living in housing varied. Three had always done so, while another had married a non-Showman and had stopped living on the yard at that point. One saw buying and moving to a house as an investment, while another stated that they *'saw no future in the travelling way of life. I wanted a better future for my children so they could settle down and get jobs. I wanted it easier for them'*. One participant however suggested that the lack of space on yards was the main reason: *'I was settled in Clacton but there's no room for trailers so could not go to a yard'*. Two said they would want to live on a yard if possible.

Access to services

- 13.13 All were permanently registered with a GP surgery in Essex and none reported problems accessing health or other services beyond what would be expected for the general population (e.g. difficulties getting appointments, longer waiting times). Just over half (57%) reported a health issue in their family, although only half of these were receiving help for this issue through the council or health services.
- 13.14 Of those who had children of school age, half said that their children attended school all year round, with the remainder not attending all year or using education packs for when they were not at school. Most expected their children to work in the same industry but some were pessimistic about future prospects: *'The expenses are killing the game. If it continues with all the high costs, showmen will have no work and we'll be left on our yards.'*

Summary

- 13.15 37 interviews were conducted with Travelling Showpeople families, on 18 of the identified 20 yards in Essex. The survey found a great deal of concern about a lack of space on existing yards, whether for storing equipment or living space for current and future family. Some had moved into housing as a consequence of the lack of space on yards. The main barrier to bringing forward new yards was the difficulty in obtaining planning permission, whether on new yards or for the expansion at existing ones. Affordability was seen as a less significant issue and there was an expectation that Travelling Showpeople would be able to provide the extra accommodation themselves should land be made available to develop. Participants stressed their close connections to their local area and community, suggesting that, where possible, existing yards should be expanded.
- 13.16 Two-thirds of participants said that someone lived all year round on their yard, rather than using it as traditional winter quarters. The fact that almost all had lived there over five years and were well-integrated into the local community is one reason why satisfaction with where they lived was very high. This would also help explain why there was a strong preference for staying in the same areas of Essex.

SECTION C: NEED ASSESSMENTS

The final section of this report contains the accommodation need assessments. Chapter 14 contains the assessments for Gypsies and Travellers, and outlines need in terms of residential pitches, short stay sites and bricks and mortar accommodation. A similar methodology is applied in Chapter 15 which contains the assessment of plots for Travelling Showpeople. The final chapter draws conclusions on the research findings.

14. Gypsy and Traveller accommodation need

Introduction

- 14.1 This chapter presents the detailed technical calculation of the Gypsy and Traveller needs assessment. The model used is based on the example given in the GTAA Guidance.⁴³ General comments on the findings will be found in Chapter 16.

Requirement for residential pitches, 2008-2013: summary

- 14.2 The need for residential pitches in the study area is assessed according to a 14-step process, closely based upon the model suggested in CLG guidance (page 22). The results of this are shown in the table below, while the subsequent section contains explanations of the sourcing and calculation of the figures for each step.
- 14.3 As can be seen the overall need is for an additional 310 pitches, on top of the 33 pitches already planned. This amounts to a total need, additional to any existing planned construction, for approximately 62 pitches per annum for the 2008-2013 period.

⁴³ ODPM [CLG] (2006) op cit. page 22.

Table 14.1 Estimate of the need for permanent / residential site pitches, 2008-2013

1) Current occupied authorised residential site pitches	458.0
<i>Current residential supply</i>	
2) Number of unused residential pitches available	16.0
3) Number of existing pitches expected to become vacant through mortality	8.9
4) Number of households on sites expected to leave area in next 5 years	2.5
5) Number of households on sites expected to move into housing in next 5 years	12.9
6) Residential pitches planned to be built or to be brought back into use 2008-2013	33.0
7) Additional supply generated by movement within the stock	95.3
Total Supply	168.6
<i>Current residential need from sites*</i>	
8) Households sharing pitches causing overcrowding	113.0
9) Existing households on pitches moving and requiring pitches in the area	30.8
10) Existing households on unauthorised sites requiring pitches in the area	141.2
11) Existing households on overcrowded pitches requiring pitches in the area	64.5
12) New households forming on sites requiring pitches	73.8
13) Households expected to arrive from elsewhere	6.5
Total gross requirement	429.7
<i>Current residential need from housing</i>	
14) Existing households in housing moving and requiring pitches in the area	29.3
15) Households in overcrowded housing requiring pitches in the area	8.6
16) Households in housing requiring pitches	10.6
Total Need	48.5
<i>Balance of need and supply</i>	
Total additional pitch requirement**	309.5
Annualised additional pitch requirement	61.9

* Please note that a household cannot be counted as being in more than one of these categories, except where a household both lives on an unauthorised pitch and containing a newly forming household needing to move to independent accommodation.

** Numbers in table may not add exactly due to rounding errors; the final figures are calculated before rounding takes place.

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

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

Step 1: Current occupied permanent / residential site pitches

- 14.4 Based on information provided by the County Council, districts and corroborated by information from site surveys. There are currently estimated to be 458 occupied (and authorised) Gypsy and Traveller pitches in the study area, including those owned by a local authority and privately.

- 14.5 It should be noted that the data has been standardised for the model; an allowance has been made for the fact that private site pitches tend to be larger, to avoid underestimating either the capacity of these sites or their existing population. This base figure may therefore be higher than other estimates of the number of existing pitches.

Step 2: Number of unused residential pitches available

- 14.6 A total of 16 vacant pitches were on authorised sites in Essex which provides a small amount of supply.

Step 3: Number of existing pitches expected to become vacant, 2008-2013

- 14.7 This is calculated using mortality rates, as applied in conventional Housing Needs Assessments. The figures for mortality, however, have been increased in line with studies of Gypsy and Traveller communities suggesting a life expectancy approximately 10 years lower than that of the general population.⁴⁴ The table below shows the relevant calculation.

Table 14.2 Number of existing pitches expected to become vacant 2008-2013

From authorised pitches

Current supply of occupied permanent / residential site pitches	458
Pitches released from this number by mortality per year according to adjusted mortality rates (assuming inheritance of pitch by any remaining adult residents of pitch)	1.789
Expected pitches released 2008-2013 (1.789 × 5)	8.95 → 9

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Step 4: Number of households in site accommodation expressing a desire to leave Essex

- 14.8 It was assumed, given that development of sites is likely to occur in the Counties surrounding Essex as well as in the County itself, and that survey respondents were unlikely to say they would move unless it was a feasible option, that those currently living on sites expecting to leave the County permanently in the next five years would generally be able to do so. This is assumed for those moving out of choice (Step 8) or due to overcrowding (Step 11).
- 14.9 Nevertheless, as reported in the survey finding chapters, there was a low level of interest in leaving Essex, so this step only results in the supply of three pitches.

⁴⁴ E.g. L. Crout, *Traveller health care project: Facilitating access to the NHS*, Walsall Health Authority, 1987. NB: For Travelling Showpeople, the standard mortality rate is used.

Step 5: Number of households in site accommodation expressing a desire to live in housing

- 14.10 It was assumed that all those currently living on sites and planning to move into housing in the next five years would be able to do so. This excluded those planning to move due to site management issues, since it was assumed that these could be resolved in the light of the findings of this study.
- 14.11 A supply of 13 pitches was expected from this source, excluding those moving out of Essex, since these are already counted in Step 4.

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

- 14.12 Overall 33 pitches are likely to be provided according to information provided by Essex councils. The total comprises a 12 pitch social rented site in Colchester and the possible granting of planning permission to a 21 pitch unauthorised development in Braintree.

Step 7: Additional supply generated by movement within the stock

- 14.13 This figure, although not included in the CLG model, allows for the fact that movement of families from pitches onto different pitches (Steps 8 and 10) not only generates demand/need but also supply. Pitches vacated by moves out of Essex or into housing are excluded, since these are already counted in Steps 4 and 5 above. This generates a total supply of 95 pitches.
- 14.14 It is recognised that, of course, those moving from overcrowded pitches will not release pitches large enough for every family; however there are many smaller newly forming households within the total households generating need.

Step 8: Households sharing pitches

- 14.15 An occurrence in areas with a shortage of site accommodation is for families to 'double up' on their pitch with another family who would ordinarily have their own separate pitch.
- 14.16 The table below shows that those on unauthorised developments were the most likely to share their pitch resulting in overcrowding – overwhelmingly at Dale Farm, Basildon. The survey did find significant doubling up on private sites, but due to the generally larger pitches, not all of this resulted in overcrowding. This has been taken into account in the model.
- 14.17 Based on these responses, it is estimated 113 additional pitches would be required to resolve doubling up, shown in Step 8.

Table 14.3 Percentage of pitches with families overcrowded due to doubling up

Site type	% doubling up	% overcrowded due to doubling up
Unauthorised development	67.3%	52.7%
Private site	18.3%	6.3%
Social rented site	4.5%	4.5%
Unauthorised encampment	N/A	N/A
Total	27.8%	18.1%

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Step 9: Existing households on pitches moving and requiring pitches in Essex, 2008-13

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

14.19 This category of need overlaps with those moving due to overcrowding, counted in Step 10, and so any households which are both overcrowded and seeking accommodation are deducted from this total. This generates a total need from this source of 31 pitches.

Step 10: Existing households on unauthorised sites requiring residential pitches in Essex

14.20 The Guidance indicates that all those living on unauthorised encampments or developments must be provided with alternative accommodation. Using survey data, it has been calculated how many families on unauthorised sites want residential pitches in the County. They generate a need for 141 residential pitches, as shown in Table 14.4. This is substantial figure, overwhelmingly based on the high number of unauthorised developments in Essex, and largely comprising the unauthorised development at Dale Farm, Basildon.

Table 14.4 Households on unauthorised sites requiring new accommodation in the area, 2008-2013

<i>From unauthorised pitches</i>		
Currently on unauthorised sites		164.0
Minus those expecting to leave the County	2.3%	-3.8
Minus those not seeking a residential pitch	11.9%	-19.1
Total		141.2

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Step 11: Households on overcrowded pitches requiring residential pitches in the area

14.21 Guidance indicates that those on overcrowded pitches should be provided with pitches of an adequate size. These households are considered in the table below, although households which also contain a newly formed household that has not yet left are excluded. This is because it is assumed that once the extra household leaves (included in the need figures in Step 11), their accommodation will no longer be overcrowded. NB: Households doubling up, and so included at Step 2, have not been counted here as well.

Table 14.5 Households in overcrowded accommodation on authorised sites, 2008-2013

<i>From authorised pitches</i>		
Number of pitches overcrowded		92
Minus those with an emerging household likely to leave the pitch	18.6%	-17.1
Minus those expressing a desire to leave the County	2.3%	-1.7
Minus those not seeking a residential pitch	11.9%	-8.7
Total		65

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Step 12: New households forming on sites requiring residential pitches

14.22 The number of individuals needing to leave pitches to create new households was estimated from survey data to be 157 in the next five years, as shown in the table below. Allowing for those planning to leave the study area, and for estimated rates of marriages to both Gypsies and Travellers and non-Gypsies and Travellers, it is thought that this will result in the formation of 74 new households requiring residential pitches during the 2008-2013 period.

Table 14.6 Newly forming households on sites, 2008-2013

<i>From authorised pitches and unauthorised pitches</i>		
Individuals needing or likely to leave existing households, 2007-2012		164.2
Minus proportion expressing a desire to leave the County	0.0%	0.0
Minus those not seeking a residential pitch	11.9%	-19.5
Discount for marriage to non-Gypsies and Travellers	15.0%	-21.7
Discount for marriage between Gypsies and Travellers	40.0%	-49.2
Total		73.8

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Step 13: New households expected to arrive from elsewhere

14.23 In the absence of any data derivable from secondary sources on the moving intentions of those outside the Essex study area, it is assumed that inflow of Gypsies and Travellers into the County will be equivalent to the outflow. In addition, inflow equivalent to the outflow of newly forming households must be considered. Together, these amount to an inflow of only seven households.

Steps 14-16: Households in housing requiring a pitch

14.24 The Guidance includes an allowance for families living in bricks and mortar accommodation but who have a 'proven psychological aversion' to housing. Given that a psychological aversion cannot be demonstrated in a social survey, our approach is to include only those respondents who demonstrate through their answers to the questionnaire an aversion to living in housing which could be remedied by moving to a pitch. This was determined by identifying those respondents who said in their questionnaire responses that they had been forced to live in a house or that they suffered adverse psychological effects due to leaving a site.

14.25 Need for a pitch due psychological aversion to housing is broken into three categories: those with a stated intention to move, those in overcrowded housing, and newly forming families. Even if the household in question was in overcrowded or unsuitable housing, psychological aversion was taken into account, since if no psychological aversion was present, the need for larger accommodation could potentially be met within the housing stock. This generated a total need for 48.5 pitches from Gypsies and Travellers, equivalent to 24.7% of the estimated population.⁴⁵

Requirement for residential pitches, 2013-2021: summary

14.26 Looking further into the future, with all existing need having been taken into account, only natural increase, mortality, and movement into and out of Essex need be taken into account. Since movement within the stock is largely neutral in terms of pitches or dwellings released, this is not taken into account. The base figures for this calculation are shown below.

⁴⁵ The same methodology produced figures of 16% in London and 30% in Northamptonshire.

Table 14.7 Base figures as at 2013, assuming all need is met for 2008-2013

	2008 Base	Change 2008-2013	2013 base
Authorised sites	458*	+310**	817
Unauthorised sites	164*	-164	0

* Total households on sites – may be larger than the number of pitches

** Figure excludes currently planned new pitches, and effect of any existing vacant pitches being brought back into use.

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

14.27 Survey data suggests a rate of natural increase in households of 17.5% over the first five years (2008-2013) for Gypsies and Travellers in the County, equating to 3.27% per year. This figure includes an allowance for those moving out of the County, and represents an average of the rate for both sites and housing. This is a little below the CLG suggested rate of 3.90%. Mortality rates are projected to be the same as in 2008-2013, although due to the changing size of population, the absolute numbers of pitches and houses freed will vary. Movement into and out of the study area is also assumed to continue at the 2008-2013 rate. The table below shows an additional requirement for the period 2013-2021 of 95 pitches.

Table 14.8 Estimate of the need for residential pitches, 2013-2021

<i>Pitches as at 2013</i>	
1) Pitches occupied by Gypsies and Travellers	816.5
<i>Supply of pitches</i>	
2) Pitches expected to become vacant due to mortality 2013-2021	25.5
3) Number of households on pitches expected to move out of County 2013-2021	1.9
4) Number of households on pitches expected to move into housing	0.0
5) Additional supply generated by movement within the stock	81.3
Total supply	108.8
<i>Residential requirement: from pitches*</i>	
6) Existing households on pitches moving and requiring pitches in the area	81.3
7) New households forming on sites requiring pitches	107.7
8) Total households expected to arrive from elsewhere requiring pitches	2.3
Total gross requirement	191.3
<i>Residential requirement: from housing</i>	
9) Existing households in housing moving and requiring pitches in the area	0.0
10) Existing households forming in housing requiring pitches	12.7
Total gross requirement	12.7
<i>Balance of requirement and supply</i>	
Total additional pitch requirement**	95.2
Annualised additional pitch requirement	11.9

* Please note that a household cannot be counted as being in more than one of these categories, except where a household both lives on an unauthorised pitch and containing a newly forming household needing to move to independent accommodation.

** Numbers in table may not add exactly due to rounding errors; the final figures are calculated before rounding takes place.

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

District summaries

14.28 The following table gives an overview of projected need for residential pitches by district, over the 2008-2021 period. We stress that these figures are evidence of need and are not targets for new provision; the final district targets may well vary. The requirements are in addition to pitches already planned for 2008 (shown in districts' individual tables).

Table 14.9 Additional residential pitch requirements for Essex study area, 2008-2021

Area	Total at 2008	Requirement 2008-2013*	Total occupied pitches, 2013	Requirement 2013-2021	Total occupied pitches, 2021	Total requirement 2008-2021
Basildon	119	+148	267	+29	296	+177
Braintree	27	+9*	60	+7	66	+16
Brentwood	32	+24*	57	+6	63	+30
Castle Point	0	+3	3	+1	4	+4
Chelmsford	62	+23*	88	+10	98	+33
Colchester	7	-6†*	14	+2	16	-4
Epping Forest	65	+32	97	+11	108	+43
Harlow	36	+13	49	+5	55	+18
Maldon	52	+10*	70	+7	77	+17
Rochford	6	+12	18	+2	20	+14
Southend	0	+19	19	+6	25	+25
Tendring	3	+5	8	+2	10	+7
Uttlesford	49	+17	66	+7	73	+24
Essex total	458	+310*	817	+95	912	+405

* Figure excludes currently planned new pitches, and effect of any existing vacant pitches being brought back into use.

† Negative figure indicates estimated need will be met if all planned pitches are built.

NB: Totals may not equal sum of districts' figures due to rounding

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

District and borough breakdowns

14.29 The following tables show a detailed breakdown of projected need for residential pitches and for housing units for each Essex district, over the 2008-2013 period. They first show the calculations of need for residential pitches for 2008-2013, broken down into contributions from overcrowding, planned moves and newly forming households. The summary table further down each sheet shows the overall need broken down equally over each five year period, and an annual average need figure. (NB: due to rounding, the sum of the district totals may exceed the countywide totals.)

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

- 14.31 The pitch requirements are based on an assessment of need following fieldwork in autumn 2008. Local authorities may wish to consider whether circumstances have changed when including figures in their planning and housing strategies. For example, if unauthorised developments have been regularised since this assessment took place, the overall need figure will fall by the number of pitches given planning permission.
- 14.32 In addition the summaries show the projected changes to the overall Gypsy and Traveller population in housing, although this change is dependent on the provision of the pitches reported to be required. Finally, the summary provides an overview of the resulting situation in terms of the location of the Gypsy and Traveller population over the 2008-2021 period, starting with the base figures at the current time, calculated by adding the number of families on authorised pitches to the number sharing pitches on authorised sites (steps 1 and 8 of the calculation).

Basildon**Table 14.10 Estimate of the need for permanent / residential site pitches, 2008-2013**

1) Current occupied authorised residential site pitches	119.0
<i>Current residential supply</i>	
2) Number of unused residential pitches available	0.0
3) Number of existing pitches expected to become vacant through mortality	2.3
4) Number of households on sites expected to leave area in next 5 years	0.7
5) Number of households on sites expected to move into housing in next 5 years	3.4
6) Residential pitches planned to be built or to be brought back into use 2008-2013	0.0
7) Additional supply generated by movement within the stock	25.2
Total Supply	31.5
<i>Current residential need from sites*</i>	
8) Households sharing pitches causing overcrowding	29.4
9) Existing households on pitches moving and requiring pitches in the area	8.4
10) Existing households on unauthorised sites requiring pitches in the area	92.1
11) Existing households on overcrowded pitches requiring pitches in the area	16.8
12) New households forming on sites requiring pitches	26.8
13) Households expected to arrive from elsewhere	2.8
Total gross requirement	176.3
<i>Current residential need from housing</i>	
14) Existing households in housing moving and requiring pitches in the area	2.2
15) Households in overcrowded housing requiring pitches in the area	0.7
16) Households in housing requiring pitches	0.8
Total Need	3.7
<i>Balance of need and supply</i>	
Total additional pitch requirement**	148.4
Annualised additional pitch requirement	29.7

* Please note that a household cannot be counted as being in more than one of these categories, except where a household both lives on an unauthorised pitch and containing a newly forming household needing to move to independent accommodation.

** Numbers in table may not add exactly due to rounding errors; the final figures are calculated before rounding takes place.

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Table 14.11 Distribution of Gypsies and Travellers (2008 – 2021)

	Base: 2008*	2013	2021	Change
Housing units	15	33	37	+144%
Authorised pitches	148	267	296	+100%
Unauthorised pitches	107	0	0	-100%
Total	270	300	333	+23%

* Total households on sites – may be larger than the number of pitches

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Braintree

Table 14.12 Estimate of the need for permanent / residential site pitches, 2008-2013

1) Current occupied authorised residential site pitches	27.0
<i>Current residential supply</i>	
2) Number of unused residential pitches available	3.0
3) Number of existing pitches expected to become vacant through mortality	0.5
4) Number of households on sites expected to leave area in next 5 years	0.2
5) Number of households on sites expected to move into housing in next 5 years	0.8
6) Residential pitches planned to be built or to be brought back into use 2008-2013	21.0
7) Additional supply generated by movement within the stock	5.7
Total Supply	31.1
<i>Current residential need from sites*</i>	
8) Households sharing pitches causing overcrowding	6.7
9) Existing households on pitches moving and requiring pitches in the area	1.9
10) Existing households on unauthorised sites requiring pitches in the area	18.1
11) Existing households on overcrowded pitches requiring pitches in the area	3.8
12) New households forming on sites requiring pitches	5.7
13) Households expected to arrive from elsewhere	0.6
Total gross requirement	36.7
<i>Current residential need from housing</i>	
14) Existing households in housing moving and requiring pitches in the area	1.8
15) Households in overcrowded housing requiring pitches in the area	0.5
16) Households in housing requiring pitches	0.6
Total Need	3.0
<i>Balance of need and supply</i>	
Total additional pitch requirement**	8.6
Annualised additional pitch requirement	1.7

* Please note that a household cannot be counted as being in more than one of these categories, except where a household both lives on an unauthorised pitch and containing a newly forming household needing to move to independent accommodation.

** Numbers in table may not add exactly due to rounding errors; the final figures are calculated before rounding takes place.

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Table 14.13 Distribution of Gypsies and Travellers (2008 – 2021)

	Base: 2008*	2013	2021	Change
Housing units	12	14	15	+22%
Authorised pitches	34	60	66	+97%
Unauthorised pitches	21	0	0	-100%
Total	67	74	81	+22%

* Total households on sites – may be larger than the number of pitches

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Brentwood**Table 14.14 Estimate of the need for permanent / residential site pitches, 2008-2013**

1) Current occupied authorised residential site pitches	32.0
<i>Current residential supply</i>	
2) Number of unused residential pitches available	1.0
3) Number of existing pitches expected to become vacant through mortality	0.6
4) Number of households on sites expected to leave area in next 5 years	0.2
5) Number of households on sites expected to move into housing in next 5 years	0.9
6) Residential pitches planned to be built or to be brought back into use 2008-2013	0.0
7) Additional supply generated by movement within the stock	6.7
Total Supply	9.4
<i>Current residential need from sites*</i>	
8) Households sharing pitches causing overcrowding	7.9
9) Existing households on pitches moving and requiring pitches in the area	2.2
10) Existing households on unauthorised sites requiring pitches in the area	11.2
11) Existing households on overcrowded pitches requiring pitches in the area	4.5
12) New households forming on sites requiring pitches	5.3
13) Households expected to arrive from elsewhere	0.4
Total gross requirement	31.5
<i>Current residential need from housing</i>	
14) Existing households in housing moving and requiring pitches in the area	0.9
15) Households in overcrowded housing requiring pitches in the area	0.3
16) Households in housing requiring pitches	0.3
Total Need	1.5
<i>Balance of need and supply</i>	
Total additional pitch requirement**	23.7
Annualised additional pitch requirement	4.7

* Please note that a household cannot be counted as being in more than one of these categories, except where a household both lives on an unauthorised pitch and containing a newly forming household needing to move to independent accommodation.

** Numbers in table may not add exactly due to rounding errors; the final figures are calculated before rounding takes place.

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Table 14.15 Distribution of Gypsies and Travellers (2008 – 2021)

	Base: 2008*	2013	2021	Change
Housing units	6	8	8	+28%
Authorised pitches	40	57	63	+58%
Unauthorised pitches	13	0	0	-100%
<i>Total</i>	<i>59</i>	<i>65</i>	<i>71</i>	<i>+20%</i>

* Total households on sites – may be larger than the number of pitches

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Castle Point

Table 14.16 Estimate of the need for permanent / residential site pitches, 2008-2013

1) Current occupied authorised residential site pitches	0.0
<i>Current residential supply</i>	
2) Number of unused residential pitches available	0.0
3) Number of existing pitches expected to become vacant through mortality	0.0
4) Number of households on sites expected to leave area in next 5 years	0.0
5) Number of households on sites expected to move into housing in next 5 years	0.0
6) Residential pitches planned to be built or to be brought back into use 2008-2013	0.0
7) Additional supply generated by movement within the stock	0.0
Total Supply	0.0
<i>Current residential need from sites*</i>	
8) Households sharing pitches causing overcrowding	0.0
9) Existing households on pitches moving and requiring pitches in the area	0.0
10) Existing households on unauthorised sites requiring pitches in the area	0.9
11) Existing households on overcrowded pitches requiring pitches in the area	0.0
12) New households forming on sites requiring pitches	0.1
13) Households expected to arrive from elsewhere	0.1
Total gross requirement	1.0
<i>Current residential need from housing</i>	
14) Existing households in housing moving and requiring pitches in the area	1.2
15) Households in overcrowded housing requiring pitches in the area	0.4
16) Households in housing requiring pitches	0.4
Total Need	2.0
<i>Balance of need and supply</i>	
Total additional pitch requirement**	3.0
Annualised additional pitch requirement	0.6

* Please note that a household cannot be counted as being in more than one of these categories, except where a household both lives on an unauthorised pitch and containing a newly forming household needing to move to independent accommodation.

** Numbers in table may not add exactly due to rounding errors; the final figures are calculated before rounding takes place.

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Table 14.17 Distribution of Gypsies and Travellers (2008 – 2021)

	Base: 2008*	2013	2021	Change
Housing units	8	7	6	-23%
Authorised pitches	0	3	4	N/A
Unauthorised pitches	1	0	0	-100%
Total	9	10	10	+10%

* Total households on sites – may be larger than the number of pitches

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Chelmsford**Table 14.18 Estimate of the need for permanent / residential site pitches, 2008-2013**

1) Current occupied authorised residential site pitches	62.0
<i>Current residential supply</i>	
2) Number of unused residential pitches available	3.0
3) Number of existing pitches expected to become vacant through mortality	1.2
4) Number of households on sites expected to leave area in next 5 years	0.3
5) Number of households on sites expected to move into housing in next 5 years	1.7
6) Residential pitches planned to be built or to be brought back into use 2008-2013	0.0
7) Additional supply generated by movement within the stock	12.7
Total Supply	18.9
<i>Current residential need from sites*</i>	
8) Households sharing pitches causing overcrowding	15.3
9) Existing households on pitches moving and requiring pitches in the area	4.0
10) Existing households on unauthorised sites requiring pitches in the area	2.6
11) Existing households on overcrowded pitches requiring pitches in the area	8.7
12) New households forming on sites requiring pitches	7.7
13) Households expected to arrive from elsewhere	0.4
Total gross requirement	38.7
<i>Current residential need from housing</i>	
14) Existing households in housing moving and requiring pitches in the area	2.1
15) Households in overcrowded housing requiring pitches in the area	0.6
16) Households in housing requiring pitches	0.8
Total Need	3.5
<i>Balance of need and supply</i>	
Total additional pitch requirement**	23.2
Annualised additional pitch requirement	4.6

* Please note that a household cannot be counted as being in more than one of these categories, except where a household both lives on an unauthorised pitch and containing a newly forming household needing to move to independent accommodation.

** Numbers in table may not add exactly due to rounding errors; the final figures are calculated before rounding takes place.

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Table 14.19 Distribution of Gypsies and Travellers (2008 – 2021)

	Base: 2008*	2013	2021	Change
Housing units	14	15	16	+16%
Authorised pitches	77	88	98	+27%
Unauthorised pitches	3	0	0	-100%
Total	94	103	114	+21%

* Total households on sites – may be larger than the number of pitches

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Colchester

Table 14.20 Estimate of the need for permanent / residential site pitches, 2008-2013

1) Current occupied authorised residential site pitches	7.0
<i>Current residential supply</i>	
2) Number of unused residential pitches available	1.0
3) Number of existing pitches expected to become vacant through mortality	0.1
4) Number of households on sites expected to leave area in next 5 years	0.0
5) Number of households on sites expected to move into housing in next 5 years	0.2
6) Residential pitches planned to be built or to be brought back into use 2008-2013	12.0
7) Additional supply generated by movement within the stock	1.4
Total Supply	14.8
<i>Current residential need from sites*</i>	
8) Households sharing pitches causing overcrowding	1.7
9) Existing households on pitches moving and requiring pitches in the area	0.5
10) Existing households on unauthorised sites requiring pitches in the area	0.9
11) Existing households on overcrowded pitches requiring pitches in the area	1.0
12) New households forming on sites requiring pitches	0.9
13) Households expected to arrive from elsewhere	0.1
Total gross requirement	5.1
<i>Current residential need from housing</i>	
14) Existing households in housing moving and requiring pitches in the area	2.2
15) Households in overcrowded housing requiring pitches in the area	0.7
16) Households in housing requiring pitches	0.8
Total Need	3.7
<i>Balance of need and supply</i>	
Total additional pitch requirement**	-6.0
Annualised additional pitch requirement	-1.2

* Please note that a household cannot be counted as being in more than one of these categories, except where a household both lives on an unauthorised pitch and containing a newly forming household needing to move to independent accommodation.

** Numbers in table may not add exactly due to rounding errors; the final figures are calculated before rounding takes place.

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Table 14.21 Distribution of Gypsies and Travellers (2008 – 2021)

	Base: 2008*	2013	2021	Change
Housing units	15	13	13	-12%
Authorised pitches	9	14	16	+86%
Unauthorised pitches	1	0	0	-100%
Total	25	27	29	+19%

* Total households on sites – may be larger than the number of pitches

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Epping Forest**Table 14.22 Estimate of the need for permanent / residential site pitches, 2008-2013**

1) Current occupied authorised residential site pitches	65.0
<i>Current residential supply</i>	
2) Number of unused residential pitches available	0.0
3) Number of existing pitches expected to become vacant through mortality	1.3
4) Number of households on sites expected to leave area in next 5 years	0.4
5) Number of households on sites expected to move into housing in next 5 years	1.8
6) Residential pitches planned to be built or to be brought back into use 2008-2013	0.0
7) Additional supply generated by movement within the stock	13.4
Total Supply	16.8
<i>Current residential need from sites*</i>	
8) Households sharing pitches causing overcrowding	16.0
9) Existing households on pitches moving and requiring pitches in the area	4.2
10) Existing households on unauthorised sites requiring pitches in the area	7.7
11) Existing households on overcrowded pitches requiring pitches in the area	9.2
12) New households forming on sites requiring pitches	8.8
13) Households expected to arrive from elsewhere	0.5
Total gross requirement	46.5
<i>Current residential need from housing</i>	
14) Existing households in housing moving and requiring pitches in the area	1.6
15) Households in overcrowded housing requiring pitches in the area	0.5
16) Households in housing requiring pitches	0.6
Total Need	2.7
<i>Balance of need and supply</i>	
Total additional pitch requirement**	32.4
Annualised additional pitch requirement	6.5

* Please note that a household cannot be counted as being in more than one of these categories, except where a household both lives on an unauthorised pitch and containing a newly forming household needing to move to independent accommodation.

** Numbers in table may not add exactly due to rounding errors; the final figures are calculated before rounding takes place.

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Table 14.23 Distribution of Gypsies and Travellers (2008 – 2021)

	Base: 2008*	2013	2021	Change
Housing units	11	14	14	+31%
Authorised pitches	81	97	108	+33%
Unauthorised pitches	9	0	0	-100%
Total	101	111	122	21.3%

* Total households on sites – may be larger than the number of pitches

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Harlow**Table 14.24 Estimate of the need for permanent / residential site pitches, 2008-2013**

1) Current occupied authorised residential site pitches	36.0
<i>Current residential supply</i>	
2) Number of unused residential pitches available	0.0
3) Number of existing pitches expected to become vacant through mortality	0.7
4) Number of households on sites expected to leave area in next 5 years	0.2
5) Number of households on sites expected to move into housing in next 5 years	1.0
6) Residential pitches planned to be built or to be brought back into use 2008-2013	0.0
7) Additional supply generated by movement within the stock	7.3
Total Supply	9.2
<i>Current residential need from sites*</i>	
8) Households sharing pitches causing overcrowding	8.9
9) Existing households on pitches moving and requiring pitches in the area	2.3
10) Existing households on unauthorised sites requiring pitches in the area	0.0
11) Existing households on overcrowded pitches requiring pitches in the area	5.1
12) New households forming on sites requiring pitches	4.3
13) Households expected to arrive from elsewhere	0.2
Total gross requirement	20.7
<i>Current residential need from housing</i>	
14) Existing households in housing moving and requiring pitches in the area	1.0
15) Households in overcrowded housing requiring pitches in the area	0.3
16) Households in housing requiring pitches	0.4
Total Need	1.7
<i>Balance of need and supply</i>	
Total additional pitch requirement**	13.2
Annualised additional pitch requirement	2.6

* Please note that a household cannot be counted as being in more than one of these categories, except where a household both lives on an unauthorised pitch and containing a newly forming household needing to move to independent accommodation.

** Numbers in table may not add exactly due to rounding errors; the final figures are calculated before rounding takes place.

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Table 14.25 Distribution of Gypsies and Travellers (2008 – 2021)

	Base: 2008*	2013	2021	Change
Housing units	7	8	7	+4%
Authorised pitches	45	49	55	+22%
Unauthorised pitches	0	0	0	N/A
Total	52	57	62	+19%

* Total households on sites – may be larger than the number of pitches

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Maldon**Table 14.26 Estimate of the need for permanent / residential site pitches, 2008-2013**

1) Current occupied authorised residential site pitches	52.0
<i>Current residential supply</i>	
2) Number of unused residential pitches available	8.0
3) Number of existing pitches expected to become vacant through mortality	1.0
4) Number of households on sites expected to leave area in next 5 years	0.3
5) Number of households on sites expected to move into housing in next 5 years	1.4
6) Residential pitches planned to be built or to be brought back into use 2008-2013	0.0
7) Additional supply generated by movement within the stock	10.6
Total Supply	21.3
<i>Current residential need from sites*</i>	
8) Households sharing pitches causing overcrowding	12.8
9) Existing households on pitches moving and requiring pitches in the area	3.3
10) Existing households on unauthorised sites requiring pitches in the area	0.0
11) Existing households on overcrowded pitches requiring pitches in the area	7.3
12) New households forming on sites requiring pitches	6.2
13) Households expected to arrive from elsewhere	0.3
Total gross requirement	29.9
<i>Current residential need from housing</i>	
14) Existing households in housing moving and requiring pitches in the area	0.7
15) Households in overcrowded housing requiring pitches in the area	0.2
16) Households in housing requiring pitches	0.3
Total Need	1.2
<i>Balance of need and supply</i>	
Total additional pitch requirement**	9.8
Annualised additional pitch requirement	1.8

* Please note that a household cannot be counted as being in more than one of these categories, except where a household both lives on an unauthorised pitch and containing a newly forming household needing to move to independent accommodation.

** Numbers in table may not add exactly due to rounding errors; the final figures are calculated before rounding takes place.

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Table 14.27 Distribution of Gypsies and Travellers (2008 – 2021)

	Base: 2008*	2013	2021	Change
Housing units	5	7	6	+22%
Authorised pitches	65	70	77	+19%
Unauthorised pitches	0	0	0	-100%
<i>Total</i>	<i>70</i>	<i>76</i>	<i>83</i>	<i>+19%</i>

* Total households on sites – may be larger than the number of pitches

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Rochford

Table 14.28 Estimate of the need for permanent / residential site pitches, 2008-2013

1) Current occupied authorised residential site pitches	6.0
<i>Current residential supply</i>	
2) Number of unused residential pitches available	0.0
3) Number of existing pitches expected to become vacant through mortality	0.1
4) Number of households on sites expected to leave area in next 5 years	0.0
5) Number of households on sites expected to move into housing in next 5 years	0.2
6) Residential pitches planned to be built or to be brought back into use 2008-2013	0.0
7) Additional supply generated by movement within the stock	1.3
Total Supply	1.6
<i>Current residential need from sites*</i>	
8) Households sharing pitches causing overcrowding	1.5
9) Existing households on pitches moving and requiring pitches in the area	0.4
10) Existing households on unauthorised sites requiring pitches in the area	6.9
11) Existing households on overcrowded pitches requiring pitches in the area	0.8
12) New households forming on sites requiring pitches	1.7
13) Households expected to arrive from elsewhere	0.2
Total gross requirement	11.5
<i>Current residential need from housing</i>	
14) Existing households in housing moving and requiring pitches in the area	1.0
15) Households in overcrowded housing requiring pitches in the area	0.3
16) Households in housing requiring pitches	0.4
Total Need	1.7
<i>Balance of need and supply</i>	
Total additional pitch requirement**	11.7
Annualised additional pitch requirement	2.3

* Please note that a household cannot be counted as being in more than one of these categories, except where a household both lives on an unauthorised pitch and containing a newly forming household needing to move to independent accommodation.

** Numbers in table may not add exactly due to rounding errors; the final figures are calculated before rounding takes place.

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Table 14.29 Distribution of Gypsies and Travellers (2008 – 2021)

	Base: 2008*	2013	2021	Change
Housing units	7	7	6	-7%
Authorised pitches	7	18	20	+166%
Unauthorised pitches	8	0	0	-100%
Total	22	25	26	+17%

* Total households on sites – may be larger than the number of pitches

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Southend-on-Sea**Table 14.30 Estimate of the need for permanent / residential site pitches, 2008-2013**

1) Current occupied authorised residential site pitches	0.0
<i>Current residential supply</i>	
2) Number of unused residential pitches available	0.0
3) Number of existing pitches expected to become vacant through mortality	0.0
4) Number of households on sites expected to leave area in next 5 years	0.0
5) Number of households on sites expected to move into housing in next 5 years	0.0
6) Residential pitches planned to be built or to be brought back into use 2008-2013	0.0
7) Additional supply generated by movement within the stock	0.0
Total Supply	0.0
<i>Current residential need from sites*</i>	
8) Households sharing pitches causing overcrowding	0.0
9) Existing households on pitches moving and requiring pitches in the area	0.0
10) Existing households on unauthorised sites requiring pitches in the area	0.0
11) Existing households on overcrowded pitches requiring pitches in the area	0.0
12) New households forming on sites requiring pitches	0.0
13) Households expected to arrive from elsewhere	0.4
Total gross requirement	0.4
<i>Current residential need from housing</i>	
14) Existing households in housing moving and requiring pitches in the area	11.5
15) Households in overcrowded housing requiring pitches in the area	3.4
16) Households in housing requiring pitches	4.1
Total Need	19.0
<i>Balance of need and supply</i>	
Total additional pitch requirement**	19.4
Annualised additional pitch requirement	3.9

* Please note that a household cannot be counted as being in more than one of these categories, except where a household both lives on an unauthorised pitch and containing a newly forming household needing to move to independent accommodation.

** Numbers in table may not add exactly due to rounding errors; the final figures are calculated before rounding takes place.

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Table 14.31 Distribution of Gypsies and Travellers (2008 – 2021)

	Base: 2008*	2013	2021	Change
Housing units	77	66	71	-8%
Authorised pitches	0	19	25	N/A
Unauthorised pitches	0	0	0	N/A
Total	77	86	97	+25%

* Total households on sites – may be larger than the number of pitches

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Tending

Table 14.32 Estimate of the need for permanent / residential site pitches, 2008-2013

1) Current occupied authorised residential site pitches	3.0
<i>Current residential supply</i>	
2) Number of unused residential pitches available	0.0
3) Number of existing pitches expected to become vacant through mortality	0.1
4) Number of households on sites expected to leave area in next 5 years	0.0
5) Number of households on sites expected to move into housing in next 5 years	0.1
6) Residential pitches planned to be built or to be brought back into use 2008-2013	0.0
7) Additional supply generated by movement within the stock	0.6
Total Supply	0.8
<i>Current residential need from sites*</i>	
8) Households sharing pitches causing overcrowding	0.7
9) Existing households on pitches moving and requiring pitches in the area	0.2
10) Existing households on unauthorised sites requiring pitches in the area	0.9
11) Existing households on overcrowded pitches requiring pitches in the area	0.4
12) New households forming on sites requiring pitches	0.5
13) Households expected to arrive from elsewhere	0.1
Total gross requirement	2.8
<i>Current residential need from housing</i>	
14) Existing households in housing moving and requiring pitches in the area	1.9
15) Households in overcrowded housing requiring pitches in the area	0.6
16) Households in housing requiring pitches	0.7
Total Need	3.2
<i>Balance of need and supply</i>	
Total additional pitch requirement**	5.2
Annualised additional pitch requirement	1.0

* Please note that a household cannot be counted as being in more than one of these categories, except where a household both lives on an unauthorised pitch and containing a newly forming household needing to move to independent accommodation.

** Numbers in table may not add exactly due to rounding errors; the final figures are calculated before rounding takes place.

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Table 14.33 Distribution of Gypsies and Travellers (2008 – 2021)

	Base: 2008*	2013	2021	Change
Housing	13	11	11	-15%
Authorised sites	4	8	10	+161%
Unauthorised sites	1	0	0	-100%
Total	18	20	21	18.9%

* Total households on sites – may be larger than the number of pitches

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Uttlesford

Table 14.34 Estimate of the need for permanent / residential site pitches, 2008-2013

1) Current occupied authorised residential site pitches	49.0
<i>Current residential supply</i>	
2) Number of unused residential pitches available	0.0
3) Number of existing pitches expected to become vacant through mortality	1.0
4) Number of households on sites expected to leave area in next 5 years	0.3
5) Number of households on sites expected to move into housing in next 5 years	1.3
6) Residential pitches planned to be built or to be brought back into use 2008-2013	0.0
7) Additional supply generated by movement within the stock	10.0
Total Supply	12.6
<i>Current residential need from sites*</i>	
8) Households sharing pitches causing overcrowding	12.1
9) Existing households on pitches moving and requiring pitches in the area	3.1
10) Existing households on unauthorised sites requiring pitches in the area	0.0
11) Existing households on overcrowded pitches requiring pitches in the area	6.9
12) New households forming on sites requiring pitches	5.8
13) Households expected to arrive from elsewhere	0.3
Total gross requirement	28.2
<i>Current residential need from housing</i>	
14) Existing households in housing moving and requiring pitches in the area	0.9
15) Households in overcrowded housing requiring pitches in the area	0.3
16) Households in housing requiring pitches	0.3
Total Need	1.5
<i>Balance of need and supply</i>	
Total additional pitch requirement**	17.1
Annualised additional pitch requirement	3.4

* Please note that a household cannot be counted as being in more than one of these categories, except where a household both lives on an unauthorised pitch and containing a newly forming household needing to move to independent accommodation.

** Numbers in table may not add exactly due to rounding errors; the final figures are calculated before rounding takes place.

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Table 14.35 Distribution of Gypsies and Travellers (2008 – 2021)

	Base: 2008*	2013	2021	Change
Housing	6	7	7	+17%
Authorised sites	61	66	73	+20%
Unauthorised sites	0	0	0	N/A
<i>Total</i>	67	73	80	+20%

* Total households on sites – may be larger than the number of pitches

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Requirement for short stay sites

14.33 In addition to permanent residential pitches, in order for provision to be complete short stay sites need to be considered. Many Gypsies and Travellers in the survey described short term travelling as part of their culture, way of life or livelihood. Stakeholders also suggested that they were required for Essex Gypsy and Traveller families who did not want to settle in one location and move to a residential site.

14.34 The questionnaire considered two possible uses of such sites; for travelling by families already living in the area, and for family or friends to visit those living on permanent pitches. There is also the possibility of households without family ties visiting the area temporarily; the survey however did not succeed in locating any such households, which suggests that their numbers are quite small.

14.35 The results obtained from the questionnaire, weighted up to represent all Gypsy and Traveller households in Essex, are shown below. They have included a vacancy rate of 10%, because the level of travelling will vary throughout the year; for example families might be more likely to travel during school holiday periods. Also included is a growth rate over the next five years, equivalent to the estimated growth rate on residential pitches. This is based on the assumption that as the residential population grows, so will the number who will need to make use of short stay sites. For growth beyond 2013, a growth rate of 11.9% is applied for the eight years between to 2021 (again, this is the same as for residential pitches). This gives a total requirement of 36 short stay sites over the study period.

Table 14.36 Requirement for short stay pitches

Households who state that their family would use a local short stay site in order to visit them	number	171.6
Allowing for an average (total) travelling time of 1 month per year within Essex	short stay pitches	14.3
Households who would use short stay sites in Essex when travelling	Number	146.6
Allowing for an average (total) travelling time of 1 month per year within Essex	short stay pitches	12.2
Total short stay pitches required at any one time		26.5
Allowance for a 10% vacancy rate		2.7
Growth 2008-2013 (10.6%)		2.8
Total short stay pitches required in Essex at 2008-13		32.0
Growth 2013-2021 (11.9%)		3.8
Total short stay pitch requirement, 2008-2021		35.8

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

14.36 The next stage is to distribute the total across Essex. Ordinarily we would refer to the pattern of unauthorised encampments and assume those with higher levels require more transit provision and apportion the total accordingly. Given that so few unauthorised encampments show up in secondary data in Essex, we have instead based the distribution on each district's size, so if one accounts for 5% of the total Essex land mass, it receives 5% of the short stay requirement. The results are shown for each district and borough in Essex in the table below.

Table 14.37 Requirements for short stay sites, 2013-2021			
District	Requirement 2008-13	Requirement 2013-21	Total requirement 2008-2021
Basildon	1	-	1
Braintree	5	1	6
Brentwood	1	-	1
Castle Point	-	-	-
Chelmsford	3	-	3
Colchester	3	-	3
Epping Forest	3	-	3
Harlow	-	-	-
Maldon	4	1	5
Rochford	2	-	2
Southend-on-Sea	-	-	-
Tendring	4	1	5
Uttlesford	6	1	7
Total	32	4	36

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

14.37 In practical terms however it makes little sense in providing short stay pitches on a district basis when numbers are so small. It would be more cost-effective and more appropriate for meeting Gypsies' and Travellers' needs if fewer but larger short stay sites were provided across Essex, close to major transport routes. It should also be remembered that Gypsies and Travellers sometimes travel in large groups, which would also make it more practical for neighbouring authorities to provide a single larger site. The following table shows how the need is distributed across the East of England housing investment sub-regions.⁴⁶ Half of the need over the next five years is required in Haven Gateway in the East of Essex, with only a small amount in the Thames Gateway districts.

⁴⁶ East of England Regional Assembly, *Regional Housing Strategy for the East of England, 2005-2010*, 2005.

Table 14.38 Summary of Gypsy and Traveller net accommodation needs			
Sub-region	Requirement 2008-13	Requirement 2013-21	Total Requirement 2008-2021
Thames Gateway ⁴⁷	3	-	3
London Commuter Belt ⁴⁸	13	1	14
Haven Gateway ⁴⁹	16	3	19
Total	32	4	36

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Summary

14.38 The following table summarises the number of residential and short stay sites required. It shows that, in addition the 33 new pitches being planned, a further 425 residential pitches are needed by 2021, and 36 short stay pitches.

Table 14.39 Summary of Gypsy and Traveller net accommodation needs		
Period	Residential pitches	Short stay pitches
Total 2008-13	310	32
Total 2013-21	95	4
Total 2008-2021	405	36

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

⁴⁷ Basildon, Castle Point, Rochford, Southend-on-Sea.

⁴⁸ Brentwood, Chelmsford, Epping Forest, Harlow, Uttlesford

⁴⁹ Braintree, Colchester, Tendring.

15. Travelling Showpeople accommodation need

Introduction

- 15.1 This chapter seeks to quantify the level of need for the provision of new accommodation for Travelling Showpeople within the study area, based on the survey data, which included 37 families living on yards and in housing. Although the sample is small, given that there are only 54 Travelling Showpeople families living in the study area, it is sufficient to allow a reasonably accurate estimation of need.
- 15.2 It is important to note that multiple families can live on the same yard, often on their own 'plot', demarcated from the rest of the yard. As with Gypsies and Travellers, we have based our assessment on each household requiring a plot.

Requirement for plots, 2008-2013: summary

- 15.3 The need for plots in the study area is assessed using the same basis as for Gypsies and Travellers, although currently no guidance exists for Travelling Showpeople need. The table below summarises the results, while the subsequent section contains explanations of the sourcing and calculation of the figures for each step. As can be seen, the overall need is for 19 plots over the next five years.

Table 15.1 Estimate of the need for Travelling Showpeople plots, 2008-2013

1) Current occupied plots	54.0
Current supply	
2) Number of unused plots available	0.0
3) Number of existing plots expected to become vacant through mortality	0.2
4) Number of households on plots expected to leave area	1.6
5) Number of households on plots expected to move into housing	0.7
6) Yards planned to be built or to be brought back into use	0.0
7) Additional supply generated by movement within the stock	8.5
Total supply	11.0
Current requirement: from yards	
8) Existing households on yards moving and requiring yards in the area**	6.7
9) Existing households on unauthorised sites requiring yards in the area	0.0
10) Existing households in overcrowded yards requiring yards in the area*	2.8
11) New households forming on yards requiring yards	5.0
12) Total households expected to arrive from elsewhere requiring yards	2.0
Total gross requirement	16.4
Current requirement: from housing	
13) Existing households in housing moving and requiring yards in the area**	2.7
14) Existing households in overcrowded housing requiring yards in the area*	0.0
15) New households forming in housing requiring yards	0.8
Total gross requirement	3.5
Total plot requirement	
Balance of requirement and supply	8.9
Adjoining plots required for storage of equipment	10.0
Annualised additional yard requirement	18.9

* Excluding those also containing an emerging household

** Excluding those also overcrowded

NB. Numbers in table may not add exactly due to rounding errors; the final figures are calculated before rounding takes place

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Need calculation: 2008-2013

Stage 1: Current supply

15.4 All the yards surveyed were fully occupied so there are no vacant plots. We have made small allowances for mortality, families moving into housing, and moving out of Essex. The main element of supply is generated from movement within the stock. This is based on the assumption that as new plots come forward, families who move into the new accommodation will free up space for another family to take.

Stage 2: Current requirement from yards

- 15.5 The requirement for plots is made of five elements. The first is from families who say they intend to move to another yard in Essex (e.g. through lack of space to store equipment). There are no plots on yards without planning permission, so the requirement from unauthorised yards is zero. Overcrowding does however create a requirement. It was assumed that any family currently living on an overcrowded plot would require an additional plot. Overcrowding was according to the criteria shown in the table below.

Table 15.2 Criteria for overcrowding**HOUSEHOLDS CONSIDERED TO BE OVERCROWDED MUST:**

Consider themselves to have insufficient space when asked

AND FULFIL AT LEAST ONE OF THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

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

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

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

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

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

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

- 15.6 As discussed in Chapter 13, more than half (52%) of participants considered themselves not to have enough space for their family; however, in the case of Travelling Showpeople the issue of overcrowding is complicated by differentiating between overcrowding in terms of essential living space, and overcrowding in terms of a lack of space impeding the commercial aims of the business.
- 15.7 Reasons not considered to be 'overcrowding' in the strictest sense might include the commercial goal of storage of all rides and equipment on one yard or having space for possible future purchases, the desire to unite related families currently living separately, or a household wanting to allocate space on an adjacent plot for future generations.
- 15.8 Using the extended criteria shown above, the number of families considered to be living on currently overcrowded plots was 22% (12 families). From this figure is deducted those who are counted elsewhere as a newly forming family, or who said they were likely to leave Essex. This gives a total requirement from overcrowding of 2.8.
- 15.9 It is estimated that 14 plots contain new forming families (those who will require their own separate accommodation). Again, deductions are made, for those who may move off a yard or marry other Travelling Showpeople. This gives a requirement for five plots.

15.10 Finally we have made an allowance for in-migration to Essex of new Travelling Showpeople families. This equates to two families (the same as those expected to leave), giving a total requirement from Travelling Showpeople currently on yards of 16 plots.

Stage 3: Current requirement from housing

15.11 There is also Travelling Showpeople living in housing in Essex. The survey found that in some for these cases it was due to a lack of space on existing yards, so we have made a small allowance for this in the requirement for plots, equivalent to four plots.

Adjustment to balance of supply and demand

15.12 The balance of the supply and demand gives a need for 8.9 plots. However the survey found that one of the pressures on space on Travelling Showpeople’s yards is for storing equipment and fairground machinery. We have therefore made an adjustment based on the assumption that some families would make use of any neighbouring plots that are vacated to store their equipment. We have estimated that 0.5 plots would be required per family reporting a space shortage in the survey. An equivalent of 20 families in the survey said they lacked space for equipment, meaning an additional ten plots has been added to the balance of supply and demand. The total additional requirement is therefore 19 plots.

Requirement for plots, 2013-2021: summary

15.13 Looking further into the future only natural increase, mortality, and movement into and out of the Essex study area are taken into account. Since movement within the stock is largely neutral in terms of accommodation released, this is not taken into account. The base figures for this calculation are shown below.

Table 15.3 Base figures as at 2013, assuming all need is met for 2008-2013			
	2008 base	Change 2008-2013	2013 base
Households	54	+ 19	73

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

15.14 Based on new households requiring housing in the years 2008-2012 (excluding those needing to move ‘now’, suggesting a new household that may have been suppressed by a lack of housing) it is estimated that there will be a rate of natural increase in households of 16.5% over the first five years (2008-2013) in Essex for Travelling Showpeople, equating to 3.30% per year. It is suggested that this rate is likely to continue through 2013-2018.

15.15 Mortality rates are also unlikely to change significantly for 2013-2018, although in practice the released plots for the Travelling Showpeople population remains zero. Permanent movement into and out of the County is also assumed to remain at zero or very close to zero as in 2008-2013.

Table 15.4 Estimate of the need for plots, 2013-2021	
<i>Plots as at 2013</i>	
1) Plots occupied at 2013	73.0
<i>Supply of plots</i>	
2) Plots expected to become vacant due to mortality 2013-2018	0.3
3) Number of households on plots expected to move out of County 2014-2021	1.9
4) Number of households on plots expected to move into housing	0.0
5) Additional supply generated by movement within the stock	11.7
Total supply	13.9
<i>Current residential requirement: from plots</i>	
6) Existing households on plots moving and requiring plots in the area	11.7
7) New households forming on sites requiring plots	7.5
8) Total households expected to arrive from elsewhere requiring plots	2.0
Total gross requirement	21.2
<i>Current residential requirement: from housing</i>	
9) Existing households in housing moving and requiring plots in the area	0.0
10) Existing households forming in housing requiring plots	0.0
Total gross requirement	0.8
<i>Balance of requirement and supply</i>	
Total additional pitch requirement	8.1
Annualised additional pitch requirement	1.0

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Summary: District breakdown, 2008-2021

15.16 The following table shows how the total requirements of 27 plots are distributed across council areas in Essex. The largest requirements are in Basildon and Chelmsford, the two areas with the largest number of Travelling Showpeople in 2008.

Table 15.5 Additional travelling show people plot requirements for Essex study area, 2008-2021

Area	Total at 2008	Req'mt 2008-2013	Total at 2013	Req'mt 2013-2021	Total at 2021	Total Req'mt 2008-2021
Basildon	16	6	22	2	24	8
Braintree	3	1	4	0	4	1
Brentwood	0	0	0	0	0	0
Castle Point	0	1	1	0	1	1
Chelmsford	22	7	29	3	32	10
Colchester	0	0	0	0	0	0
Epping Forest	9	3	12	1	13	4
Harlow	0	0	0	0	0	0
Maldon	2	1	3	0	3	1
Rochford	0	0	0	0	0	0
Southend	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tendring	0	1	1	1	2	2
Uttlesford	2	1	3	1	4	2
<i>Essex total</i>	54	19	73	8	81	27

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

15.17 As with the assessment for Gypsy and Traveller residential pitches, the distribution is based on need where it arises. As the RSS Single Issue Review makes clear, there is potential for the need to be distributed among districts. It may make sense for housing sub-regions to provide need jointly, given that Travelling Showpeople in the survey expressed flexibility about where in Essex they could live.

16. Conclusions on the evidence

Introduction

16.1 This final chapter of the Essex GTAA summarises the main findings relating to accommodation need and draws conclusions on how this can best be met by Essex local authorities. The main source is the two quantitative analysis Chapters 14 (on Gypsies and Travellers) and 15 (on Travelling Showpeople).

Summary of accommodation need

16.2 Summarising from the two preceding chapters the results of the accommodation assessment are as follows.

Table 16.1 Summary of requirements			
Period	Gypsies and Travellers		Travelling Showpeople
	Residential pitches	Short stay pitches	Plots
Total 2008-13	310	32	19
Total 2013-21	95	4	8
Total 2008-2021 ⁵⁰	405	36	27

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

16.3 This represents a substantial increase in residential pitch requirements – an increase of 68% on current authorised provision in the next five years and 90% to 2021. Additionally around 36 short stay pitches are required, where none currently exist. A large increase is also required in plots for Travelling Showpeople – 35% over the next five years and 50% by 2021. The five year total of 310 Gypsy and Traveller pitches is close to the figure proposed in the Government response to the RSS Review; the distribution found in this assessment is quite different however, as explained below.

16.4 The issue of residential pitch provision is significantly affected by the large number of unauthorised developments in Essex. Almost half of the total Essex requirement is comprised of providing authorised pitches for families on unauthorised developments, while in Basildon it accounts for 60% of the pitch requirement. The breakdowns in Chapter 14 show how much pitch requirements would fall should unauthorised developments be retrospectively granted planning permission.

⁵⁰ Figures presented here are calculated on 5 year time span similar to the RSS. RSS figures begin 2006-2011, whilst Fordham Research begins 2008-2013. The figure 2008-2021 is adjusted to assist with local planning strategy timeframes.

16.5 It is unlikely however that evictions would have the same effect in reducing need. Chapter 10 explained how families on unauthorised developments had often lived for several years on the site and had developed strong employment and family links to the local area. Given the lack of vacant pitches on council sites, it seems highly unlikely that evictions would mean this element of need would disappear altogether, but re-emerge on other unauthorised sites either in the same district or elsewhere in Essex.

Tenure of new provision

16.6 When it comes to providing new sites only 17% of survey respondents said they would be able to afford land in Essex to develop as a site themselves. This would suggest that most provision would need to be in the social rented sector. However it is difficult to establish reliable information on financial matters in Gypsy and Traveller surveys. The reality in Essex has been a steady increase in the number of unauthorised developments as Gypsies and Travellers buy up land for private sites.

16.7 Also the preference expressed in the survey for smaller, family-sized sites would be more easily facilitated through the private rather than social rented sector. We therefore recommend that in the first instance local authorities try and meet the additional need through encouraging small, owner-occupied developments on land that is suitable for development. This can be done through identifying appropriate sites in LPDs and providing clear guidelines about how planning permission can be obtained.

16.8 For Travelling Showpeople, the issue is different from other Gypsies and Travellers as their yards are privately provided. The survey found that the shortage of available space was related to difficulties in obtaining planning permission for new land or extensions on existing yards. Local planning authorities should offer guidance to Travelling Showpeople on the type of land which is suitable under current planning policy and identify specific sites in future policies. They should also discuss with individual Travelling Showpeople families whether existing yards can be expanded or whether new ones are needed.

Alternative distributions of need

16.9 Following Circular 01/2006, we have distributed pitch requirements on the principal of meeting need where it arises. This means that areas with larger populations have larger pitch requirements to meet. The Circular makes clear that it is for the regional planning body to decide on where need should be met and through an RSS redistribute the requirements identified in the GTAA.

16.10 As discussed in Chapter 3, the Revision to the RSS uses a formula to estimate need in Essex over five years, adjusted to ensure that each district provides a minimum of 15 pitches.

- 16.11 The table below shows the GTAA and RSS figures. The totals are quite similar (310 additional pitches in the GTAA; 322 in the RSS Review). However, the distribution is quite different. The minimum of 15 pitches in each district given in the RSS Review means that seven districts have a higher requirement than in the GTAA, while the requirement for Basildon is less than half than the GTAA due to its need being redistributed among districts who presently provide fewer authorised pitches.
- 16.12 The table also presents an alternative scenario. This sees need arising from growth and overcrowding on existing authorised sites kept in the same district, while that arising from unauthorised sites and housing is distributed evenly. Again, Basildon's requirement is more than halved, while for most districts this means a higher pitch requirement.

Table 16.2 Alternative distribution of pitch requirements, 2008-13			
Area	Essex GTAA	RSS	Alternative scenario (authorised growth kept)
Basildon	+148*	+62	+67*
Braintree	+9*	+25	+2*
Brentwood	+24*	+15	+26*
Castle Point	+3	+15	+15
Chelmsford	+23*	+46	+32*
Colchester	-6†*	+25	+4*
Epping Forest	+32	+34	+37
Harlow	+13	+15	+26
Maldon	+10*	+15	+23*
Rochford	+12	+15	+18
Southend	+19	+15	+15
Tendring	+5	+15	+16
Uttlesford	+17	+25	+30
Essex total	+310*	+327	+310*

* Figure excludes currently planned new pitches, and effect of any existing vacant pitches being brought back into use.

† Negative figure indicates estimated need will be met if all planned pitches are built.

NB: Totals may not equal sum of districts' figures due to rounding

Source: Essex GTAA 2008 - Fordham Research

Conclusion on accommodation need

- 16.13 Regardless of how the requirement is distributed, all districts (with the exception of those who have new sites planned already) will need to provide additional residential pitches for Gypsies and Travellers. As Chapter 4 described, the amount of authorised provision has increased in Essex in recent years, however it has not kept pace with new family growth, nor been sufficient to alleviate overcrowding and reduce the number of unauthorised developments. If all the identified need is to be met, up to 27 new sites are required in Essex, a land-take of 6.5 hectares.⁵¹ The amount will of course be reduced if any unauthorised developments are granted planning permission.
- 16.14 In terms of location, survey and focus group participants (see Appendix 1) stressed the importance of local ties and living with their family close by. While there was a preference for staying in the same district, many said they would be prepared to move in Essex if they could stay living with their family on a suitable site. They also emphasised the importance of well designed and maintained sites, or a preference for expanding existing sites. The precise location (along with design and facilities) will, however, need to be drawn up in consultation with Gypsies and Travellers to ensure the extra provision meets their needs. Government guidance on site design stresses the importance of access to services and the promotion of 'integrated co-existence' between the site and surrounding community.⁵² The health and safety implications of a new site's location should be considered in finding a balance between offering sites in good locations and the additional land costs this would entail. The settled community neighbouring the sites should also be involved in the consultation from an early stage. There may be scope for expanding existing sites to meet some of the need. However, as stated above, the survey found a preference for smaller sites which tend to be easier to manage.
- 16.15 The need assessment also identified a requirement for short stay sites. However given that the level of unauthorised encampments is very low in Essex, priority should be in bringing forward residential pitches for which there is a far greater and more urgent need. If short stay sites are provided before the shortfall in residential pitches is met, there is a risk that they will effectively be used as permanent/residential sites with all the ensuing management issues this would incur. Although short stay pitch requirements have been given for each district, it may be more cost-effective for districts to work together in meeting the need, e.g. by providing one short stay site in each of the three housing sub-regions.

⁵¹ Estimates based on each site having 12 pitches, and each pitch occupying 200m², including parking and storage space on the pitch, site roads and any incidental open space. This is the size used in the CLG RSS Review report, 2007.

⁵² CLG, *Draft Guidance on the design of sites for Gypsies and Travellers: a consultation paper*, May 2007.

16.16 A need is also present for an increase in Travelling Showpeople yards, equivalent to space for sixteen families. However the issue is different from other Gypsies and Travellers as the provision will be privately provided by Travelling Showpeople themselves. The survey found that the shortage of available space was related to difficulties in obtaining planning permission for new land or extensions on existing yards. Local planning authorities should offer guidance to Travelling Showpeople on the type of land which is suitable under current planning policy and identify specific sites in future policies. However the requirements of Travelling Showpeople can vary considerably, depending on family size and the type of equipment kept on a yard. More research may be required with individual Travelling Showpeople families to determine whether existing sites can be expanded or whether new sites are needed.

Summary

16.17 There is an overall shortfall over the next five years of some 310 additional residential pitches and 32 short stay sites for Gypsies and Travellers, and 19 plots on Travelling Showpeople yards. The large number of unauthorised developments that have been established in Essex in recent years suggests that much of the additional residential requirement can be met through new private sites, although social rented sites will also be needed. This would help meet the communities' preferences for living on smaller, self-owned sites. The policy process that follows this research should consider the information and support available to Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople to help them through the planning process to find suitable sites.

Glossary

Authorised site

A site with planning permission for use as a Gypsy and Traveller site. They can be either privately owned (often by a Gypsy or Traveller), leased or socially rented (owned by a council or Registered Social Landlord).

Average

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

Bedroom standard

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

Bricks and mortar accommodation

Permanent housing of the settled community, as distinguished from sites.

Caravan

Mobile living vehicle. Also referred to as a trailer.

Concealed household

A household that currently lives within another household but has a preference to live independently and is unable to access appropriate accommodation (on sites or in housing).

Doubling up

More than one household sharing a single pitch.

Eastern European Roma

Gypsies from Eastern Europe. Culturally distinct from English Gypsies but with some cultural and linguistic links, most no longer live in mobile accommodation. Their numbers have increased in the UK since the fall of Communism and the expansion of the European Union in 2004.

Gypsy

Member of one of the main groups of Gypsies and Travellers in Britain. In this report it is used to describe English (Romany) Gypsies, Scottish Travellers and Welsh Travellers. English Gypsies were recognised as an ethnic group in 1988.

Gypsy and Traveller

As defined for the purpose of the Housing Act 2004, in this report it includes all Gypsies, Irish Travellers, New Travellers, Travelling Showpeople, Eastern European Roma and other Travellers who adopt a nomadic or semi-nomadic life.

Household

A group of related people who live and/or travel together. It is assumed that each household would require one pitch to live on, containing up to three trailers. It is used as the basis for assessing accommodation requirements.

Irish Traveller

Member of one of the main groups of Gypsies and Travellers in Britain. Distinct from Gypsies but sharing a nomadic tradition, Irish Travellers were recognised as an ethnic group in England in 2000.

Mobile home

For legal purposes it is a caravan, but not normally capable of being moved by towing.

Net need

The difference between need and the expected supply of available pitches (e.g. from the re-letting of existing socially rented pitches or from new sites being built).

New Traveller

Members of the settled community who have chosen a nomadic or semi-nomadic lifestyle (formerly New Age Traveller).

Newly forming families

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

Overcrowding

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

Permanent / residential site

A site intended for long-stay use by residents. They have no maximum length of stay but often constraints on travelling away from the site.

Pitch

Area on a site developed for a household to live. On socially rented sites, the area let to a licensee or a tenant for stationing caravans and other vehicles.

Plot

Area on a yard for Travelling Showpeople to live. As well as dwelling units, Travelling Showpeople often keep their commercial equipment on a plot.

Primary data

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

Private rented pitches

Pitches on sites which are rented on a commercial basis to other Gypsies and Travellers. The actual pitches tend to be less clearly defined than on socially rented sites.

Secondary data

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

Settled community

Used to refer to non-Gypsies and Travellers who live in housing.

Short stay site

Also known as a transit site, intended for short-term use, with a maximum period of stay.

Site

An area of land laid out and used for Gypsy and Traveller caravans, which can be authorised (have planning permission) or unauthorised. They can be self-owned by a Gypsy and Traveller resident, or rented from a private or social landlord.

Socially rented site

A Gypsy and Traveller site owned by a council or Registered Social Landlord.

Tolerated

An unauthorised development or encampment may be tolerated by the local authority meaning that no enforcement action is currently being taken.

Trailer

Term commonly used by Gypsies and Travellers for a moveable caravan.

Travelling Showpeople

People who organise circuses and fairgrounds and who live on yards when not travelling between locations. Most Travelling Showpeople are members of the Showmen's Guild of Great Britain.

Unauthorised development

A site / land owned by Gypsies and Travellers, but without the appropriate planning permission to station caravans.

Unauthorised encampment

Where Gypsies and Travellers reside on land they do not own and without permission from the owners. The land can be public or privately owned.

Unauthorised site

Land occupied by Gypsies and Travellers without the appropriate planning or other permissions. The term includes both unauthorised development and unauthorised encampment.

Winter quarters

A site occupied by Travelling Showpeople, traditionally used when not travelling to provide fairs or circuses. Many now involve year-round occupation.

Utility block

A small permanent building on a pitch with bath/shower, WC, sink and (in some larger ones) space to eat and relax. Also known as an amenity block or shed.

Yard

In this report, term used for a site occupied by Travelling Showpeople. They are often rented by different families with clearly defined plots.

Appendix 1 Consultation focus groups

- A1.1 To further our understandings of Gypsy and Travellers living in Essex, a series of consultation events were held, one event took place in each of the three housing sub-regions in Essex, each in districts with large Gypsy and Traveller populations; Chelmsford, Basildon, and Maldon.
- A1.2 Consultation with Gypsy and Travellers about the current stock of sites and how the situation could be improved was held at locations in Chelmsford, Basildon, and Maldon. Initially it was hoped that through the focus groups it would be possible to understand the everyday experience of living on site. Although three sessions were arranged at community centres close to sites there was no attendance and the decision was made to visit several nearby sites, both authorised and unauthorised, and conduct focus groups there. The questions asked aimed to understand accommodation issues, community integration, and travelling patterns.
- A1.3 The fact that no Gypsy or Travellers turned up to the consultation sessions perhaps highlights tense relationships between Gypsy and Travellers and council projects, and a degree of weariness in taking part in another consultation event. With the example of Dale Farm, many people we approached were cautious to become involved in council work, while residents on other sites are cynical about what happens with the results of GTAAs; *“If you want anything done they just say “yeah yeah yeah”, and then you don’t hear anything from it”* this indicates that close consultation with Gypsy and Travellers about their needs would be recommended in the implementation of new sites across the County. This could also open up opportunities for rebuilding trust with the local authority and local Gypsy and Traveller communities.
- A1.4 As Government Guidance suggests:

*“Consultation with the local Gypsy and Traveller community is crucial in deciding how best to proceed with the overall layout of the site and to get full value from the investment in it. It is a key element in obtaining the trust and full support of the prospective residents at the very outset of the project”*⁵³

⁵³ Community and Local Government (2008) *Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites; good practice guide*, pg21.

A1.5 This consultation should overall aim to be a creative process which acknowledges the specific cultural needs and low literacy levels of Gypsy and Traveller communities, this is especially important as architects, designers, and local authority professionals will not have experience of living on a site. Ideally consultation should be conducted in partnership with representatives from the Gypsy and Traveller community and place emphasis upon verbal and visual aids for transferring information and verbal and visual modelling of sites and how they will function.⁵⁴

Accommodation

A1.6 Three main themes concerning accommodation needs and requirements were addressed through the research questions; location of sites, available facilities on sites and the potential relocating of Gypsies and Travellers to new improved sites.

A1.7 Location of sites was an important issue, many responses indicated that poor sites were not unusual and responses indicated that the quality and accommodation circumstances on sites can have knock on affects to the sense of pride and community of those living there. When asked about the location of current sites and where new sites were needed, concerns were raised about the shortage of sites in general and the overall practical location of sites in relation to industrial wastelands or to the settled community.

'None of our sites are in the right places, they are built on old rubbish tips, Basildon has the biggest need and the biggest population of Travellers in Essex.'

'I wouldn't say they are in the right or wrong place, I just know that there is not enough sites around here...no one wants to build them and no one wants to pass permission for our private sites.'

'[the site] is 4-5 miles to a shop, this site is no good for the elderly or disabled; it's too far out for them.'

'There needs to be more sites and more opportunities to make sites in appropriate places. The Hovefield site is situated next to a sewage farm and should be relocated.'

'Access to schools, the nearest primary school is two miles away; the nearest secondary school is four miles away and there are no footpaths'

⁵⁴ See further Communities and Local Government, *Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites: good practice guide*, 2008, and as practised in Learning from the Local; Newtown Neighbourhood Project, 2008, West Kent Housing Association.

A1.8 Access to sites and the location of sites are important issues facing local authorities; this is especially the case for those operating in areas with lots of protected green spaces. Current policy presented in the Secretary of State's revisions to the RSS Single Issue Review encourages local authorities to work together across counties in co-ordinated LDDs to ensure sufficient provisions are made in the area as a whole. The revised RSS Single Issue Review also suggests that where necessary, councils look into freeing up protected green spaces as an alternative to using unsuitable waste lands.

*'Local Development Documents should consider the need for rural exception sites and the alteration of Green Belt boundaries, where necessary to meet the required provision.'*⁵⁵

*'Sites should not be situated near refuse sites, industrial processes or other hazardous places, as this will obviously have a detrimental effect on the general health and wellbeing of the residents and pose particular safety risks for young children.'*⁵⁶

A1.9 From the responses collected it appears that inline with the survey, participants thought that the current number of sites is not enough to meet demand, and that existing sites can fail to adequately support the needs of those with mobility issues such as the elderly, disabled, children and those unable to drive. Through enabling easier access to the local community it is also anticipated that better relations between the settled community and the Gypsy and Traveller community could happen, as government guidance points out;

*'Easy access to local services, and to social contact with other residents in the community, should help deal with the myths and stereotypes which can cause community tensions and instead encourage a greater sense of community with shared interests.'*⁵⁷

A1.10 When asked about what facilities tenants would like to see on their sites, or how the ideal site would function, responses focused upon sites being run informally by tenants alongside general improvements being made to the standard and size of outbuildings.

'Most Romani Gypsies and Irish Travellers prefer to live on their own sites, run by themselves and owned by themselves, however there needs to be council sites for people who can't afford their own... existing sites that don't have planning permission should be given permission unless they are in a particularly bad situation. Green belt should not be used as a justification for with holding planning permission, as there is a crisis situation'

⁵⁵ Secretary of States Proposed changes to RSS for Gypsy and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the East of England, 2009, p 20.

⁵⁶ ibid

⁵⁷ Communities and Local Government; Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites good practice guide, 2008, pg 14.

'a site with my own people and us running it, not the council'

'I want to live in my trailer and just be me, live with my family. I don't want no houses.'

'I want to stay where I am, here at Dale Farm. I know they won't let us stay but we will keep fighting.'

'Pitches should have a dayroom with bath/shower and a kitchen with a dinning area or lounge. Pitches should also have an area where people can store items for their work such as tools or even scrap metal. Some people would like the option to have room to keep a horse and a dog. Perhaps communal area for horses might be workable in some places.'

A1.11 The desire to maintain autonomy was a strong theme in responses, as many respondents wanted to buy their own land and set up a small family pitch, independent of the council. Such ties should not be underestimated as in attempts to build new sites and form new communities, good relations between groups is one of the primary difficulties facing councils trying relocate sensitively. Greater involvement of Gypsy and Travellers in the building and the everyday running of sites would encourage a sense of community and a sense of shared place in sites and ensure that both councils and tenants get the best return upon invested monies.

A1.12 When asked about the possibility of moving to new sites which would offer improved facilities responses described how the overall standard of existing sites was seen as low and how people were reluctant to move to new areas.

'All sites should be the same good standards all over the country, and any council that has a site not fit for a human to live on it should be fined for such sites...like they do with houses...no landlord, not even the council could or would be allowed to rent out a rat infested property, if I pay rent and taxes I expect the same standards as everyone else.'

A1.13 Others though would be willing to move as long as they were able to remain with their families:

'I would live up to 20 miles from here (Dale Farm) and would only move with family.'

'I want to be with my family, and stay where they are or go...to me I want to be safe and know my children are safe and won't get bullied cause we are in a large group...I don't really want to move from here... (Dale Farm)'

'Every site should be in line with planning law and not next to rubbish dumps, motorways, sewage farms or other unsuitable areas.'

'We want to stop where we are (Dale Farm)'

A1.14 These responses suggest that whilst good quality sites are needed, there is a significant sense that a site which provides stability and a fixed place for families to bring up children and build strong relationships with each other and the local community is paramount. Family groups need to be kept together, and accommodated into medium-large sites if considering relocation from much larger sites such as Dale Farm. Relocation should also take into account ethnic diversity and preference e.g. Irish Travellers often prefer larger extended family sites whilst smaller sites are commonly requested by Roma Travellers.

Community

A1.15 Discussions focused upon how Gypsy and Travellers felt about integration with the settled community highlighted two major points which could be focused upon to improve cohesion and integration. Firstly it was felt that reactions from the settled community can be hostile towards Gypsy and Travellers and this is often perpetuated by local media coverage of sites and the behaviour of those who live on them. Secondly the relationship between the local authorities and Gypsy and Traveller communities would benefit from greater transparency to ensure trust through effective communication between groups.

'They [relationships with the settled community] are getting better, but they won't let us join the residents association'

'We've been chased all our lives - by the gavvers [police] and council.'

'Very little has changed for the Gypsy Traveller into race issues which taints everyone's perception in a negative way.'

A1.16 It appears that if local councils would like to see improved relations and better integration between the settled community and the Gypsy and Traveller settlements there needs to be a strong drive to improve public and media representations of Gypsy and Traveller communities. This could be accomplished through positive images and publications of the traveller culture working alongside the settled community i.e. through culture days or education/arts projects. It became clear throughout the research that Gypsy and Travellers were suspicious and held negative opinions of the work local authorities conducted, through better communication between these two groups it would be hoped to build a trust which would help inform local policy and make developments more efficient.

A1.17 When asked how the current situation with the settled community could be improved it became clear that the discrimination of the Gypsy and Traveller culture and the stigma attached to living on a site was problematic. In order to combat this, it was suggested that travellers have their own representation and the opportunity to build bridges between the settled community and other travelling groups.

“Stop all this council going to the newspapers making us look like animals, stop allowing these big meetings and councillors using us as cow fodder to gain votes.”

“Allow people to see us through their own eyes, not through the scandal of the newspaper...stop the witch hunts on our people”

“People look at you differently when you say Caravan Park, so no council should name their sites”

“The Gypsy Traveller community needs to be given the resources to change the situation and only then will relations improve. There needs to be bridge building between the Irish Travellers and Romanic community and also between settled communities and the GRT community. The initiative needs to be lead by the Gypsy and Traveller community and not people on their behalf, history proves that doesn't work.”

A1.18 Through working with both Gypsy and Traveller communities and the local settled community, councils could work towards removing common stereotypes which would also help to ease potential frictions with the settled community when establishing new sites in the County.

Travelling Patterns

A1.19 When asked about short stay sites, where and for whom they would be of most use to, responses showed that short stay sites would be welcomed and used by family, friends and those who travel for work. These sites should ideally be located close to every major town/city which would provide an ideal location for those who visit towns and cities seasonally such as Travelling Showpeople and account for the fact that a lot of work is frequently located in towns or cities.

‘My family travel all the time so they would use them and be happy to have them, I think all travellers would use them as it is there and a way of being able to travel again without having to be moved on by the police’

‘every major town and city across the country’

'make sure that councils don't build these to stop them from building real ones.'

- A1.20 By more local councils providing short stay sites Gypsy and Travellers would be encouraged to travel more, something important in retaining their culture and traditional lifestyle. However there was a little concern that monies would be put into providing short stay sites as apposed to transit sites, and councils should caution against this by outlining a strategic plan which demonstrates that both permanent and short stay sites would be provided for in any planned developments.
- A1.21 The needs of Gypsy and Travellers living in and around Essex stress that better quality sites in improved locations need to be sourced by the local authority, this also is in line with current Government policy. The number of sites needs to be increased to follow current guidelines set out by the EiP, however this process would benefit from close engagement and consultation with residents of new sites. Overall the process of implementing new sites would benefit from closer partnership working between Gypsy and Traveller groups, local authorities and the settled community to encourage better relations and representations of Gypsy and Traveller sites in the local community.

Appendix 2. Survey briefing note

FINDING OUT THE ACCOMMODATION NEEDS OF GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS IN ESSEX

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

MORE AND IMPROVED SITES

The government wants to increase the number of sites for Gypsies and Travellers and to improve the quality of



existing ones.

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



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

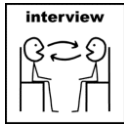


THE ASSESSMENT

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



THE INTERVIEWS



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

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

WHAT DO WE WANT TO FIND OUT?

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

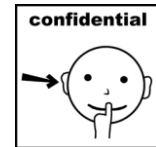
All this information will help the councils plan sites for the future and improve existing services.

WHY SHOULD YOU TAKE PART?

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



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



NEXT STEPS

Once the survey is finished, we'll prepare a report for the councils. This will explain the need for any additional sites in each area.



FURTHER INFORMATION If you'd like to find out more or are worried about anything; feel free to speak to us. Please call **Jamie Keddie** or **Sara Elias** on 020 7289 3988 or free-phone 0800 163 231.

Appendix 3. Survey questionnaire