Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment: Maidstone

Final Report

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About the Authors

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The Salford Housing & Urban Studies Unit is a dedicated multi-disciplinary research and consultancy unit providing a range of services relating to housing and urban management to public and private sector clients. The Unit brings together researchers drawn from a range of disciplines including: social policy, housing management, urban geography, environmental management, psychology, social care and social work.

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Particular thanks must, of course, go to the people who found the time to talk to us and answer our questions in a full, honest and patient manner. It is hoped that this report is able to accurately reflect their experiences and needs.

This report is based on research undertaken by the study team and the analysis and comment thereafter do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the research commissioners, or any participating stakeholders and agencies. The authors take responsibility for any inaccuracies or omissions in the report.

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Glossary

The following terms are used in this report and or are used in conjunction with planning for Gypsy, Traveller and Showpeople accommodation. As such these terms may need some clarification. In the case of those terms which are related to Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation and culture, it is noted that a number of these terms are often contested and debated. It is not the intention of the authors to present these terms as absolute definitions; rather, the explanations provided are those the authors used in this assessment as their frames of reference.

Term	Explanation
Amenity block/shed	On most residential Gypsy/Travellers sites these are buildings where basic plumbing amenities (bath/shower, WC and sink) are provided at the rate of one building per pitch.
Authorised social site	An authorised site owned by either the local authority or a Registered Housing Provider.
Authorised Private site	An authorised site owned by a private individual (who may or may not be a Gypsy or a Traveller). These sites can be owner-occupied, rented or a mixture of owner-occupied and rented pitches.
Bricks and mortar	Permanent mainstream housing.
Caravan	Mobile living vehicle used by Gypsies and Travellers. Also referred to as trailers.
Caravan Count	Bi-annual count of Gypsy and Traveller caravans conducted every January and July by local authorities published by the CLG
Chalet	In the absence of a specific definition the term 'chalet' is used here to refer to single storey residential units which resemble mobile homes but can be dismantled.
Core Strategy	Key compulsory Development Plan Document in the Local Development Framework which sets out principles on which other Development Plan Documents are built.
Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG)	The main government department responsible for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation issues
Development Plan Documents (DPDs)	Documents which outline the key development goals of the Local Development Framework.
Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTAA)	The main document that identifies the accommodation requirements of Gypsies and Travellers.
Doubling-up	To share a pitch on an authorised site.
Gaujo/Gorger	Literal translation indicates someone who is not of the Romany Gypsy race. Romany word used mainly, but not exclusively, by Romany Gypsies to refer to members of the settled community/non-Gypsy/Travellers.
Green Belt	A policy or land use designation used to retain areas of largely undeveloped, wild, or agricultural land surrounding or neighbouring urban areas.
Gypsy	Members of Gypsy or Traveller communities. Usually used to describe Romany (English) Gypsies originating from India. This term is not acceptable to all Travellers.
Gypsies and Travellers (as used in this report)	Consistent with the Housing Act 2004, inclusive of: all Gypsies, Irish Travellers, New Travellers, Show People, Circus People and Gypsies and Travellers in bricks and mortar accommodation.

Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)	National housing and regeneration agency. Has been responsible for administering the Gypsy and Traveller Site Grant since 2009/10.
Local Plan/Local Development Framework (LDF)	A set of documents which a Local Planning Authority creates to describe their strategy for development and use of land in their area of authority.
Mobile home/Mobiles	Legally classified as a caravan but not usually moveable without dismantling or using a lorry.
Pitch/plot	Area of land on a site/development generally home to one licensee household. Can be varying sizes and have varying caravan occupancy levels. Often also referred to as a plot, particularly in relation to Travelling Showpeople. There is no agreed definition as to the size of a pitch.
Pulling-up	To park a trailer/caravan.
Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)	Previous planning approach across England. In July 2010 the government announced its decision to revoke RSSs.
Settled community/people	Reference to non-Travellers (those who live in houses).
Site	An authorised area of land on which Gypsies and Travellers are accommodated in trailers/chalets/ vehicles. Can contain one or multiple pitches.
Static caravan	Larger caravan than the 'tourer' type. Can be moved but only with the use of a large vehicle. Often referred to simply as a trailer.
Stopping place	Locations frequented by Gypsies and Travellers, usually for short periods of time.
Suppressed/concealed household	Households, living within other households, who are unable to set up separate family units and who are unable to access a place on an authorised site, or obtain or afford land to develop one.
Tourer	Term used by MBC to define a moveable caravan
Trailer	Term commonly used by Gypsies and Travellers to refer to a moveable caravan.
Transit site	Site intended for short stays. Such sites are usually permanent, but there is a limit on the length of time residents can stay.
Travelling Showpeople	Commonly referred to as Showmen, these are a group of occupational Travellers who work on travelling shows and fairs across the UK and abroad.
Unauthorised Development	This refers to a caravan/trailer or group of caravans/trailers on land owned (possibly developed) by Gypsies and Travellers without planning permission.
Unauthorised Encampment	Residing in caravans/trailers on private/public land without the landowner's permission (for example, at the side of the road, on a car park or on a piece of undeveloped land).
Yard	Term used by Travelling Showpeople to refer to a site.

Executive Summary

The Study

1. The Housing Act 2004 placed a duty upon local authorities to produce assessments of accommodation need for Gypsies and Travellers. In 2006, along with a number of neighbouring local authorities Maidstone Borough Council published Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTAA). This GTAA provided an overview of the accommodation and related needs and experiences of the Gypsy and Traveller population.

2. In September 2011 Maidstone Borough Council commissioned the Salford Housing & Urban Studies Unit (SHUSU) at the University of Salford to produce a Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment for the borough. The primary purpose of this report is to provide an evidence base to inform the future development of planning policies through the Local Development Framework. This report presents the projection of requirements for the following periods:

   - 2011 – 2016
   - 2016 – 2021
   - 2021 – 2026

3. The assessment was undertaken by conducting a review of the following data sources:

   - Previous assessments of need and information submitted through the previous regional planning process
   - The policy and guidance context
   - The bi-annual Caravan Count
   - Information from the local authority with regards to pitch provision and supply
   - Information from key stakeholders.
   - A survey of 115 Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople households currently residing in Maidstone borough.

4. On a base population of 262 households 97 resident households,[1] 37% of the estimated resident Gypsy and Traveller community across the Study Area. We believe that as the sample included a range of accommodation types and household circumstances we have no reason to believe that those households included in the survey are untypical from the total population in the area. Overall, we believe that the findings for the assessment are based on reliable information from accommodation types within the Study Area.

[1] Does not include households on unauthorised developments. Populations on unauthorised sites typically have precarious planning status; therefore including them would distort and possibly skew the size of the local population if they move or application is refused.

Local accommodation provision

5. There is no one source of information about the size of the Gypsy and Traveller population in the borough. Our best estimate is that there are at least 863 local Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople living in the borough. The population was found across a range of accommodation types:

- There are **2 socially rented sites** in the borough. These are managed by Kent County Council and together provide accommodation over 33 pitches.
- There are **65 authorised permanent private sites** in the borough. Together these accommodate approximately 237 caravans which equates to 139 pitches/households.
- There are **17 authorised private sites with temporary consent** in the borough. Together these accommodate approximately 74 caravans which equates to 43 pitches/households.
- There are **31 unauthorised developments** (land owned by Gypsies and Travellers but developed without planning permission) within the borough. It is estimated that these sites accommodate approximately 51 pitches/households.
- It is estimated that there are at least **42 households living in bricks and mortar housing** in the borough.
- It is estimated that there are **3 yards for Travelling Showpeople** in the borough. Together it is estimated these provide accommodation for 5 plots/households.
- There is little to no evidence of significant need for accommodation arising from the presence of unauthorised encampments within the borough.

Characteristics of local Gypsies and Travellers

6. The survey of Gypsies and Travellers identified some of the important characteristics of the local population.

- Household size is significantly larger than in the settled/non-Traveller population at 3 persons across the whole sample.
- A significant minority of the sample (17%) were households over 60 years of age.
- The majority of Gypsies and Travellers in trailers and in housing can be seen to belong, in some way, to the borough. The vast majority of people had lived in the borough for over 10 years. Most of these were born or had strong family links in the area.
- The local population is dominated by Romany Gypsies (84%) with smaller numbers of Irish Travellers (9%) and Travelling Showpeople (3%).
- There was a mix of households who still travelled and those who no longer travelled. A number of those who no longer travelled cited education, health and age related reasons for becoming more sedentary.

Accommodation need and supply

7. There are no signs that the growth in the Gypsy and Traveller population will slow significantly. Indeed, population characteristics which have emerged from GTAAs suggest that the formation of new households, at levels often above non-Gypsy/Traveller households, is inevitable. Research from the Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has indicated that around 6,000 additional pitches for Gypsies and Travellers are immediately required to meet the current shortage of accommodation within England.

8. This study has taken a thorough assessment of the need arising from all sites (social, permanent, temporary and unauthorised) present at the time of the survey. As such this assessment of need should be regarded as a reasonable and robust assessment of need upon which to base planning decisions going forward. Sites given planning permission or developed through new social provision after the 1st October 2011 contribute to the need requirements detailed in the table below.

9. Requirements for the additional residential provision for Travelling Showpeople are estimated on the basis of survey findings and local authority information.

Table i: Summary of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation and pitch need (2011-2026)

	Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Need Total (No. of pitches)	**Travelling Showpeople Plot Need Total (No. of plots)**
Current authorised residential provision (pitches/plots)	172	5
Residential need 2011–2016 (pitches/plots)	**105**	**7**
Residential need 2016–2021 (pitches/plots)	25	1
Residential need 2016–2021 (pitches/plots)	27	1
Residential need 2011–2026 (pitches/plots)	**157**	**9**

10. It is recommended that this assessment of accommodation need is repeated in due course (circa 5 years) to ensure this assessment remains as accurate as possible.

11. Numerical transit requirements have not been provided although an indication of how to provide for short-stay households is detailed.

1. Introduction

Background and scope

1.1 The Housing Act 2004 placed a duty upon local authorities to produce assessments of accommodation need for Gypsies and Travellers. In 2006, along with a number of neighbouring local authorities Maidstone Borough Council published Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTAA).[2] This GTAA provided an overview of the accommodation and related needs and experiences of the Gypsy and Traveller population. Crucially, the GTAA identified the accommodation need – in the form of residential pitch shortfall – of the population on an individual district level. This assessment found a need for 32 pitches to be provided within the borough of Maidstone between 2006-2011. This net figure assumed that 15 pitches would become available though pitch turnover on the Council's two public sites during this period. The 'total' need was therefore 47 pitches. A separate accommodation assessment for Travelling Showpeople was also produced, covering North and West Kent.[3] This assessment did not identify a need for the provision of additional accommodation provision from Travelling Showpeople within the borough between 2006 - 2011.

1.2 Between April 2006 and the end of March 2011 permanent planning permission was granted for 52 mobile homes in the borough. Temporary permission was granted for a further 37 in this period (of which 4 have subsequently expired). During this same period some 3 pitches became available through genuine pitch turnover on the Council's public sites, significantly fewer than the 15 pitches the GTAA had assumed. Nonetheless, in total the requirement measured in the GTAA was achieved.

1.3 In September 2011 Maidstone Borough Council commissioned the Salford Housing & Urban Studies Unit (SHUSU) at the University of Salford to produce a Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment for the borough. The primary purpose of this report is to provide an evidence base to inform the future development of planning policies through the Local Development Framework. This report presents the projection of requirements for the following periods:

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Research approach

1.4 The approach to this study involved bringing together various existing data sources with empirical research with the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities across the Borough. Details about the methodology for the assessment can be found in Appendix 1. The methodology entailed a review of the following data sources:

[2] DCA (2006) Ashford, Maidstone, Tonbridge & Malling & Tunbridge Wells Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2005-6 Final Report.
[3] DCA (2007) North and West Kent Travelling Showpeople Study Final Report 2007.

- Previous assessments of need and information submitted through the previous regional planning process
- The policy and guidance context
- The bi-annual Caravan Count
- Information from the local authority with regards to pitch provision and supply
- Information from key stakeholders. These included officers from within Maidstone Borough Council, Kent County Council, the Gypsy Council and the Showmen's Guild. Consultations (written and verbal) were undertaken in order to develop a clearer understanding about the context of provision and need within the area and to help inform the assessment of need. This information has been incorporated into this report in the appropriate places.
- A survey of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople currently residing in Maidstone borough. This has entailed the completion of interviews with 115 households living in trailers and in houses across Maidstone Borough Council. See Appendix 1 of this report for specific details of this process.

Structure of the report

1.5 This report is intended to assist Maidstone Borough Council in its formulation of planning policies for the provision of accommodation for the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities. It sets out the background and current policy context, identifies the estimated Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population of the borough and presents evidence of need arising within the borough.

- **Chapter 2** looks at the past, present and emerging policy context in the area of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation.
- **Chapter 3** looks at the trends in caravan numbers evident from the bi-annual count of caravans.
- **Chapter 4** presents the findings from across all authorised social and private sites based on information provided by Maidstone Borough Council and obtained through the survey of Gypsy and Traveller households.
- **Chapter 5** looks at the level of planning applications made in the borough, the presence of unauthorised sites and the views of households on unauthorised sites obtained through the household survey.
- **Chapter 6** looks at the numbers of Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar accommodation as well as drawing upon the views of people obtained through the household survey.
- **Chapter 7** looks at issues associated with travelling in order to shed some light on travelling patterns and experiences of Gypsies and Travellers throughout the borough
- **Chapter 8** looks at a range of issues including the movement intentions of the sample, the formation of new households and concealment of existing ones and the accommodation preferences of the Gypsy and Traveller population.

- **Chapter 9** considers the provision of accommodation and need relating to Travelling Showpeople.
- **Chapter 10** provides the numerical assessment of accommodation need of Gypsies and Travellers for the borough.
- **Chapter 11** provides an analysis of the need for transit provision for the borough
- **Chapter 12** provides the numerical assessment of accommodation need of Travelling Showpeople for the borough.

1.6 The base date for this assessment is the 1st October 2011.

2. Policy context

2.1 This chapter looks at the current, past and emerging policy context impacting on the assessment of need and the provision of accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

Planning policy 2006-2011

2.2 The main document for detailing planning policy in England over the 2006-2011 period has been ODPM Circular 01/2006 *Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites*. This specifies that the aims of legislation and policy are to:

- ensure that Gypsies and Travellers have fair access to suitable accommodation, education, health and welfare provision;
- reduce the number of unauthorised encampments and developments;
- increase significantly the number of Gypsy and Traveller sites in appropriate locations and with planning permission in order to address under-provision by 2011;
- protect the traditional travelling way of life of Gypsies and Travellers;
- underline the importance of assessing accommodation need;
- promote private site provision; and,
- avoid Gypsies and Travellers becoming homeless, where eviction from unauthorised sites occurs and where there is no alternative accommodation.

2.3 The circular directs local authorities to assess needs through Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments which should then form part of the evidence base for subsequent Development Plan Documents.

2.4 Travelling Showpeople are the subjects of separate planning guidance, CLG Circular 04/07, which aims to ensure that the system for pitch assessment, identification and allocation as introduced for Gypsies and Travellers is also applied to Travelling Showpeople.

Regional planning policy

2.5 ODPM Circular 01/2006 made it clear that district level requirements identified in GTAAs were to be submitted to the relevant Regional Planning Body (RPB).[4] The RPB would then, in turn, provide pitch requirements on a district by district basis once a strategic view of needs had been taken through the process of producing the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS).

[4] In the case of the South East this was the South East of England Regional Assembly (SEERA) which was then dissolved with the planning function transferring to the South East England Partnership Board

2.6 During early 2010 the South East RSS was examined in public, including the regional pitch requirements identified for the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities. In July 2010 the Secretary of State announced his intention to revoke all Regional Strategies, as a consequence the South East RSS was not completed. Local authorities were advised to continue to develop LDF core strategies and, where these had already been adopted, use the adopted Development Plan Documents as the local planning framework. Specific guidance was provided in July 2010 in the form of a letter from the Chief Planner in order to assist in the determination of provision for Gypsy and Traveller sites. [5] With respect to the needs of Gypsies and Travellers this guidance stated that:

"Local councils are best placed to assess the needs of travellers. The abolition of Regional Strategies means that local authorities will be responsible for determining the right level of site provision, reflecting local need and historic demand, and for bringing forward land in DPDs. They should continue to do this in line with current policy. *Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments* (GTAAs) have been undertaken by all local authorities and if local authorities decide to review the levels of provision these assessments will form a good starting point. However, local authorities are not bound by them. We will review relevant regulations and guidance on this matter in due course."

Emerging planning policy

2.7 The government is currently formulating a radically different planning framework for England and Wales in the form of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The draft NPPF has been recently released for public consultation. Among the many significant changes to the planning system the NPPF proposes a greater role for communities in the planning process.

2.8 The precise planning framework that will be implemented for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation provision has not been finalised. The government however has indicated their intention to pursue the following actions:

1. To replace Circulars 01/06 and 04/2007 with new light-touch guidance.
2. The introduction of stronger planning enforcement powers to help local authorities deal with breaches of planning control and limiting the opportunities for retrospective planning applications.
3. The encouragement of local authorities to provide, in consultation with the local community, an appropriate number of Traveller sites that reflect local and historic demand. Exploration of incentives for site provision and innovative ways in which Traveller sites can be funded and maintained.
4. The co-ordination of action across Government to tackle the discrimination and poor social outcomes faced by Gypsies and Travellers.

[5] http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/1631904.pdf

2.9 In April 2011 the government issued a consultation document (*Planning for traveller sites*) (CLG, 2011). This outlined that the new policy for Gypsy and Traveller provision aims to:

- enable local planning authorities to make their own assessment to set their own pitch/plot targets;
- encourage local planning authorities to plan for sites over a reasonable timescale;
- protect Green Belt from development;
- remove repetition of national planning policy that is set out elsewhere;
- remove unjustified differences in policy in the two circulars, and between the two circulars and other policy statements ;
- remove unnecessary guidance and context so that planning policy documents contain only policy;
- ensure that local planning authorities, working together, have fair and effective strategies to meet need through the identification of land for sites;
- promote more private Traveller site provision while recognising that there will always be those Travellers who cannot provide their own sites;
- reduce the number of unauthorised developments and encampments and make enforcement more effective if local planning authorities have had regard to this policy;
- ensure that the development plan includes fair, realistic and inclusive policies;
- increase the number of Traveller sites, in appropriate locations with planning permission, to address under provision and maintain an appropriate level of supply;
- reduce tensions between settled and Traveller communities in plan making and planning decisions; and,
- enable provision of suitable accommodation from which Travellers can access education, health, welfare and employment infrastructure.

2.10 The consultation document states that Local Planning Authorities should have an up to date understanding of likely permanent and transit accommodation needs and use robust evidence to establish needs and to inform the preparation of the Development Plan. Pitch and plot targets should be set in the light of historic demand.

2.11 At the time of writing (December 2011) the final document outlining Gypsy and Traveller planning policy has not been released. However, this assessment has anticipated certain aspects of the proposed policy in order to ensure the findings of this assessment are valid for the long-term. In particular, we have given full consideration to the assessment of 'local and historic' need in the undertaking of the survey work and the analysis of the findings. Such issues are likely to be a core feature of future policy as proposed by both the Secretary of State and the draft planning guidance.

Defining Gypsies and Travellers

2.12 Defining Gypsies and Travellers is not straightforward. Different definitions are used for a variety of purposes. At a very broad level the term 'Gypsies and Travellers' is used by non-Gypsies and Travellers to encompass a variety of groups and individuals who have in common a tradition or practice of nomadism. More narrowly both Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers are recognised minority ethnic groupings.

2.13 At the same time Gypsies and Travellers have been defined for accommodation and planning purposes. The statutory definition of Gypsies and Travellers for Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment required by the Housing Act 2004 is:

(a) persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or of living in a caravan; and

(b) all other persons of a nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin, including:

(i) such persons who, on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependant's educational or health needs or old age, have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently; and

(ii) members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people (whether or not travelling together as such).

2.14 There is a separate definition for planning purposes as specified in ODPM Circular 01/2006 which offers a narrower definition and excludes Travelling Showpeople:

Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling show people or circus people travelling together as such.

2.15 This definition focuses more narrowly upon people who either still travel or have ceased to do so as a result of specific issues and can as a consequence demonstrate specific land use requirements.

2.16 A separate definition of Travelling Showpeople is provided by CLG Circular 04/2007:

Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family's or dependants' more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined in ODPM Circular 1/2006.

2.17 It is proposed by the government that the emerging planning policy will have a definition for 'travellers' which will combine the current definitions of Gypsies andTravellers and Travelling Showpeople. In the meantime and in the spirit of the emerging policy this assessment has adopted the Housing Act 2004 definition as its starting point and has sought to be inclusive in the Gypsy and Traveller groupings.

This has been used as it is recognised that this definition is '…more pragmatic and wider and enables local planning authorities to understand the possible future accommodation needs of this group and plan strategically to meet those needs'.[6]

Housing/accommodation need

2.18 Crucially, for Gypsies and Travellers, the definition of housing need is varied slightly to acknowledge the different contexts in which members of these communities live. The general definition of housing need is "households who are unable to access suitable housing without some financial assistance", with housing demand defined as "the quantity of housing that households are willing and able to buy or rent."[7]

2.19 In recognising that in many cases these definitions are inappropriate for Gypsies and Travellers, the guidance on producing Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments refers to distinctive requirements that necessitate moving beyond the limitations of the definition for both caravan dwellers and those in bricks and mortar housing. For caravan dwelling households, need may take the form of those:[8]

- who have no authorised site on which to reside;
- whose existing site accommodation is overcrowded or unsuitable, but who are unable to obtain larger or more suitable accommodation; and
- who contain suppressed households who are unable to set up separate family units and are unable to access a place on an authorised site, or obtain or afford land to develop one.

2.20 In the context of bricks and mortar dwelling households, need may take the form of:

- those whose existing accommodation is overcrowded or unsuitable (including unsuitability by virtue of psychological aversion to bricks and mortar accommodation).

2.21 The needs presented in this report reflect both the definition of Gypsies and Travellers as used in the Housing Act 2004, which gives an overall strategic level of accommodation need, and also Circular 01/2006 which indicates the proportion of site-based need for operational purposes. It should also be noted that, in line with commentary from the CLG in the draft PPS consultation document, steps have been taken within this report to analyse need in the context of 'local and historic demand'.

2.22 Housing need is assessed at the level of a single family unit or household (broadly a group of people who regularly live and eat together). On Gypsy and Traveller sites, this is assumed to equate to a 'pitch'; in housing, to a separate dwelling.

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[6] CLG (2011) *Planning for traveller sites.* Consultation Paper, April, London: HMSO http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/1886164.pdf

[7] ODPM (2006) *Definition of the term 'Gypsies and Travellers' for the purposes of the Housing Act 2004*. Consultation Paper, February, London: HMSO.

[8] CLG (2007) *Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments* – Guidance. London: HMSO.

Defining a pitch

2.23 There is no set definition for what constitutes a Gypsy and Traveller residential pitch. In the same way as in the settled community, Gypsies and Travellers require various accommodation sizes, depending on the number of family members.

2.24 The convention used in this report is that a pitch is the place on a Gypsy and Traveller site accommodating a single family/household. In some cases a single pitch may account for the entire site. The number of caravans that a household uses can be a single unit (trailer, touring caravan, static, chalet etc.) or more. In order to ensure comparability across accommodation types it is important to determine a convention when translating caravan numbers into pitches/households.

2.25 The convention in the last round of GTAAs, and an approach advocated by CLG guidance, was the use of a 1.7 caravan to pitch ratio. Taking a more locally informed approach this assessment has indicated that from a base of 94 site based interviewees a total of 159 caravans are owned/used. This provides a 1.7 caravan to pitch ratio across the sample. [9] Therefore throughout this assessment a 1.7 caravan to pitch ratio is used to determine need.

Conventions

2.26 Two conventions are followed in this report:

- Percentages in text and tables are rounded to the nearest whole number; this means that they do not always sum to exactly 100.
- 'Quotes' included from Gypsies and Travellers are sometimes in first and sometimes in third person form because interviews were not audio recorded but noted in written form. They are distinguished by being in italic type and usually inset.

[9] Although we attempted to distinguish between caravans used for living, sleeping and storage the survey findings indicate trailers have multiple uses serving all these uses for the vast majority of the time.

3. The bi-annual Caravan Count and size of the population

3.1 This chapter looks at the Count of Gypsy and Traveller Caravans in order to present what is known about Gypsies and Travellers within the Study Area. This chapter presents information on the estimated size of the Gypsy and Traveller population.

Caravan numbers and trends from the Caravan Count

3.2 The bi-annual caravan count provides a snapshot of the local context in terms of the scale and distribution of caravan numbers across the borough. The Count provides a useful starting point in assessing the current picture and recent trends. Indeed, in the absence of other datasets it is virtually the only source of information on Gypsy and Traveller caravan data. However, there are well documented issues with the robustness of the count.[10] Such issues include: the 'snapshot' nature of the data, the inclusion of caravans and not households, the exclusion of Travelling Showpeople,[11] and the exclusion of Gypsies and Travellers in housing. It should be noted that the analysis contained in this report should be considered a more robust assessment of the current situation with regards to the local population than the Caravan Count, this is demonstrated further in Chapter 10.

3.3 With regard to this specific Study Area the Counts, over time, offer little information for analysis purposes. However, in order to broadly illustrate the caravan numbers within the Study Area this information is presented below. Table 3.1 provides the distribution of caravan numbers for Maidstone since January 2006 with this illustrated in Figure 3.1. These figures have been adjusted to account for inaccuracies observed in the published data

Table 3.1: Caravan numbers across accommodation types within Maidstone

	Authorised sites with planning permission		**Unauthorised sites**		**Total No. caravans**
	Caravans on Socially Rented sites	Caravans on authorised sites with planning permission	Caravans on unauthorised developments	Caravans on unauthorised encampments	
Jan-06	36	135	38	30	239
Jul-06	37	166	94	0	297
Jan-07	36	135	38	30	239
Jul-07	39	205	50	0	294
Jan-08	45	216	65	0	326
Jul-08	44	213	73	1	331
Jan-09	41	220	64	2	327
Jul-09	43	218	54	0	315
Jan-10	43	197	100	0	340
Jul-10	31	188	102	0	321
Jan-11	32	205	104	0	341
July-11[12]	32	278	66	0	376

[10] Niner, P. (2002) Review of the ODPM Caravan Count. London: ODPM.

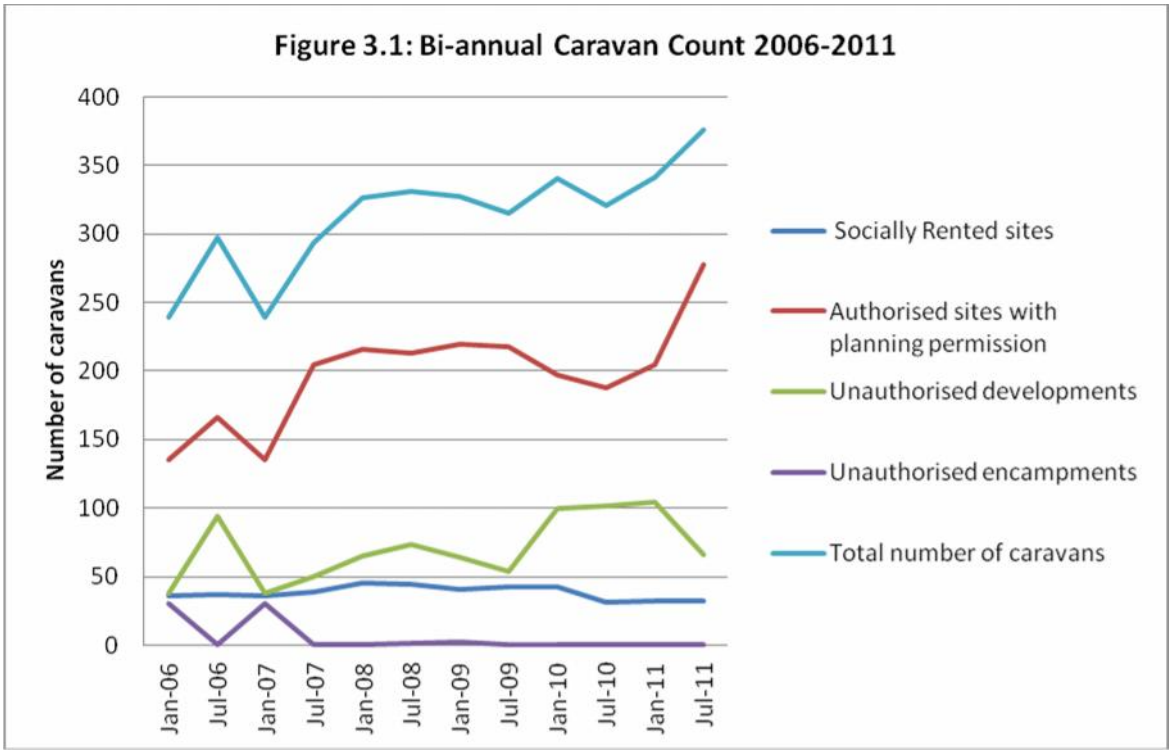
[11] The January 2011 count included a count of Travelling Showpeople caravans for the first time. However, as this is not comparable with previous years and as 0 caravans have been identified this is excluded from the tables in this report.

[12] Adjusted from data from MBC to correct the double counting of the Plum Tree Bottom site which was categorised as both an authorised and an unauthorised site.

3.4 Table 3.1 shows the following:

- Caravan numbers have remained relatively stable on socially rented sites over this period.
- Overall caravan numbers have increased by 43% between Jan 2006 – Jan 2011. However, caravan numbers have been generally stable over the Jan 2008 – Jan 2011 period with only a 5% increase in overall caravan numbers.
- Since 2007 the numbers of caravans counted on unauthorised encampments has either been zero or very small indeed.

3.5 The following chart illustrates the trends in caravan numbers recorded in the count and described above. There appears to be little seasonality in caravan numbers (i.e. absence of significant summer travelling).



The size of the local Gypsy and Traveller community

3.6 For most minority ethnic communities, presenting data about the size of the community in question is usually relatively straightforward (with the exception of communities who have large numbers of irregular migrants and migrant workers etc. amongst them). However, for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, one of the most difficult issues is providing accurate information on the size of the population. As a result, we have used information provided by the local authorities and key stakeholders, together with our survey findings, in order to provide a best estimate as to the size of the local Gypsy and Traveller population at the time of the assessment. This estimate does not include households on unauthorised

encampments or unauthorised developments. Populations on unauthorised sites typically have precarious planning status; therefore including them would distort and possibly skew the size of the local population if they move or an application is refused.

3.7 Table 3.2 presents the estimation of the size of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population in authorised accommodation. Using the best information available we estimate that there are at least 863 individuals or 262 households in the Study Area.

Table 3.2: Gypsy and Traveller population in authorised accommodation in the area

Type of accommodation	**Families/ Households** (based on 1 pitch = 1 household)	**Individuals**	**Derivation**
Socially rented sites	33	76	Actual numbers taken from information supplied by Kent County Council
Private sites (permanent)	139	487	Estimated number of pitches multiplied by average household size from the survey (3.5)
Private sites (temporary)	43	151	Estimated number of pitches multiplied by average household size from the survey (3.5)
Housing	42[13]	134	Number of families estimated to live in the area multiplied by average household size from the survey (3.2)
Travelling Showpeople	5	15	Number of plots multiplied by an estimate of the household size for Travelling Showpeople (2 adults and 1 child)
Total	**262**	**863**	

[13] We did not receive any information regarding the accurate size of the Gypsy and Traveller bricks and mortar-based population. The Commission for Racial Equality's 2006 report *Common Ground: Equality, good race relations and sites for Gypsies and Irish Travellers* suggested that the housed population could be around 3 times the trailer-based population. Using a multiplier of 3 times the site population may be excessive in the absence of definitive evidence of the size of the population. Therefore, as a conservative estimate, we assume we have interviewed 50% of the actual bricks and mortar-based population.

4. Authorised social and private sites

4.1 A certain degree of caution needs to be taken when extrapolating the characteristics, trends and needs of the Gypsy and Traveller population from the Caravan Counts and other such data alone. In order to provide more specific information on the local Gypsy and Traveller population, this section draws upon the information provided by Maidstone Borough Council on site provision within the borough as well as information obtained through a survey of Gypsy and Traveller households. The sampling and response rates from the survey are included in Appendix 1.

Socially rented sites

4.2 There are two socially rented sites in the borough. These sites are managed by Kent County Council. Together these sites provide accommodation on 33 pitches.

Table 4.1: Socially rented sites

Site Location	Tenure	No. of pitches	Residential/Transit
Stilebridge Caravan Site	Socially rented	19	Residential
Water Lane Caravan Site	Socially rented	14	Residential

Stilebridge Caravan Site

4.3 This site currently has 19 occupied pitches with this level of occupancy remaining static over a number of years. Approximately 1 to 2 pitches are vacated each year and immediately re-let. The site has a waiting list which consists of 10 applicants, this number has remained static for the last few years. The site currently has 2 pitches that are closed due to land contamination and there is no plans to re-open these pitches unless investment is made. There are currently 46 people living on the site (29 adults; 4 children under 5 years of age; 7 children 5-11 years; and, 6 children 12-16 years). Each pitch has an amenity unit which has a shower, WC and space/provision for laundry facilities.

4.4 Licensees are permitted to be absent for up to 12 weeks of the year subject to the payment of their licence fee. Visitors are permitted on the site subject to certain restrictions (i.e. agreement of site manager and adherence to site rules and regulations).

4.5 There is a formal policy for allocating pitches on the site with the most important factors being, in rank order:

1. Need for accommodation
2. Medical/special health needs
3. Family size/composition

4.6 The weekly rent is £47.07 with all/almost all residents receiving housing benefit payments.

4.7 The site has previously received funding from the Gypsy and Traveller Sites Grant to refurbish the utility blocks, upgrade the electrical supply and repair and renew waste water drainage systems.

4.8 Kent County Council reported that 2 households are currently doubled up on the site.

Water Lane Caravan Site

4.9 This site currently has 14 occupied pitches with this level of occupancy remaining static over a number of years. Approximately 1 to 2 pitches are vacated each year and immediately re-let. The site has a waiting list which consists of 10 applicants, this number has remained static for the last few years. There are currently 30 people living on the site (20 adults; 2 children under 5 years of age; 6 children 5-11 years; and, 2 children 12-16 years). Each pitch has an amenity unit which has a bath, WC and space/provision for laundry facilities.

4.10 Licensees are permitted to be absent for up to 12 weeks of the year subject to the payment of their licence fee. Visitors are permitted on the site subject to certain restrictions (i.e. agreement of site manager and adherence to site rules and regulations).

4.11 There is a formal policy for allocating pitches on the site with the most important factors being, in rank order:

1. Need for accommodation
2. Medical/special health needs
3. Family size/composition

4.12 The weekly rent is £54.74 with all/almost all residents receiving housing benefit payments.

4.13 Kent County Council reported that 1 household is currently doubled up on the site.

Socially rented sites residents: findings

4.14 A total of 16 people were interviewed across these sites. The residents were mostly Romany Gypsies on both sites although two people who described themselves as 'Traveller' were consulted on the Stilebridge site.

4.15 Most residents had a single caravan with 6 respondents owning two caravans. The average number of caravans to households was 1.4.

4.16 81% (13 households) of respondents reported that this gave them enough room. Of the remaining 2 who responded to the question one respondent commented that they would like a larger caravan with another responding that they required more living space (see chapter 8 which details how need arising from overcrowding has been accounted for).

4.17 When asked why they had come to live on the site people cited a variety of reasons including: to be near family, some were born/raised there, others moved with their family, others saw that the site had better facilities than where they were previously living. Some cited that all the options presented could be their reason. One person commented that they had no where left to travel. Just one person reported being evicted from the accommodation they had previously lived in.

4.18 81% of respondents reported that they do not have visitors to stay on their pitch with them. Around half (47%) of the respondents reported that accommodating visitors on the site was a problem mainly due to the fact that the County Council (i.e. the landlord) did not allow visitors on the site.

4.19 All the respondents we spoke to residing on the two sites managed by the County Council said that they had lived in the area for 10 years or more. The vast majority of these had been on the site all this time (81%) with the remainder estimating their length of stay on the site between 5-10 years. When asked why they were living in the area they were every respondent either cited some form of family connection or that they were born there.

4.20 Very few residents left the area during the year – 25% of respondents said that they travelled away at certain times of the year. When asked where most cited short periods of summer holiday in various areas of the UK.

4.21 No respondent had a base elsewhere

Authorised private sites

4.22 This section looks at private sites across the Study Area. There is a large number of small to medium sized authorised private sites in the borough. There are 80 authorised private sites in the borough 65 have permanent planning permission for a total of around 237 caravans. 17 sites have temporary planning permission and provide for a total of 74 caravans, see Table 4.2. [note: 2 sites included in the figures above have both temporary and permanent consents on the same site]

4.23 According to information received from the local authority permanent permission for 52 caravans and temporary permission for 37 caravans (of which 4 have subsequently expired) has been granted between April 2006 and March 2011.

4.24 It proved difficult to accurately establish the pitch capacity of all private sites. Planning permissions are often based on a maximum number of caravans rather than clearly defined pitches. Where pitch numbers are not defined, we have used a 1.7 caravan to pitch ratio to ascertain the approximate number of pitches.[14]

[14] As described earlier this ratio is commonly used in GTAA research and, importantly, the caravan to pitch ratio based on the sample for the assessment across all private sites (permanent and temporary) was 1.7

Table 4.2: Private authorised sites

Consent	No. of sites	Approx No. of Caravans	Estimated No. of pitches
Permanent	65	237	139
Temporary	17	74	43
Total (est)	**80**[15]	**311**	**182**

4.25 Table A3.1 which can be found in Appendix 3 provides details of all the private sites that currently have temporary planning permission within the borough. The planning consent for all these sites is due to expire within the assessment period.

Permanent private site residents: findings

4.26 A total of 50 people were interviewed on the permanent private sites. Of these all either owned the pitch they were occupying (96%) or it was owned by a member of their family (2%), or in one case they were renting it (2%). All respondents owned their trailers.

4.27 Most respondents (50%) reported that they either had a single living unit or 2 living units (30%). However, there was a spread of caravan ownership including 3 trailers (10%), 4 (6%), 5 (2%) and 7 (2%). The average number was 1.9 caravans per household.

4.28 All but four households (92%) reported that this provided them with enough space. The reasons that were given for needing more space included a need for either a larger site/pitch or more trailers/living space.

4.29 A total of 38% of respondents reported that they accommodated visitors on their site on a short term basis. 51% of respondents said that they did not accommodate visitors. The remainder did not know. In terms of who visited the site this was exclusively family members, usually close family members, for short periods multiple times a year, for example:

"It depends, any of our family might come for 2-3 weeks and they might come with just trailer"

"My aunts and uncles they have one trailer each. My brother, his wife and 2 children they have one trailer as well. They all come every Christmas day and they leave 2nd/3rd Jan. Been doing this ever since I can remember"

"My daughter and her family, 2-3 times a year for one or two weeks"

"My sisters and brothers come for a week, couple of trailers, couple of times a year"

4.30 Most people (90%) commented that if they wanted to, accommodating visitors was not a problem but for the minority who did indicate it was a problem this was due to a lack of planning permission for the extra caravans.

[15] There are 2 sites which have both temporary and permanent consents on the same site hence the total number of sites is 80, not 82 (which is the sum of 65 + 17).

4.31 Half of residents on the permanent private sites we spoke to said that they had lived in the area for 10 years or more (50%), 26% had lived there for between 5-10 years, 14% for between 3-5 years, 4% for between 1-3 years and 4% had lived there for less than 12 months see Table 4.3 below.[16]

Table 4.3: Length of time living on the site with permanent planning permission

Length of time	**%**
10 years or more	50
Between 5-10 years	26
Between 3-5 years	14
Between 1 -3 years	4
Between 6-12 months	2
Between 3-6 months	0
Between 1-3 months	2
2-4 weeks	0
Don't know	2

Base: 50 respondents

4.32 Although a number of reasons were cited for living in the area the majority either cited family connections (37%) or that they were born in the area (39%), see Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4: Most important reason for living in the area

Most important reason for being in the area:	**%**
Born here	39
Having family living here	37
Looking after family member in old age	4
Children's education	4
Work in the area	4
Availability of site	4
Only place I could find	4
Other	4

Base: 50 respondents

4.33 In terms of 'other' reasons these were, '*always travelled in the South East area'* and '*wanted to settle the place came up for sale so we bought it*'.

4.34 A total of 65% of respondents reported never leaving the area throughout the year, 18% reported that they lived in the area between 41-51 weeks of the year, 4% reported that they lived in the area between 31-40 weeks of the year. Just 2% (1 respondent) reported significant absence where they lived in the area between 1-10 weeks of the year, see Table 4.5 below.

[16] It should be noted that the interviewers directed respondents to interpret 'in the area' throughout the survey as within the Maidstone borough

Table 4.5: How many weeks of the year lived in the area

Length of time	%
52 weeks/never leave	65
Between 41-51 weeks	18
Between 31-40 weeks	4
Between 21-30 weeks	0
Between 11-20 weeks	0
Between 1-10 weeks	2
Don't know	10

Base: 50 respondents

4.35 The reasons for leaving the area for these periods were various but they generally involved some form of traditional Traveller way of life or widely practised holidays such as:

"2 months in summer, anywhere across the UK usually with family"

"Appleby Fair" (This was a commonly mentioned destination as was a variety of other fairs)

"Essex, Cambridge, Maidstone and other places for Christian conventions"

"Only sometimes, we might go to stay with family or take the kids to the seaside"

"Sometimes we go to fair or have had 1-2 weeks at in-laws in Scotland"

4.36 A total of 94% reported not having a base elsewhere. Just 2 respondents (4%) reported having a base they can use elsewhere with one reporting that this was an unauthorised development in Ashford. It is unknown who owned this site. It is likely that using a base was interpreted as somewhere a household could stay when they were travel in the area as opposed to somewhere they can use on a more residential basis.

Temporary private site residents: findings

4.37 A total of 10 people were interviewed on the temporary private sites. Of these all either owned the pitch they were occupying (80%) or it was owned by a member of their family.

4.38 A total of 50% of respondents had 1 trailer with the other 50% owning 2 trailers. All respondents thought they had enough living space.

4.39 Most respondents reported that they do not host visitors on the site on a short-term basis (56%) with 33% (3 respondents) reporting that they did on a short-term basis. Most reported that this did not cause them any problems although a minority acknowledged that they may not have permission to do so. For those who did host visitors the visitor profile was similar to those on permanent sites i.e. close and extended family members.

4.40 The vast majority of residents on the temporary sites we spoke to said that they had lived in the area for 10 years or more (90%) the other 10% (1 respondent) did not know how long they had lived in the area. A significant number of these had been on the site they were currently living on all this time, see Table 4.6 below.

Table 4.6: Length of time living on the site with temporary planning permission

Length of time	**%**
10 years or more	60
Between 5-10 years	20
Between 3-5 years	10
Between 1 -3 years	0
Between 6-12 months	0
Between 3-6 months	0
Between 1-3 months	10
2-4 weeks	0
Don't know	0

Base: 10 respondents

4.41 Although a number of reasons were cited for living in the area the majority either cited family connections (40%) or that they were born in the area (40%), see Table 4.7 below.

Table 4.7: Reason for living in the area

Most important reason for being in the area:	**%**
Born here	40
Having family living here	40
Children's education	10
Work in the area	10

Base: 10 respondents

4.42 A total of 40% of respondents reported never leaving the area throughout the year, 20% reported that they lived in the area between 41-51 weeks of the year. A total of 40% of respondents did not know how many weeks a year they lived in the area, see Table 4.8 below.

Table 4.8: How many weeks of the year lived in the area

Length of time	**%**
52 weeks/never leave	40
Between 41-51 weeks	20
Between 31-40 weeks	0
Between 21-30 weeks	0
Between 11-20 weeks	0
Between 1-10 weeks	0
Don't know	40

Base: 10 respondents

4.43 The reasons for leaving the area for these periods were similar to those provided by respondents on sites with permanent planning permission: fairs, summer holidays and family events. One respondent mentioned that work was a factor in determining how long they were away for.

4.44 Only 1 respondent (10%) reported being able to use a base elsewhere when travelling – this place was a private site with planning permission in Reading. Although it unknown whose base this was.

5. Planning and unauthorised sites

5.1 The development of sites for Gypsies and Travellers can be a major source of tension between Gypsies and Travellers and the settled population. The current planning system is intended to create conditions where there is no need for unauthorised developments because land will be allocated for authorised site development within the Local Development Framework. This chapter focuses upon the development of Gypsy and Traveller sites without planning permission. This chapter then looks at the presence of unauthorised encampments in the area.

Unauthorised development of Gypsy and Traveller sites

5.2 At the time of the study there were a total of 31 unauthorised developments within the borough. Table A3.2 which can be found in Appendix 3 provides details of the unauthorised sites and presents the estimated pitch size of each.

5.3 Estimating the size of unauthorised developments is very difficult as very little information is available about the number of households accommodated on these sites therefore little is known about how many pitches would be required to accommodate the residents. Table A3.2 demonstrates our estimation of each site size. By using the number of caravans permission is being sought or, where there is no current application, the number of caravans counted in the most recent Caravan Count (July 2011) and applying the 1.7 caravan to pitch ratio, we have estimated based on the local population. We therefore estimate that there are currently 51 pitches on unauthorised developments in the borough.

Unauthorised developments residents: findings

5.4 A total of 15 households were interviewed across 14 of the 31 sites. In terms of number of trailers on these sites this demonstrated a similar profile to residents of private sites with most having a single trailer (80%) or two (7%). The remainder had 3 (7%) or 4 (7%). The average was 1.4 caravans to a household.[17] All households reported that this gave them enough space.

5.5 A minority of respondents (21%) reported that they accommodated visitors on their site on a short term basis. All respondents reported that it was not a problem to host visitors if they chose to do so.

5.6 The vast majority of residents on the unauthorised developments we spoke to said that they had lived in the area for 10 years or more (87%), 7% (1 respondent) had lived in the area for less than 1 month, 7% (1 respondent) did not know how long they had lived in the area, see Table 5.1.

[17] Although we found 1.4 caravans possessed by households on unauthorised developments we use the 1.7 caravan to pitch ratio for consistency across accommodation types.

Table 5.1: Length of time living in the general area

Length of time	%
10 years or more	87
Between 5-10 years	0
Between 3-5 years	0
Between 1 -3 years	0
Between 6-12 months	0
Between 3-6 months	0
Between 1-3 months	0
Less than 1 month	7
Don't know	7

Base: 15 respondents

5.7 Similarly, a significant number of these reported living on the site where they were interviewed for significant periods of time, 73% reported having had lived on the site for 10 years or more, see Table 5.2 below.

Table 5.2: Length of time living on the unauthorised site

Length of time	%
10 years or more	73
Between 5-10 years	0
Between 3-5 years	0
Between 1 -3 years	13
Between 6-12 months	0
Between 3-6 months	0
Between 1-3 months	0
2-4 weeks	13
Don't know	0

Base: 15 respondents

5.8 Although a number of reasons were cited for living in the area the majority either cited family connections (27%) or that they were born in the area (53%), see Table 5.3 below.

Table 5.3: Reason for living in the area

Most important reason for being in the area	%
Born here	53
Having family living here	27
Other	9
Work in the area	7
Availability of site	7

Base: 15 respondents

5.9 A total of 60% of respondents reported never leaving the area throughout the year, 13% reported that they lived in the area between 41-51 weeks of the year, see Table 5.4 below.

Table 5.4: How many weeks of the year lived in the area

Length of time	%
52 weeks/never leave	60
Between 41-51 weeks	13
Between 31-40 weeks	0
Between 21-30 weeks	0
Between 11-20 weeks	0
Between 1-10 weeks	13
Don't know	13

Base: 15 respondents

5.10 The reasons for leaving the area for these periods were similar to those provided by respondents on sites with planning permission: fairs, summer holidays and family events.

5.11 Only 2 respondents (13%) reported being able to use a base elsewhere when travelling. In both cases these bases were bricks and mortar housing one of which was situated in Luton the other in Maidstone. Although it is unknown who owned/rented these houses.

Unauthorised encampments: Findings

5.12 The presence and incidence of unauthorised encampments is often a significant issue that impacts upon local authorities, landowners, Gypsies and Travellers and the settled population. Unauthorised encampments are often the type of accommodation which has become synonymous with Gypsies and Travellers due to often residing on public and private land.

5.13 Due to the nature of unauthorised encampments (i.e. unpredictability, seasonal fluctuations etc.), it is often very difficult to grasp a comprehensive picture of need for residential and/or transit accommodation without considering a range of interconnected issues. However, as seen in Chapter 3 the level of encampment has been at a low/nominal level since July 2007. Indeed during the fieldwork for this assessment we did not receive notification of any unauthorised encampments within the borough.

5.14 The authority does not keep a log of unauthorised encampments this data is collected by Kent County Council. Information from Kent County Council indicated that over the last 2 years there had been 4 unauthorised encampments in 2011 and 5 unauthorised encampments in 2010.

6. Gypsies and Travellers in social and private bricks and mortar accommodation

6.1 The numbers of Gypsies and Travellers currently accommodated within bricks and mortar accommodation are unknown, but potentially large. Movement to and from housing is a major concern for the strategic approach, policies and working practices of local authorities. Moreover, this was an issue raised in the Panel Report of the South East Regional Spatial Strategy which commented on the lack of consideration given to households accommodated in bricks and mortar housing in the previous GTAA covering the borough.

Estimating the size of Gypsy and Traveller population in bricks and mortar housing

6.2 Neither the local authority officers nor members of the local Gypsy and Traveller communities in the area were able to accurately estimate the size of the Gypsy and Traveller population in bricks and mortar housing in the borough. In the absence of definitive data about the housed population we contacted a number of stakeholders to enquire as to their knowledge of Gypsies and Travellers in housing in the borough, the following information was obtained by the research team:

- Hyde Housing reported that there was 3 Gypsy/Traveller households on their tenancy list.
- Maidstone Borough Council Housing Advice have 11 Gypsy/Traveller households on their waiting list.

6.3 However a response from the Gypsy Council indicated that the number of Gypsies and Travellers in the area could amount to a sizeable population:

It is hard to tell how many there are in and around Maidstone. But I know that in Swale the population is around 33%. but there are so many in all the big council estates in and around Maidstone and Sevenoaks. Because of the agricultural industry. There has never been any interest in any G&Ts who are in housing, within the boroughs, It could be as much as 24 to 30% of the total population. As you say, the GTAAs were so small it was only a guide...The outlying villages have also got a high number in them.[18]

6.4 The Commission for Racial Equality's 2006 report, *Common Ground: Equality, good race relations and sites for Gypsies and Irish Travellers*, suggested that the housed populations was around 3 times the number of trailer-based populations. This would however, provide a potential housed population of 645 households.[19] This figure would appear unrealistic given the relatively small size of the borough. In the absence of accurate evidence as to the numbers in housing we base the estimate of the base population of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople living in houses on the number of interviews with bricks and mortar-based households we secured. Therefore, as a pragmatic working assumption, which allows for a reasonable

[18] From personal correspondence with Joe Jones of the Gypsy Council

[19] Number of authorised households on sites (socially rented 33, private permanent 139, and private temporary 4) equals 215 trailer based houses multiplied by 3.

consideration of need arising from households in bricks and mortar, we assume we have interviewed 50% of the actual bricks and mortar-based population. Therefore, by doubling the number of interviews attained we posit that there are at least 42 households living in bricks and mortar in the borough.[20]

6.5 It should be noted that we believe that this may be an understatement of the actual housed population but it is based on the best information available at the time of the assessment. A more accurate estimation of the numbers of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in houses will only be possible when a number of issues are resolved:

- Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople feel able to disclose their ethnic group in monitoring forms
- Monitoring forms allow for the ethnic groups as options
- The data from the Census 2011 is released

6.6 Until this point estimates based on the informal knowledge of stakeholders and the experiences of fieldworkers, such as those in this study, will be the only and best source of evidence.

Living in bricks and mortar housing residents: findings

6.7 Among the 21 respondents whom we consulted who lived in bricks and mortar accommodation, 71% of bricks and mortar dwellers were social housing tenants; 24% were private tenants; and 5% (1 respondent) was an owner-occupier.

6.8 In terms of the size of the dwelling:

- 33% had 2 bedrooms;
- 62% had 3 bedrooms; and,
- 5% (1 household) had 4 or more bedrooms.

6.9 All but 1 respondent (5%) thought that their property gave them enough space. The respondent who reported needing more space commented:

"Would like a bigger driveway to put a trailer on"

6.10 In total, 6 households (29%) in bricks and mortar accommodation still owned trailers. All households had just 1 trailer.

6.11 The majority of respondents had lived in their accommodation for a significant period of time: 38% for 10 years or more; 19% had been there for between 5 and 10 years; 10% had been there for between 1 and 3 years; only 9% (2 households) had been in the house for less than 1 year.

[20] This figure should be revised should further information become available at a later date.

6.12 There was a range of reasons given for why people moved into the houses they were living in, see Table 6.1 below.

Table 6.1: Reasons given for people living in the house

Reason	Number (%)
To be near family or friends	38
Other	19
Born/raised in the house	14
Health reasons	10
Moved with family	5
Evicted from last accommodation	5
Work available in the area	5
House was available to buy	5

6.13 The most common reason was that living in the house allowed them to live nearer to their family or friends. A number of people were born in the house with a minority of people living in house due to some sort of health problem which was either cited as 'back problems' or 'having to go to the hospital'. In terms of the second most prevalent reason 'other' this, in all cases, was marriage.

6.14 The majority of people who were now living in housing had previously been living on a private site with planning permission (52%). 14% had been living on a socially rented site, 14% had been living on an unauthorised encampment or on a transit site, 14% had either lived in the house all their life or had lived in another house before that one.

6.15 Only 23 respondents across the whole site based population (20%) had, at one time or another, lived in a house. 40% of these households rated their experience of living in a house as either poor or very poor, 36% said that it was neither good nor poor, with 24% of respondents commenting in positive terms about their experience. When asked why they had left the house by far the most common response (in around 60% of cases) could be seen, in some way, as 'cultural aversion',

"Couldn't settle, couldn't get used to it"

"Couldn't stand living in a house"

"Couldn't settle, felt depressed and confused"

"Wanted to return to the Gypsy community and leave London"

6.16 The next reason was marriage (20%) with other reasons such as their being a vacancy or land available (8%) cited in a minority of cases.

6.17 Out of the entire sample of site based households only 2 respondents were looking to move in a house at some point in the future. Both respondents were currently living on one of the socially rented sites in the borough. Both were registered on a housing waiting list with Maidstone Borough Council (see Chapter 8). However, just one of these households wanted to move immediately with the other indicating that they

wanted to move sometime in the next 5-10 years. Experience suggests it would need particularly attractive site provision to encourage house to site movement. However we recognise the aversion to housing that may exist amongst the bricks and mortar housing but there is little evidence of this from the survey.

7. Travelling

7.1 In order to shed some light on the travelling patterns and experiences of Gypsies and Travellers throughout the Study Area, respondents were asked about a range of issues associated with travelling.

7.2 One of the most important issues to gain some information on was the frequency that households travelled. The vast majority of people reported that they never travelled or travelled seasonally, which generally means for short periods during the summer months. Table 7.1 breaks this down by accommodation type.

Table 7.1: Frequency of travelling by current accommodation type

Frequency	Unauthorised development (%)	Socially rented sites (%)	Private residential sites (perm) (%)	Private residential sites (temp) (%)	Bricks & mortar (%)
Every day or so	-	-	-		
Every week	-	-	-	10	-
Every month	-	-	-	-	-
Every month or so	-	-	-	-	-
Few times a year	39	6	22	30	24
Once per year	15	19	27	10	14
Never	46	75	51	50	62

Base: 112 respondents providing information

7.3 Just one household, who was living on a private site with temporary permission, reported frequent travelling of every week due to seeking work opportunities. Generally this appears a slightly more static population than a number of other areas in which the researchers have worked where residents from all accommodation types, but particularly households on private sites and in bricks and mortar housing, appear to travel on a more often (e.g. Cumbria, Tees Valley, Merseyside etc.). However, similar to Maidstone it is common in GTAAs across the country (i.e. the North of England and Midlands) for large numbers of residents to report that they 'never' travel.

7.4 We asked those who said they never travelled to tell us why which resulted in some diverse replies. Table 7.2 looks at the proportion of people not travelling for reasons of health, education or older age.

Table 7.2: Reasons given for never travelling

Reason	%
Your, a family member or a dependents health	21
Your, a family member or a dependents educational needs	28
Your, a family member or a dependents older age	21
Other reason	51

Base: 61 respondents providing information. Respondents could submit multiple responses in order to best explain their situation.

7.5 A total of 4 separate households currently living on unauthorised developments (27% of the sample on unauthorised developments) reported that they did not travel as a result of one of the above reasons. Similarly, 2 separate households currently living on temporary private sites (20% of the sample on temporary sites) reported that they did not travel as a result of one of the above reasons.

7.6 Although all the options were given as reasons for ceasing travelling, 'other' was cited most often. When asked to expand on 'other' respondents cited reasons such as: being settled, being happy where they are, work in the area, being unable to afford to travel, the 'old ways' being gone, making their current accommodation a home, being too old, as well as citing 'no particular reason'.

7.7 For those who did travel, however, we asked them where they liked to go. This was an open question designed to allow respondents to mention three of the places they visit most frequently. The most common destination seemed to be Appleby Fair in Cumbria or a number of other traditional horse fairs across the UK. Places such as towns in the East of England (e.g. Cambridge and Harlow) and South West (Cornwall and Dorset) were very common responses. It is difficult to ascertain and quantify a specific travelling pattern from these responses; however, it seems that there was a preference for remaining in the 'South' of England, with the exception of annual visits to Appleby Fair in Cumbria.

7.8 For those people who still travelled, there was a wide variation in how many caravans/trailers they travelled with from 1 to 3, with most people travelling with between 1 and 2 caravans.

7.9 Of the people who said they still travel to a certain extent 73% of these had travelled at some point in the past 12 months. In terms of why they travelled, respondents cited attending fairs as the main reason followed by 'work' and 'a holiday'.

8. Future accommodation, household formation and accommodation affordability

8.1 This chapter looks at a range of issues including the movement intentions of the sample, the formation of new households and concealment of existing ones and the accommodation intentions of the Gypsy and Traveller population. These factors are key drivers in the assessment of accommodation need within the borough. The findings from the survey are presented here and how this then translates into 'need' is discussed in Chapter 10.

Future accommodation: site based households

8.2 The overwhelming majority of trailer based households in area had no intention of leaving their current accommodation, 90% said that they were 'going to stay in this accommodation indefinitely'. Interestingly, the households most committed to remaining in their current accommodation were those on unauthorised developments where all households could not foresee themselves moving.

8.3 Only two trailer based households wanted to move immediately, 1 from one of the socially rented sites and who wanted to move into a house within Maidstone and 1 household from one of the private sites with temporary permission who cited 'no particular reason' for their intention but they did not wish to remain in Maidstone.

8.4 The only other households who had any movement intentions were two households from one of the socially rented sites who reported that they would move in around 5-10 years. Both indicated that they simply wanted a change of accommodation at some point.

8.5 Just one household was currently on a waiting list for an authorised pitch (on one of the Maidstone social sites), this household was currently on a private site with temporary planning permission.

Future accommodation: households in bricks and mortar

8.6 Considering households currently living in bricks and mortar accommodation when asked how long they were likely to remain in their house, the vast majority said that they intended to stay in their accommodation indefinitely (62%); 14% did not know or were not sure. A quarter of the sample had movement intentions with 10% looking to move in 2-5 years, 5% looking to move in the next 1-2 years and 10% looking to move in the next 12 months.

8.7 Of those who had firm intentions to move out of their house, or did not know what they would do, just 1 respondent cited the most important need to move was to live in trailer based accommodation and 'travel' (5% of all bricks and mortar respondents) citing the most important reason for leaving their house as needing to travel. This

respondent wanted to remain within the borough of Maidstone. The other reasons given for wanting to leave their house was: no particular reason (3 respondents), work reasons (2 respondents), to be near family (1 respondent), housing conditions (1 respondent). However, when then asked what sort of accommodation they would be looking to move into all 8 respondents (38% of the sample) were looking for trailer based accommodation of some form and 5 respondents (24% of the sample) wanted this within the Maidstone borough. The main reason being is that they had family in the area. However, no one was aware of any accommodation they would be able to move onto.

Household concealment

8.8 A total of 6 households (5% of the sample) reported concealed households (i.e. separate households currently in need of accommodation and living with them), which equates to a total of 19 individuals. All of these were family members (mainly older children often with children of their own) of the respondents who required their own accommodation. Table 8.1 below shows the composition of these households by accommodation type.

Table 8.1: Concealed households by accommodation type

Type of accommodation	Comments
Unauthorised development	HH1. 1 household of 4 people consisting of their daughter and son-in-law and their 2 children
Socially rented site	Two households: HH2. One household of 1 person – a 20 year old daughter HH3. one household of 5 people – son, daughter-in-law and 3 children
Permanent private site	Three households: HH4. one household of 2 people – their grandchild and partner HH5. three households each of 1 person – 2 20yr old daughters and a 19 yr old son HH6. Four households each of 1 person – 4 daughters aged 27, 28, 30 and 34

8.9 No households were concealed within bricks and mortar housing. From looking at these household members it is reasonable to assume that this concealment equates to an accommodation need for 11 separate households.

8.10 Table 8.2 below looks at how the accommodation need for these concealed households is expected to be resolved. It should be noted that all households were expected to move within the same local area as the respondents.

Table 8.2: Accommodation intentions and arrangements for each concealed household

Household (see Table 8.1 above)	Intentions and arrangements being made	Potential pitch need
HH1	Probable move to bricks and mortar	Nil
HH2	Intention to live on pitch but may need permission from the County Council	1 pitch
HH3	Intention to live on the same site may need permission from the County Council	1 pitch
HH4	Unknown	1 pitch
HH5	Intention to all live on the same site but will need planning permission to do so	3 pitches (but dependent on planning permission)
HH6	Intention to live on the same site and going through the planning system to try and make this happen	4 pitches (but dependent on planning permission)

8.11 From examining the intentions and arrangements being made for these households it is reasonable to assume a pitch need of 10 pitches.

Household formation

8.12 Respondents were also asked whether there were people living with them who were likely to want their own separate accommodation in the next five years (2011–2016). A total of 8 households (9% of the trailer based sample[21]) said that there were people living with them who would require independent accommodation within the next five-year period. This amounted to 15 individuals.[22]

8.13 All of these were family members (mainly older children or children in their teens). Table 8.3 below shows the composition of these households by accommodation type.

Table 8.3: Household formation by accommodation type

Type of accommodation	Comments
Unauthorised development	HH1. One household member - a 16 yr old son
Socially rented site	Four households: HH2. One household member – a 14 year old daughter HH3. One household member – a 22 yr old daughter HH4. One household member – a 17 yr old son HH5. Eight household members which separate into two separate households. Each with two adults and two children.
Permanent private site	Three households: HH6. One household member – a 14 yr old daughter HH7. One household member – a daughter HH8. One household member – a son

[21] No one in bricks and mortar identified anyone in need of separate accommodation over the 2011-2016 period.

[22] We are confident there was no double counting between these different time periods.

8.14 It was not expected that households would be formed from within bricks and mortar housing. From looking at these household members it is reasonable to assume that this household formation equates to an accommodation need for 9 separate households.

8.15 Table 8.4 below looks at how the accommodation need for these households is expected to be resolved. It should be noted that all households were expected to move within the same local area as the respondents.

Table 8.4: Accommodation intentions and arrangements for each household

Household (see Table 8.3 above)	Intentions and arrangements being made	Potential pitch need
HH1	Probable move to bricks and mortar	Nil
HH2	Intention to live on a pitch	1 pitch
HH3	Intention to live on a pitch	1 pitch
HH4	Intention to live on a pitch	1 pitch
HH5	Intention to all live on the same site but may need permission from the County Council	2 pitches
HH6	Intention to live on a pitch	1 pitch
HH7	Intention to live on a pitch	1 pitch
HH8	Intention to live on a pitch	1 pitch

8.16 From examining the intentions and arrangements being made for these households it is reasonable to assume a pitch need of 8 pitches.

8.17 We are confident that we have ensured no double counting between household concealment and household formation.

Accommodation affordability

8.18 In order to explore issues of accommodation affordability we asked a series of related questions. The first of these looked at the ability of households to afford a series of accommodation options; these are presented in Table 8.5.

Table 8.5: Ability to afford any of the following

Type of accommodation	% of respondents agreeing
A pitch on a private site with planning permission	3
A pitch on a private site without planning permission	4
Land to be developed into a site	4
Cannot afford to purchase land or a site	44

8.19 As can be seen very few people appeared able to afford to develop their own site based accommodation.

8.20 The next question explored how much they pay per week/month in rent or mortgage for their accommodation. This information is displayed across all accommodation types in Table 8.6.

Table 8.6: Cost of rent/mortgage

Cost	Type of accommodation							Total
	Unauthorised Development	Socially rented site	Private site (perm)	Private site (temp)	Bricks & mortar (socially rented)	Bricks & mortar (Private rented)	Bricks & mortar (owner occupier)	
£130-255pm	0	13 (81%)	1 (2%)	0	0	0	0	14 (12%)
£256-385pm	0	0	0	0	7 (46%)	0	0	7 (6%)
£386-515pm	0	0	0	0	1 (7%)	2 (40%)	0	3 (3%)
£516-645pm	0	0	0	0	0	2 (40%)	0	2 (2%)
Don't know	0	0	1 (2%)	0	5 (33%)	0	0	7 (6%)
Prefer not to say	0	2 (13%)	1 (2%)	2 (20%)	2 (13%)	1 (20%)	0	8 (7%)
Don't pay rent or mortgage	15 (100%)	1 (6%)	45 (92%)	8 (80%)	0	0	1 (100%)	73 (64%)

8.21 As this table shows, the vast majority of the sample (64%) do not have any rental or mortgage costs. The remainder have to pay between £130 and £645 a month.

8.22 The next question looked at the income that each household received gross. This can be seen in Table 8.7.

Table 8.7: Income

Cost	Type of accommodation							Total
	Unauthorised Development	Socially rented site	Private site (perm)	Private site (temp)	Bricks & mortar (socially rented)	Bricks & mortar (Private rented)	Bricks & mortar (owner occupier)	
Under £50pw	0	0	1 (2%)	0	0	0	0	1 (1%)
£50-100pw	2 (13%)	5 (31%)	4 (8%)	1 (10%)	1 (7%)	0	0	13 (11%)
£101-150pw	0	2 (13%)	1 (2%)	0	1 (7%)	1 (20%)	0	5 (4%)
£151-200pw	0	0	1 (2%)	0	0	0	0	1 (1%)
£201-250pw	0	4 (25%)	3 (6%)	0	0	0	0	7 (6%)
£351-400pw	0	1 (6%)	0	0	0	0	0	1 (1%)
none	0	0	2 (4%)	0	0	0	0	2 (2%)
Don't know	6 (40%)	2 (13%)	20 (41%)	7 (70%)	6 (40%)	1 (20%)	0	43 (38%)
prefer not to say	7 (47%)	2 (13%)	17 (35%)	2 (20%)	7 (47%)	3 (60%)	1 (100%)	41 (36%)

8.23 As can be seen most people either did not know (38%) or preferred not to say (36%). Those who did respond appeared, for the most part, to be on low incomes of between £50 pw and £200 pw.

8.24 We also asked people to indicate their household savings. However, the results are uninformative as the majority either preferred not to say (60%) or reported 'none' (38%).

8.25 In line with many other assessments of the affordable accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers relatively few respondents were willing to answer the specific questions relating to income. The reasons for these are complex but tend to revolve around issues of trust between the interviewer and respondent and particular privacy issues associated with Gypsy and Traveller communities. This is not atypical from other similar assessments and few conclusions should be drawn about the need for affordable accommodation or otherwise from these responses or from the disproportionate rates of pitch ownership on sites in the borough.

8.26 It is worth noting that a diversity of socio-economic situations is present amongst the Gypsy and Traveller communities, from the moderately wealthy to very poor families. Although obtaining empirical evidence on the economic circumstances of Gypsies and Travellers is very difficult it is well established that Gypsies and Travellers are amongst the most culturally, socially, physically and financially excluded in society.[23] A number of families will always be able to afford to purchase or rent pitches at market rates. However, in line with the rest of society, other sections of the communities will be excluded from accommodation provided at market rates and will require additional support to access safe and secure accommodation in line with their cultural needs. The absence of a range of tenure to address this diversity of socio-economic circumstances may lead to a perpetuation and possible increase in hidden homelessness. Such incidents of hidden homelessness are already clear in the Maidstone borough by the presence of concealed households on a number of sites – particularly socially rented sites. The waiting lists for these sites also indicate a demand for affordable accommodation in the area.

[23] For detailed information see Cemlyn, S et al. (2009), *Inequalities experienced by Gypsy and Traveller Communities: A Review* (Research Report: 12), London, Equality and Human Rights Commission.

9. Travelling Showpeople

9.1 Travelling Showpeople occupy an unusual position in planning terms and a separate planning Circular, detailing the particular planning needs of Travelling Showpeople, has been produced: Circular 04/07. As well as detailing the requirements for pitch identification and allocation for Travelling Showpeople, Circular 04/07 also requires that the accommodation needs of Travelling Showpeople are included within the assessments of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs.

9.2 Within Maidstone there is currently three 'known' authorised private yards used by Travelling Showpeople in the borough. Due to a lack of official information yard size/plot capacity has been estimated by the research team.

1. Fairview, Osborne Drive, Delting Hill. Estimated to consist of 3 plots
2. Franks Bridge, Headcorn. This is a small yard which appeared unoccupied with no evidence of habitation at the time of this study. It appears reasonable to assume that a single household may occupy the site and that this household was away at the time of the fieldwork.
3. Wickham Orchard, Marden. Estimated to consist of 1 plot.

9.3 This provides an estimated plot total of 5 plots.

9.4 Initial contact was made with a representative of the Showmen's Guild who offered to raise the awareness of the survey with the members of the local community. However, upon visiting the yards the research team no interviews were achieved with household members due to absence or refusal to take part.

9.5 At the time of the survey there was also one unauthorised development occupied by Travelling Showpeople:

1. The Paddock, Delting Hill. Consisting of 12 caravans (July 2011 Caravan Count) equating to approximately 7 plots[24]

9.6 An interview was secured with three residents on this site. Due to the small number of interviews secured it is impractical to present the survey responses as percentages. The following summarises the key issues emerging from the interviews:

- All claimed that the site has permanent planning permission
- All reported that they had enough space
- All said they had lived in the area for over 10 years and that they had lived on this site for all of that time
- All said they were going to stay on the site indefinitely.
- All said they lived in the area for between 21-30 weeks of the year and they were travelling with fairs at other times.

[24] Applying the 1.7 caravan to plot ratio

10. An assessment of accommodation need

10.1 Irrespective of the proposed change in policy targeted at resolving Gypsy and Traveller accommodation issues there are no signs that the growth in the Gypsy and Traveller population will slow significantly. Indeed, population characteristics which have emerged from GTAAs suggest that the formation of new households, at levels often above non-Gypsy/Traveller households, is inevitable. Research from the Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has indicated that around 6,000 additional pitches for Gypsies and Travellers are immediately required to meet the current shortage of accommodation within England.[25]

A note on the assessment of accommodation need

10.2 Because of the historical inequalities in pitch provision, Gypsies and Travellers have constrained choices as to where and how they would choose to live if they had real choice. So while choices for the non-Travelling community are generally much wider - as there is social housing available in every authority in the country - there are no local authority sites in around a third of the local authorities in England. Few local authorities have more than one socially rented site and a significant number of authorities have no authorised private sites.

10.3 Despite all local authorities across England completing a first round of Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments (GTAAs) over the 2006-2009 period the methods of assessing and calculating the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers are still developing. The model drawn upon here derives from a number of sources including:

- The Guidance on Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments.[26]
- Guidance for Regional Planning.[27]
- Knowledge and experience of assumptions featuring in other GTAAs and results of EiP tests of GTAAs
- The emerging messages arising from the recent CLG consultation document '*Planning for Travellers'*.

10.4 In a move from the first round of GTAAs this assessment has focussed more closely on two issues, the constitution of 'local and historic' need and the need for site based accommodation in line with the planning definition contained with Circular 01/2006 (see Chapter 2). In terms of addressing local and historic need this assessment has measured this by:

[25] See Brown, P., Henning, S. and Niner, P (2010) *Assessing local housing authorities' progress in meeting the accommodation needs of Gypsy and Traveller communities in England and Wales : Update 2010*. Equality and Human Rights Commission.
[26] CLG (2007) *Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments* – Guidance, London: HMSO.
[27] http://www.communities.gov.uk/pub/209/PreparingRegionalSpatialStrategyreviewsonGypsiesandTravellersbyregionalplannings_id1508209.pdf

- Surveying households resident in the borough, as opposed to extrapolating trends and findings from households resident outside the borough (i.e. which often occurs where neighbouring authorities have combined to produced joint GTAAs).
- Drawing upon empirical primary research within the borough as opposed to developing projections based upon trends within the Caravan Count. Via a process of triangulation, records are brought together with survey responses on issues such as unauthorised sites, temporary consents and concealed households to develop a robust assessment of need. Similarly, an empirical assessment of local likely future needs is made possible via the comprehensive survey of households. Together these factors represent the latest position on historic demand.

10.5 In turn, the definition of Gypsies and Travellers as detailed in Circular 01/2006 is operationalised by a refinement of accommodation need informed by the current mobility/nomadism of resident Gypsies and Travellers. In line with the sentiment of Circular 01/2006 refinement of need is made possible by assessing the extent of travelling undertaken by households and whether travelling was no longer undertaken due to the specific reasons of needs associated with their, or a dependents, education, health or age.

10.6 It should be noted that the need reported as arising here is generated from households currently accommodated across a variety of accommodation types i.e. private sites, social sites and unauthorised sites. This does not entail a need for these types of tenure.

10.7 This study has taken a thorough assessment of the need arising from all sites (social, permanent, temporary and unauthorised) present at the time of the survey. As such this assessment of need should be regarded as a reasonable and robust assessment of need upon which to base planning decisions going forward.

10.8 Table 10.1 below contains the requirements for net additional pitches that need to be developed to meet the measured need. Sites given planning permission or developed through new social provision, 'genuine' vacancies on social and private sites arising in the borough[28] occurring after the 1st October 2011 contribute to the need requirements detailed in the table below. It should also be noted that the use of temporary planning consents will not address the long-term needs of Gypsies and Travellers in the borough. The use of such consents merely postpones meeting the need thus causing added uncertainty. It is recommended that this assessment of accommodation need is repeated in due course (circa 5 years) to ensure this assessment remains as accurate as possible.

[28] Such vacancies will need close monitoring.

10.9 Accommodation need has been considered in this assessment by carefully exploring the following factors:

Current residential supply

- Socially rented pitches
- Private authorised pitches

Residential need 2011–2016

- Temporary planning permissions, which will end over the assessment period.
- Concealment of households
- Allowance for family growth over the assessment period.
- Need for authorised pitches from families on unauthorised developments.
- Movement over the assessment period between sites and housing.
- Whether the closure of any existing sites is planned
- Potential need for residential pitches in the area from families on unauthorised encampments.
- Movement between areas.

Additional supply, 2011–2016

The supply of pitches between 2011–2016 has been considered but concluded to be nil. The supply of pitches within the borough should be closely monitored. New mechanisms may be required to enable this. A number of factors are potential sources of supply:

- Pitches currently closed but re-entering use
- New sites planned
- Vacant pitches

10.10 Site overcrowding was also considered (i.e. whether there were more living units on sites designed for less) but there was no strong evidence that sites are overcrowded in this way to any great extent. Pitch overcrowding (i.e. more households occupying a single living area than they are designed for) is addressed within the consideration of household concealment.

10.11 The requirements are presented in summary form in Table 10.1 below. Table 10.1 details the accommodation and pitch need, derived from applying the definition as used in the Housing Act and the Planning definition. The housing definition is considered to illustrate overall accommodation need for the borough. The planning definition refines the above need in order to illustrate the need for site-based accommodation. Each element is explained in greater detail below. **All figures related to pitches not sites.**

Table 10.1: Summary of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation and pitch need (2011-2026)

	Element of supply and need	Column 1	Column 2
		Accommodation Need Total (households)	Pitch Need Total (pitches)
	Current residential supply		
1	Socially rented pitches	33	33
2	Private authorised pitches	139	139
3	**Total authorised Gypsy and Traveller pitches**	**172**	**172**
	Residential pitch need, 2011–2016		
4	End of temporary planning permissions	43	30
5	Concealed households	21	21
6	New household formation	14	14
7	Unauthorised developments	51	41
8	Net Movement from housing to sites	-1	-1
9	Closure of sites	0	0
10	Unauthorised encampments	0	0
11	Movement between areas	0	0
12	**Residential pitch need (2011–2016)**	**128**	**105**
13	**Residential pitch need (2016–2021)**	**27**	**25**
14	**Residential pitch need (2021–2026)**	**30**	**27**
15	**Total Residential pitch need (2011–2026)**	**185**	**157**

Note: For pragmatic reasons these figures have been rounded up to the nearest whole pitch

Explanation of the need requirement elements

Current residential supply

10.12 **Row 1:** The number of pitches on socially rented sites provided by local authority information.

10.13 **Row 2:** The number of pitches on private authorised sites provided by local authority information.

10.14 **Row 3:** The total number of authorised pitches within the borough.

Residential pitch need 2011–2016

10.15 **Row 4:** The number of pitches which have temporary planning permission due to expire within the assessment period. Column 1 of Table 10.1 details the number of pitches with temporary planning permission in the borough ending within the assessment period. Column 2 of Table 10.1 details the number of pitches with temporary planning permission in the borough ending within the assessment period and estimated to meet the need for site-based accommodation under the planning definition.

Households on private sites with temporary planning permission meeting the planning definition

Applying the planning definition to households within the borough was made possible by assessing the extent of travelling undertaken by households and the reasons for not travelling where households were sedentary.

Column 1 of Table 10.1. presents the actual number of households currently residing on pitches with temporary planning permission which will end within the assessment period. Column 2 of Table 10.1 applies findings from the survey which detail the extent of travelling undertaken by these households. The findings and calculation are as follows.

Finding: The number of households living on temporary pitches who travel at times throughout the year was 50% of the resident households. Those households who no longer travelled for reasons of their or a dependents education, age or health needs was 20% of the resident households. Responses were checked to ensure no double counting.

Calculation: 70% on a base population of 43 pitches with temporary planning permission = 30 households who meet the Planning definition.

10.16 **Row 5**: This details the number of concealed households occupying existing accommodation who require independent accommodation within the borough. A total of 21 households require site based accommodation due to being concealed.

Concealed households across accommodation types requiring site based accommodation

Finding: The analysis of the survey showed that there were a number of individuals who are concealed/doubled up who are currently occupying pitches in the borough.

Assumptions: It is unlikely that all households will form and demand independent accommodation. A ratio of pitch sharing has been assumed at a rate of 1:075 as advocated in the incomplete Inspector's Report for the South East Plan Partial Review. We believe the figures outlined below also account for the doubled up households identified by Kent County Council (see Chapter 4).

Calculation:

- Authorised private sites (permanent) – 8 concealed households were identified in the survey that required independent site based accommodation. Applying the pitch sharing ratio equates to 6 new households which is the equivalent to 12% of the sample on private sites. This is then grossed to the whole population of households on permanent private sites = 17 households
- Socially rented sites – 2 households were identified in the survey that required independent site based accommodation. Applying the pitch sharing ratio equates to 2 new households which is the equivalent to 13% of the sample on socially rented sites. This is then grossed to the whole population of households on permanent private sites = 4 households
- There were no concealed households found in bricks and mortar housing, unauthorised developments or on temporary privates sites thought to require site based accommodation.

10.17 **Row 6:** This is the number of new pitches required from new household formation.

Pitch requirement from new households forming

Finding: Drawing upon the information contained within Chapter 8, the analysis of the survey showed that there were 8 households likely to require pitch based accommodation in the borough in the next 5 years from authorised sites. There were no households expected to form and require pitch based accommodation from bricks and mortar housing, unauthorised developments and temporary private sites.

Assumptions: It is unlikely that all households will form and demand independent accommodation. A ratio of pitch sharing has been assumed at a rate of 1:075 as advocated in the incomplete Inspector's Report for the South East Plan Partial Review. We believe the figures outlined below also account for the doubled up households identified by Kent County Council.

Calculation:

- Authorised private sites (permanent) – 3 households were identified in the survey that required independent site based accommodation. Applying the pitch sharing ratio equates to 2 new households which is the equivalent to 4% of the sample on private sites. This is then grossed to the whole population of households on permanent private sites = 6 households
- Socially rented sites – 5 households were identified in the survey that required independent site based accommodation. Applying the pitch sharing ratio equates to 4 new households which is the equivalent to 25% of the sample on socially rented sites. This is then grossed to the whole population of households on permanent private sites = 8 households

10.18 **Row 7:** This is the level of need arising from current unauthorised developments. Column 1 of Table 10.1 details the number of pitches on unauthorised developments within the borough. Column 2 of Table 10.1 details the number of pitches on unauthorised developments which have been estimated to meet the need for site-based accommodation under the planning definition.

Households on pitches on unauthorised developments meeting the planning definition

Applying the planning definition to households within the borough was made possible by assessing the extent of travelling undertaken by households and the reasons for not travelling where households were sedentary.

Column 1 of Table 10.1. presents the actual number of households currently residing on unauthorised developments. Since these sites are, by definition, unauthorised, these households are in need of authorised, legal accommodation, whether through the granting of planning permission, the provision of other accommodation options or the provision of accommodation elsewhere. Column 2 of Table 10.1 applies findings from the survey which detail the extent of travelling undertaken by these households. The findings and calculation are as follows.

Finding: The number of households living on unauthorised developments who travel at times throughout the year was 54% of the resident households. Those households who no longer travelled for reasons of their or a dependents education, age or health needs was 27% of the resident households. Responses were checked to ensure no double counting.

Calculation: 81% on a base population of 51 unauthorised pitches = 41 households who meet the Planning definition

10.19 **Row 8:** This is the estimation of the flow from sites to houses and vice versa.

Movement between housing and sites

Movement from sites to housing finding: Only 1 site based household expressed a firm intention to move into bricks and mortar accommodation. This is the equivalent of 1% of the total site based sample.

Calculation: 1% of the total site based population present at the time of the study = 3 households who will move from sites to housing over the assessment period

Movement from housing to sites finding: Only 1 respondent in bricks and mortar accommodation had firm intentions to move from their house on a site (5% of the sample). However, a total of 8 (38% of sample) respondents reported that they would like to move back into trailer based accommodation and 5 (24% of sample) of these said that they would like to do this within Maidstone. Based on experience we assume that it is unrealistic for all 5 to move into trailers as satisfaction levels with housing were high and movement intentions low. Experience suggests it would need particularly attractive site provision to encourage house to site movement. However we recognise the aversion to housing that may exist amongst the bricks and mortar housing but there is little evidence of this from the survey. Bearing these points in mind we estimated 5% of bricks and mortar residents would move onto sites.

Calculation: 5% of the estimated bricks and mortar population = 2 households who will move from housing to sites over the assessment period.

Net movement from housing to sites = -1

10.20 **Row 9:** Plans to close existing sites, which have been calculated within the supply of site accommodation, will ultimately displace a number of Gypsies and Travellers resulting in an increase in housing need. It is the understanding of the project team that there was no intention to close any residential site in the borough.

10.21 **Row 10:** This provides an estimation of the need arising from households on unauthorised encampments. This factor takes into account households involved in unauthorised encampments that require a residential pitch in the Study Area. The Caravan Count records and records collected by Kent County Council indicate low to nil levels of unauthorised encampments in the borough. The survey team saw no primary evidence of unauthorised encampments during the fieldwork. This assessment has not found any need for residential accommodation from households on unauthorised encampments.[29]

10.22 **Row 11:** This is the level of movement of households between areas. The survey found no evidence to suggest that there is movement between areas. It is assumed that if movement does occur in-migration will balance out migration

[29] This should remain under close review by the agencies responsible.

10.23 **Row 12:** This is the total residential need for pitches arising in the borough between 2011-2016

Permanent residential accommodation need over 2016–2021 and 2021-2026

10.24 The current shortage of sites and pitches for Gypsies and Travellers means that it is difficult to predict trends in living arrangements until the current lack of pitch based accommodation has been addressed at a national level. There is no means of knowing how Gypsies and Travellers will decide to live in the next decade. There may be an increase in smaller households, moves into bricks and mortar housing may be more common or household formation may happen at a later age.

10.25 However, it is necessary to plan for the long term and anticipate pitch need from Gypsy and Traveller households. In order to tackle the complexity of needs that may well occur over the next decade it is established practice in assessment of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation need to apply an assumed rate of household growth. It has been common in similar studies to employ a standard 3% per annum compound rate of household growth. This study however has responded to the local situation and has found a local household growth rate of 2.3% a year compound. [30] This figure is then applied, minus an assumed ratio for pitch sharing of 1:0.75, to the projected number of pitches which should be available by 2016. All household growth is assumed to require a site-based solution. This study does not allow for unauthorised developments over the next periods (2016 – 2021 and 2021 – 2026) because the factors which will contribute to future need have been clearly identified and measured as part of the study. The supply of pitches over the 2016–2026 period has been considered but has been assumed to be zero. This is consistent with earlier GTAAs and implicitly compensates for not taking into account needs arising from drivers other than family growth.

10.26 **Row 13:** The total requirement for pitches in the borough over the period 2016–2021.

10.27 **Row 14**: The total requirement for pitches in the borough over the period 2021-2026.

10.28 **Row 15:** The total requirement for pitches in the borough over the period 2011-2026.

[30] Based on the local household growth rate found in the survey which has synergy with household growth rates of 2% and 3% that have been recommended and used in other studies e.g. Niner, P. (2003) *Local Authority Gypsy/Traveller Sites in England*, ODPM.

11. An assessment of need for transit accommodation

11.1 Although to a certain extent nomadism and travelling are currently restricted, this remains an important feature of Gypsy and Traveller identity and way of life, even if only to visit fairs or visit family. Some Gypsies and Travellers are still highly mobile without a permanent base, and others travel for significant parts of the year from a winter base. More Gypsies and Travellers might travel if it were possible to find places to stop without the threat of constant eviction. Nationally the worst living conditions are commonly experienced by Gypsies and Travellers living on unauthorised encampments who do not have easy access to water or toilet facilities and have difficulties in accessing education and health services.

Need for Transit Sites and Stopping Places

11.2 National policy is clear that there should be provision in order for Gypsies and Travellers who choose to travel to do so without resorting to stopping illegally or inappropriately.

11.3 We found no clear evidence of the need for transit provision from households on unauthorised encampments in the borough. It appears that transit need is currently being catered for by site-based households resident in the area who allow their families and friends to stay with them for short periods at various times throughout the year. No one mentioned accommodating visitors as being a problem except households on socially rented sites, who reported requiring permission from the site manager, and households on others sites who reported not having permission for extra caravans.

11.4 It is understood that Kent County Council are exploring the development of a network of transit facilities to cater for mobility across the South East region. This assessment would support that approach.

11.5 There are a number of issues to note when considering the provision of transit accommodation:

- The geographic nature of the area - the provision of one transit site may not provide for need across the different areas of the borough.
- A single transit site would force the mixing of differing groups (family and ethnic) and could lead to potential tensions.
- The needs of the travelling groups often combines a mixture of motivations (i.e. work, family and holiday). A uniform transit site may not meet the differing requirements.
- Larger pitches on residential sites, or larger number of pitches on sites, provide the potential to meet the needs of short-term visitors and 'future-proof' against an increase in unauthorised encampments.

11.6 Although transit need could be met by the creation of 'hard' purpose-made pitches/sites, it is also recommended that consideration is also given to the need for the development of such 'hard' pitches with the possibility of 'soft' transit pitches (i.e. designated stopping places). Such 'softer' options would provide Gypsies and Travellers with somewhere authorised and more secure to stop whilst creating a minimal environmental impact. Such stopping places are often favoured by Gypsy and Traveller households.

11.7 Requirements for provision of future transit accommodation are impossible to predict from this survey. Additional provision would only be required if the level of travelling were to increase markedly. This underlines the general importance of monitoring and reviewing travelling patterns and the incidence of transient unauthorised encampments regularly, and re-assessing provision usage and requirements.

12. An assessment of need for Travelling Showpeople pitches

12.1 Circular 04/07 requires that the accommodation needs of Travelling Showpeople are included within GTAAs. Because of the separate planning issues for Travelling Showpeople and their differing accommodation needs, we have produced a separate calculation of residential need. It must be noted that pitches (commonly referred to as 'yards') for Travelling Showpeople are significantly larger than those required for other groups of Travellers.

Travelling Showpeople accommodation need

12.2 All of the factors that are used to determine Gypsy and Traveller accommodation need are considered in order to calculate need for accommodation for Travelling Showpeople.

Additional residential plot requirements for Travelling Showpeople

12.3 It is particularly difficult to estimate additional plot requirements as there was no definitive information on the number of plots currently in the borough. From visits to the sites it was estimated that the capacity was as follows:

1. Fairview, Osborne Drive, Delting Hill. 3 plots
2. Franks Bridge, Headcorn. 1 plot
3. Wickham Orchard, Marden. 1 plot.

12.4 Taking note of this, and the issues discussed in Chapter 9, the following requirements represent an informed estimate based on the data available.

12.5 Table 12.1 below summarises the model for residential plot requirements in the borough for the first 5-year period (2011–2016). For the purposes of clarity each requirement is expanded upon below.

Table 12.1: Summary of estimated need for additional residential plots for Travelling Showpeople within Maidstone, 2011–2026

Element of supply and need		Plots
	Current residential supply	
1	Socially rented plots	0
2	Private authorised plots	5
3	Total authorised plots	5
	Residential plot need, 2011–2016	
4	End of temporary planning permissions	0
5	Concealed households	0
6	New household formation	0
7	Unauthorised developments	7
8	Movement between yards and housing	0
9	Closure of sites	0
10	Unauthorised encampments	0
11	Movement between areas	0
12	**Residential plot need (2011–2016)**	**7**
13	**Residential plot need (2016–2021)**	1
14	**Residential plot need (2021–2026)**	1
15	**Total residential plot need (2011–2026)**	**9**

Note: For pragmatic reasons these figures have been rounded up to the nearest whole pitch

Explanation of the need requirement elements

Current residential supply

12.6 **Row 1**: The number of plots on residential socially rented yards provided by local authority information.

12.7 **Row 2**: The total number of authorised plots provided for Travelling Showpeople. One plot here equates to one household – see Chapter 9 for more information.

12.8 **Row 3:** The total number of authorised plots within the borough.

Residential plot need, 2011–2016

12.9 **Row 4:** There are no temporary planning permissions due to end during the assessment period.

12.10 **Row 5:** There are no known concealed households living with households on the plots

12.11 **Row 6**: There were no households likely to form from households in the borough.

12.12 **Row 7:** This is the number of plots currently classified as unauthorised developments. Since these sites are, by definition, unauthorised, these households are in need of authorised, legal accommodation, whether through the granting of planning permission, the provision of other accommodation options or the provision of accommodation elsewhere. All respondents in the survey appear highly mobile and are seen to be in need of yard based accommodation in the borough.

12.13 **Row 8**: There was no evidence of any movement between housing and yards in the borough.

12.14 **Row 9**: There was no evidence of yards due to close within the borough.

12.15 **Row 10:** There was no evidence of Travelling Showpeople appearing as unauthorised encampments within the borough.

12.16 **Row 11**: There was no evidence of movement occurring between areas. It is assumed that if movement does occur in-migration will balance out migration

12.17 **Row 12:** This is the net requirement for additional residential plots within the borough 2011-2016.

Permanent residential accommodation need over the next period, 2016–2026

12.18 Similar to the case with Gypsies and Travellers, the current shortage of sites and pitches for Travelling Showpeople means that it is difficult to predict future trends in living arrangements. However, in order to take a strategic view, it is important to be able to plan for the longer term. Therefore, in order to balance the complexity of issues with a need to plan for the longer term we have used an assumed rate of household growth of 2% a year compound as applied to the projected number of pitches which should be available by 2016.[31] All households on yards sites are assumed to require plots. It is assumed there will be no unauthorised developments over the next period.

12.19 **Row 13**: It is estimated that there will be 1 additional plot required between 2016-2021.

12.20 **Row 14**: It is estimated that there will be 1 additional plot required between 2021-2026.

12.21 **Row 15**: Total residential plot need, 2011–2026 = 9 plots.

12.22 The supply of pitches over the 2016–2026 period has been considered but has been assumed to be zero. This is consistent with other similar assessments and implicitly compensates for not taking into account needs arising from drivers other than family growth.

[31] Although household growth rates of 3% a year are typically used for Gypsies and Travellers, 2% has been used here to account for the smaller families of Travelling Showpeople in comparison to Gypsies and Travellers. This was a growth figure used in the North West RSS Partial Review

Appendix 1: The assessment methodology

Draft practice guidance for local authorities undertaking Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments was released by the ODPM (now CLG) in February 2006 with final guidance made available in October 2007. Specialised guidance and assessments was felt to be required as many local authority housing needs assessments were previously failing to assess or identify the needs of Gypsies and Travellers. The Guidance explains why assessments are needed, how authorities might go about conducting an assessment and issues to consider. The Guidance is non-prescriptive in terms of methods but suggests that Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments integrate a wide variety of evidence such as existing secondary information, views of selected stakeholders and the views of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

It is noted that the recent consultation document draft Planning Policy Statement 'Planning for traveller sites' (CLG, 2011) has proposed removing the need for dedicated Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments (GTAAs) from any new guidance. It states,

> *While the Government is keen that planning policy highlights the importance of ensuring that targets are based on robust evidence, it does not consider it necessary to prescribe to local planning authorities the type and volume of evidence required, especially as their conclusions will be tested through the process of consultation and Examination in Public of local plans. This also accords with the Government's "streamlining" objectives by removing policy that is already adequately covered by legislation. The proposed policy states that local planning authorities set their own evidence-based targets for the provision of pitches/plots. The policy does not dictate what targets local planning authorities should adopt. This is a matter for local planning authorities to decide themselves depending on the circumstances in their particular area.*

However, in the absence of alternative methodologies for assessing the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers we have adopted a modified survey of the sort used in the first round of GTAAs.

This assessment was undertaken in two distinct stages. Each of these stages is described in more detail below.

- Stage one – collation and review of existing information
- Stage two – survey with Gypsies and Travellers across the Study Area.

Stage One: Collation and review of existing secondary information

This first stage comprised a review of the available literature and secondary sources obtained from government (central and local) and regional and community bodies. This provided an historical, social and political overview to the situation of Gypsies and Travellers in the Study Area. More specifically this included the collection, review and synthesis of:

- The bi-annual Count of Gypsy and Traveller Caravans.

- Local Plans, Regional and Core Strategy documents and other literature relevant to Local Development Frameworks. Housing Strategies, Homelessness Strategies and Supporting People strategies were analysed as was local authority allocation and monitoring procedures.
- Records and data maintained and provided by the local authority

Stage Two: Survey with Gypsies and Travellers

One of the most important aspects of the assessment was consulting with local Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople; the fieldwork took place between September and November 2011. These consultations took the form of face-to-face interviews in order to gather information about their characteristics, experiences, accommodation and related needs and aspirations. The survey with Gypsies and Travellers is discussed below under three sections: sampling strategy and response rates; questionnaire design; and fieldwork and interviewers.

Sampling and response rates

Sampling Gypsy and Traveller households for Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments is always problematic given the absence of accurate information concerning the size and location of the Travelling communities. As such the sampling technique for the assessment was purposive rather than purely random. The sampling strategy for the assessment differed depending upon the particular accommodation type currently inhabited by Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the Study Area.[32]

- For households on the socially rented sites, authorised private sites and unauthorised developments we compiled a sample frame from information provided by the local authority. We set an aspirational quota for the interviews of 50% of the occupied pitches on these sites. Repeat visits were made to locations in order to achieve interviews if households were away from the site, it was not convenient for the household in question or the fieldworkers ran out of time.
- For households on unauthorised encampments, officers were encouraged to inform the fieldwork team when and where encampments occurred during the fieldwork period. Fieldwork team members also sought to utilise their own contacts to trace any unauthorised sites. There were no unauthorised encampments reported to the team during the fieldwork period and none were found. From looking at the Caravan Count and from discussions with stakeholders it appears that the low number of encampments is reflective of the current trend.

[32] Such a sampling strategy coupled with the lack of knowledge about the overall size of the Gypsy and Traveller population means that discussing statistical issues such as sampling error and confidence intervals would be misleading.

- As the population of Gypsies and Travellers in bricks and mortar housing is relatively hidden from official records there was no sample frame from which to identify people. Therefore, in order to engage with housed Gypsies and Travellers the fieldwork team relied on three main methods: contacts of Gypsies and Travellers who had already been interviewed as part of the assessment; the contacts of the Gypsy and Traveller Community Interviewers on the fieldwork team; and contacts provided by stakeholders.
- Contact with Travelling Showpeople was made possible by information held by the local authority as to the whereabouts of yards as well as links provided by the local section of the Showmen's Guild.

A total of 115 households were involved in the assessment within the borough.

Table A1.1 below illustrates how the assessment sample relates to the known number of pitches and estimated population by accommodation type. As can be seen, we endeavoured to include all known sites in the Study.

It should be noted that the fieldwork team, which included members of the Gypsy and Traveller community, found it extremely difficult to engage with households on a number of sites. The precise reasons for this are unknown, however It is worth considering that on smaller independent sites, which are the norm through Maidstone, the site owner often acts as the 'spokesperson' and therefore effectively acts as the gatekeeper to other residents on the site. In practice therefore this may mean that we have set a target or 2 or3 interviews but can only in practice achieve one.

Furthermore, to be clear Table A1.2 reflects achieved household interviews. This represents the households who opted to participate in the study rather than the number of households approached. Anecdotally, households on temporary sites often stated that they no longer had any needs, with households on unauthorised developments wary of participating in the survey in case participation complicated, or was detrimental to, their planning application (despite the researchers explaining that it was in no way linked to their application). However, we would not advocate taking these reasons as proxies for having no household need due to the level of suspicion in the communities around surveys of this nature. We therefore believe that the sample is as representative as can be reasonably expected.

Table A1.1: Sample in relation to local Gypsy and Traveller population

Type of accommodation	No. of sites			No. of pitches/households		
	Total	Sample	%	Total	Sample	%
Socially rented	2	2	100	33	16	48
Residential private authorised (permanent)	65	35	54	139	50	36
Residential private authorised (temporary)	17	7	41	43	10	23
Unauthorised developments	31	14	49	51	15	29
Unauthorised encampments	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Housed	NA	NA	NA	NA	21	NA
Authorised Travelling Showpeople yards	3	0	0	5	0	0
Unauthorised Travelling Showpeople yards	1	1	100	7	3	43

In terms of the gender split between interviewees, we spoke to 42 men (36.5%) and 73 women (63.5%). This reflects a commonly achieved gender distribution in GTAAs.

On a base population of 262 households we consulted with 97 resident households,[33] 37% of the estimated resident Gypsy and Traveller community across the Study Area. We believe that as the sample included a range of accommodation types and household circumstances we have no reason to believe that those households included in the survey are untypical from the total population in the area. Overall, we believe that the findings for the assessment are based on reliable information from accommodation types within the Study Area.

Questionnaire design

All household interviews have utilised a structured questionnaire upon which questions were routed according to the appropriate accommodation type. Questions were a mixture of tick-box answers and open-ended questions. This mixed approach enabled us to gather quantifiable information, but also allowed for contextualisation and qualification by the more narrative responses. The survey contained the following sections:

- Current accommodation;
- Connection to the area;
- Travelling;
- Previous housing experiences;
- Household details;
- Health services; and
- Future accommodation.

The questionnaires used in the assessment are available in Appendix 4.

Fieldwork and interviewers

In addition to SHUSU fieldwork staff, and of crucial importance to engaging as effectively as possible with the Gypsy and Traveller population, was the involvement of Gypsy and Traveller Community Interviewers. In total, two members of the Gypsy and Traveller community were involved in the assessment as Community Interviewers. These interviewers had worked previously with SHUSU and were of Romany Gypsy background and lived outside the area.

Each interviewer took part in refresher training, prior to commencing fieldwork, and provided with support from the core study team members during their interviewing activity. Each questionnaire which was returned to us was subject to quality control and appropriate feedback was given to the interviewers. By taking this approach we found we were able to access a range of people that would not otherwise have been included in the assessment, such as 'hidden' members of the community (older people or people living in bricks and mortar housing), and those people who were uncomfortable talking to non-Travellers.

[33] Does not include households on unauthorised developments. Populations on unauthorised sites typically have precarious planning status; therefore including them would distort and possibly skew the size of the local population if they move or application is refused.

Appendix 2: Demographics of the local Gypsy and Traveller population

This section aims to provide some information on the demographics of the sample involved in this accommodation assessment within the Study Area.

Demographic and household characteristics

Characteristics of Gypsy and Traveller communities are often hidden or not widely known. Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments present an ideal opportunity to get to know more about the community at large, particularly in terms of living circumstances, age, Gypsy and Traveller groups and household composition. The following aims to provide some information about the composition of Gypsy and Traveller households in the sample.

Age of interviewees

The age profile of the sample can be seen from Table A2.1. The 25–39 age group was the most consulted during the assessment, forming 30% of the total sample. This was followed by the 50–59 age group (19%) and then the 40-49 age group (18%). A total of 17% of the sample were aged 60 years and over.

Table A2.1: Age of interviewees

Age Group	No.	%
11-17	1	1
18–24	17	15
25–39	35	30
40–49	21	18
50–59	22	19
60–64	16	14
65–74	2	2
75-84	1	1
Total	**115**	

Base: 115 respondents providing information

Household size

In total, the survey sample accounts for 354 members of the Gypsy and Traveller community in the Study Area. The average household size for the whole sample is 3 – larger than the household size of the non-Traveller population. However, this hides a range in household sizes as indicated in Table A2.2 below.

Table A2.2: Household size distribution

Household Size	No.	%
1 Person	6	5
2 Persons	38	33
3 Persons	29	25
4 Persons	21	18
5 Persons	11	10
6 Persons	2	2
7 Persons	1	1
8 Persons	1	1
9 Persons	1	1
10 Persons	1	1
Total people38	**354**	

Base: 111 respondents providing information

There was very little variation in the size of households in relation to their current accommodation type. As can be seen from Table A2.3, respondents from socially rented sites tended to have smaller households.

Table A2.3: Average household size by accommodation type

Accommodation type	Average household size
Socially rented sites	2.4
Bricks and Mortar	3.2
Residential private sites (Perm)	3.5
Residential private sites (Temp)	3.5
Unauthorised developments	2.8

Base: 111 respondents providing information

Gypsy and Traveller groups

The largest single group was Romany/Gypsy (84%), followed by smaller numbers of Irish Travellers (9%), Showperson/Circus person (3%), Traveller (not specified) (3%) and Other (3%).

Table A2.4: Interviewees by Gypsy and Traveller group

Gypsy and Traveller groups	No. of households	%
Romany/Gypsy (English)	96	84
Irish Traveller	10	9
Showperson/Circus person	3	3
Traveller (not specified)	3	3
Other	3	3
Total	**115**	

Base: 115 respondents providing information

Appendix 3: Location of authorised sites with temporary planning permission and unauthorised developments

Authorised sites with temporary planning permission

Table A3.1: Authorised private sites with temporary planning consent

Site	Number of Mobiles & Tourers	Estimated No. of pitches	Planning consent dates
Pear Paddock, Symonds Lane	3	2	Granted February 2010 expires February 2012
Little Boarden, Boarden Lane	2	1	Granted October 2008 expires October 2012
The Stables Brookfield, Forsham Lane	1	1	Expires October 2012
Horseshoes, Hook Lane	2	1	Expires December 2012
The Mellows, Marley Road	2	1	Expires December 2012
Land Rear Of The Meadows, Lenham Road	29	17	Granted February 2011 expires February 2013
Pear View, Symonds Lane	3	2	Granted February 2010 expires February 2013
Quarter Paddocks, Bletchenden Road	5	3	Expires March 2013
Perfect Place, Park Wood Lane	2	1	Expires March 2013
Ash Tree Place, Hampstead Lane	4	2	Expires April 2013
Long Lane, Lenham Road	1	1	Granted September 2010 expires September 2013
Maplehurst Paddock, Frittenden Road	2	1	Expires November 2013
Green Tops, Symonds Lane	2	1	Granted November 2010 expires November 2013
The Vine, Green Hill Lane	1	1	Granted September 2003 expires September 2014
Blue Bell Farm, George Street	6	3	Expires April 2013 and June 2015
The Paddocks, George Street	6	3	Expires April 2013 and June 2015
Stilebridge Stableyard, Stilebridge Lane	3	2	Granted September 2011 expires September 2015
Total	**74**	**43**	

Unauthorised developments

Table A3.2: Unauthorised developments in the area and estimated pitch size

	Site	Caravans present (as of July 2011 Count)	No. of pitches/ caravans applied for	Est pitches/ households[34]
1	Hieland Glen Farm, Love Lane	1 mobile 0 tourers	-	1
2	Land at Love Lane	0 mobiles 0 tourers	1 mobile 1 tourer	1
3	1 Oak Lodge, Tilden Lane	2 mobiles 0 tourers	-	1
4	The Orchard, Snowey Track, Park Lane	0 mobiles 4 tourers	4 mobiles 4 tourers	5
5	Land West of Horseshoe Paddock, Lucks Lane	2 mobiles 3 tourers	2 mobiles 2 tourers	2
6	Plot 13 The Meadows, Lenham Road	0 mobiles 0 tourers	1 mobile 2 tourers	2
7	Land at The Meadows, Lenham Road	0 mobiles 0 tourers	0 mobiles 4 tourers	2
8	Orchard Place, Benover Road	0 mobiles 1 tourers	-	1
9	Plot 2 / Four Oakes, Church Hill	2 mobiles 0 tourers	2 mobiles 1 tourer	2
10	The Stables, Wagon Lane	2 mobiles 0 tourers	3 mobiles 0 tourers	2
11	Hertsfield Farm, Staplehurst Road	1 mobile 0 tourers	-	1
12	Plot 1 / Cobnut Tree Place, Church Hill	1 mobile 0 tourers	1 mobile 1 tourer	1
13	Plot 5 / Greenacre, Church Hill	1 mobile 0 tourers	1 mobile 1 tourer	1
14	The Stables / Land East of Maplehurst Lane,	1 mobile 0 tourers	2 mobiles 0 tourers	1
15	Fairhaven, Queen Street	-	-	1
16	Flips Hole, South Street Road	1 mobile 0 tourers	-	1
17	The Ash, Yelsted Road	1 mobile 0 tourers	-	1
18	Land at Cherry Tree Farm, West Wood Road	1 mobile 0 tourers	1 mobile 2 tourers	2
19	Land at Squirrel Wood, Rumstead Lane	1 mobile 1 tourer	-	1
20	Huntsman's Stables, Maidstone Road	0 mobiles 2 tourers	-	1

[34] Estimated By taking the number of caravans applied for in the planning application, where there is one, and using the number of caravans counted in the most recent caravan count where this is absent and applying the 1.7 caravan to pitch ratio

21	Abbeywood Stud Farm, Love Lane	1 mobiles 0 tourers	-	1
22	Plum Tree Farm, Park Road	2 mobiles 2 tourers	2 mobiles 1 tourer	2
23	3 Oak Lodge, Tilden Lane	3 mobiles 0 tourers	-	2
24	Three Acres, Hampstead Lane	1 mobile 0 tourers	4 mobiles 4 tourers	5
25	The Three Sons, Hampstead Lane	1 mobile 1 tourer	-	1
26	Acers Place / Land Adjoining Greengate, Lenham Road	1 mobile 0 tourers	1 mobile 1 tourer	1
27	Oak Tree Farm / The Pond, Lenham Road	2 mobiles 0 tourers	2 mobiles 1 tourer	2
28	The Caravan / North Road Folly, Barn Hill	1 mobile 0 tourers	-	1
29	Land Rear of Brickyard Cottages, Redwall Lane	2 mobiles 0 tourers	-	1
30	The Chances, Lughorse Lane	1 mobile 1 tourer	1 mobile 1 tourer	1
31	Greengates, Lenham Rd	1 mobile 6 tourers		4
	Total			**51**