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**Identifying Gypsy & Traveller
Accommodation
Needs in
Yorkshire and The Humber**

**Final Report
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We would like to make it clear that this report is based on research undertaken by the author and the analysis and comment therein does not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Assembly, or any of the participating researchers, stakeholders and agencies. The author takes responsibility for any inaccuracies or omissions in the text.

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A note on terminology

As the parlance of the times suggests - that is, the widespread use of the term 'Gypsies and Travellers' - there are important distinctions between different travelling communities, which call for a terminology sensitive to diversity and signalling that any collective term denotes a range of *different* population groups. Romani Gypsies, Irish Travellers, new travellers, as well as other groups associated with a nomadic way of life, such as bargees (boat dwellers), show people (fairground travellers) and circus travellers, have different needs, preferences and cultural heritage, such that conflating these groups within the catch-all term 'travellers' is inappropriate. In particular, a crucial distinction between Gypsies and Irish Travellers on the one hand, and all other travelling populations on the other, lies in the *ethnic minority status* of the former two populations (as set out in the Race Relations Act 1976, amended by the Race Relations Act 2000). That said, researchers and practitioners should also pay attention to the ways in which Gypsies and Travellers define themselves as opposed to seeking to codify difference.

The terminology employed to refer to 'Gypsies and Travellers', then, is an emotive and controversial issue packed with cultural and political significance and, while different populations share commonalities in terms of their nomadic, semi-nomadic, or previously nomadic way of life, recognising their difference remains crucial. In this report, the term 'Gypsies and Travellers' is therefore used as a collective term to refer to all Gypsy and Traveller populations. The term 'Traveller' is never used without an identifying prefix ('new', 'Irish') other than to quote individuals using this terminology, but the term 'Gypsy' is used alone, to refer to Romani Gypsies (regardless of their nationality, although all Gypsies interviewed for this research were English). Where reference is being made to a particular group, or where an issue is discussed that is relevant to one group and not others, the proper name is used – e.g. Gypsy, new traveller, show person and so on. Capitalisation of the collective term reflects the ethnic minority status of Gypsies and Irish Travellers.

Certain colloquialisms and Romani words in common usage amongst Gypsies and Travellers have also been used at times in this report. The glossary below provides definitions for these.

Glossary

to 'double up': to share a *single* pitch on an authorised site, more often than not for a set period of time.

'gorger': Romani word for a member of the non-Gypsy community, primarily used by Gypsies. The spelling of this word varies (sometimes appearing as gauje or gaujo among other variations) but 'gorger' is preferred amongst the community as this better conveys the pronunciation.

to 'pull up', 'to pull', or 'to pull on': to park up a trailer, or set up an encampment, regardless of whether the site is authorised or unauthorised (e.g. 'we pulled on a site' or 'we pulled on some open land').

to be **roadside:** a term used to describe living or 'stopping' in places not authorised for residential encampment - i.e. unauthorised sites or encampments. 'Roadside' does not necessarily denote locations literally by the side of the road, although it can do. Also referred to as 'unauthorised sites or encampments'

roadside Gypsies and Travellers: Gypsies and Travellers living on unauthorised sites.

slab: a term for a pitch on a site.

stopping places: unauthorised locations frequented by Gypsies and Travellers, not usually for very long and often on the roadside.

unauthorised encampment: a caravan/trailer or cluster of caravans/trailers on land not owned by Gypsies and Travellers.

unauthorised development: a caravan/trailer or cluster of caravans/trailers on land owned (and sometimes developed) by Gypsies and Travellers without planning permission. The term unauthorised is used as opposed to 'illegal' to reflect the fact that retrospective planning permission is allowed under the procedures of the planning process.

List of acronyms

CSA: Caravan Sites Act 1960

CSCDA: Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1968

CJPOA: Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994

CRE: Commission for Racial Equality

CRESR: Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research

DCLG: Department for Communities and Local Government.

DGLG: Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group

EIP: Examination in Public (of the RSS)

GOYH: Government Office for Yorkshire and Humber

Hull GATE: Hull Gypsy and Traveller Exchange

Leeds GATE: Leeds Gypsy and Traveller Exchange

LGA: Local Government Association

ODPM: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

RHB: Regional Housing Board

RSL: Registered Social Landlord

RSS: Regional Spatial Strategy

TES: Traveller Education Service

YHRA: Yorkshire and Humber Regional Assembly

1. Introduction

This research was commissioned by the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Assembly in January 2006 and was managed by a steering group reporting to the Regional Housing Forum. The study was conducted by a team of researchers at the Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research at Sheffield Hallam University with research support from members of the Gypsy and Traveller community of the region.

1.1 The research brief

The accommodation and related support needs of Gypsies and Travellers have risen up the policy agenda in recent years with the establishment of the Gypsy and Traveller Unit within the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (now DCLG) last year bearing testament to this new impetus.

Research into the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Yorkshire and The Humber is one of the actions identified as necessary in order to improve the limited understanding of this diverse group and their accommodation situations and needs. This study is the first step in moving towards a more robust regional understanding of current provision and identifying gaps and accommodation needs that will inform the development of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). The report provides an initial quantitative and qualitative assessment of accommodation need.

The dynamic nature of Gypsy and Traveller settlement patterns - given the nomadic or semi-nomadic way of life of much of the community - makes any definitive account of the size of the population, and the required sites and pitch numbers, extremely difficult. The absence of any reliable datasets relating to Gypsy and Traveller settlement patterns and the lack of ethnic coding in monitoring housing allocations further accentuates this problem. Thus, this research is intended to provide: an indicative account of the current situation; an assessment of the geography, scale and form of unmet need (i.e. demand for housing, transit, permanent, private or public sites); and the extent of future need.

The primary aim of the research is:

- to develop a better regional understanding of the current and changing needs of Gypsies and Travellers, including an assessment of factors that may impact on meeting current and future accommodation needs.

The objectives of the research are:

- to assess current site provision within Yorkshire and The Humber and the extent to which existing provision meets current need;
- to identify and recommend a common methodology for local authority and sub-regional Gypsy and Traveller accommodation assessments;
- to identify current and arising need for accommodation against planned additional provision; and
- to assess the mobility patterns of Gypsies and Travellers within the region and the drivers of mobility.

1.2 The research approach

This report contains an initial quantitative and qualitative assessment of accommodation needs, with findings derived from a number of research activities including:

- a survey of the 21 local authorities in the region
- a review of national policies and strategies relating to Gypsies and Travellers
- a review of existing evidence on Gypsies and Travellers within the region
- four sub-regional stakeholder events
- detailed discussion with selected stakeholders to identify good practice
- interviews with Gypsies and Travellers within the region
- focus groups with Gypsies and Travellers within the region
- analysis of the existing data pertaining to Gypsy and Traveller numbers and their accommodation situations
- analysis of interview and focus group transcripts

This study has engaged with the Gypsy and Traveller community from the beginning of the research process and great benefits have been derived from including members of the

community on the research team. Representatives from the Gypsy and Traveller community have not only sat on the steering group but have played a central role in identifying and accessing interviewees and sensitising the research to cultural considerations (see section 6).

The research approach has centred on consultation with the Gypsy and Traveller community of Yorkshire and The Humber and the vast majority of resources have been invested in identifying and interviewing respondents. Every effort has been made to ensure an appropriate spread across the different groups falling within the broad definition of Gypsies and Travellers so it is representative of the picture in the region. Thus, Gypsies, Irish Travellers, showpeople and new travellers are all represented within the interview sample. The research team has also sought to capture the varying accommodation situations of the population with interviews conducted with Gypsies and Travellers resident on local authority sites, registered social landlord (RSL) sites, private sites, unauthorised sites and with those living in bricks and mortar housing. Geographical spread was a criterion for the identification of potential interviewees and an appropriate proportion of the sample has been drawn from each of the four sub-regions.

A more exploratory qualitative interviewing technique has been used for the study. It was considered that a quantitative questionnaire survey can be quite limited in developing a sufficiently nuanced understanding of the issues facing Gypsies and Travellers. The standard questionnaire approach, for example, often involves rudimentary tick-box answers which are unable to account for the cultural differences within the population: the accommodation needs of Gypsies and showpeople for instance are often different and a failure to identify such differences may result in needs remaining unmet. Furthermore, as the mobility patterns of Gypsies and Travellers change in the face of employment opportunities and lifestyles, a qualitative approach can capture such changes more effectively. Given that the regional knowledge base on Gypsy and Traveller issues is fairly limited a more open-ended interviewing approach is better suited, as it does not occlude any particular themes. An in-depth interviewing approach enables the respondent to define the issues for themselves rather than have these dictated to them by a rigid questionnaire schedule.

As the current regional evidence base about this population is relatively poor, the qualitative assessment is intended to contribute to an understanding of the generic issues facing Gypsies and Travellers within the region. The findings can then be used to inform local assessments and can benefit research design in terms of guidance about what

information should be sought. Once a qualitative understanding of needs, preferences and mobility patterns is developed, a more quantitative approach to consultation should be utilised for local accommodation assessments, to quantify accommodation need in more detail and inform local development plan documents. A full account of the research approach used in this study is presented in Section 6 which also provides guidance on methodology and draws attention to some of the potential pitfalls in conducting accommodation assessments. Careful consideration of methodology is essential if assessments are to be utilised effectively.

The remainder of this Report is divided into 5 sections. Section 2 explores the national and regional policy framework relating to Gypsies and Travellers which has seen significant developments over the last two years. Section 3 sets out the current regional picture with regards to the distribution of the Gypsy and Traveller population, levels of provision, planned new provision, the scale of unauthorised encampments and local authority approaches. This section also contains an initial estimate of regional pitch requirements to 2010 taking account of current unmet and future arising need. Section 4 presents the findings from the qualitative assessment based on in-depth interviews and focus groups with 58 Gypsies and Travellers. Section 5 then draws on the previous two sections to identify what action needs to be taken to close the gap between the level of provision and accommodation need within the region. Finally, section 6 highlights the need for a common methodological approach and provides guidance on conducting Gypsy and Traveller accommodation assessments at the local and sub-regional level.

2. Policy and Legislative Context

This section reviews past and current policy on Gypsies and Travellers, paying particular attention to planning and site provision. It incorporates the raft of documents published over the last 18 months including those by central government, the Commission for Racial Equality and the Local Government Association. It is important to review the policy landscape, as past and existing legislation has a significant bearing on the current context in which Gypsy and Traveller accommodation issues need to be understood.

Gypsies and Travellers are affected by most legislation in much the same way as the 'settled population'. The policy realms of planning and housing, however, do contain requirements and guidance specific to Gypsies and Travellers and the recent establishment of the Gypsy and Traveller Unit within the Office of the Deputy Minister (ODPM) (now the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)) suggests that central government is beginning to develop a more focussed response to Gypsy and Traveller issues.

Numerous documents have been published by the ODPM in recent months which affect policies towards Gypsies and Travellers. Recent publications have included draft guidance on undertaking accommodation needs assessments, a planning circular, a consultation document on the definitions of 'Gypsies and Travellers' and various local authority guidance notes on powers and responsibilities. This brief review of relevant policy and legislation is not exhaustive, but it provides a context for understanding some of the issues facing Gypsies and Travellers and local authorities today. Most of the documents and legislation discussed below can be obtained from the DCLG website (communities.gov.uk) or by contacting Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

2.1 Legislative Definitions of 'Gypsies and Travellers'

Variable definitions of the collective term 'Gypsies and Travellers' are applied for different legislative purposes: one in relation to planning and one to housing. 'Gipsies' [sic] were first defined for legislative purposes in Part 2 of the 1968 Caravan Sites Act, later repealed in 1994, and the definition was consequently inserted into the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act (CSCDA) 1960. This stated that *"gipsies" [sic] are persons of nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin, although not including travelling*

showmen or circus people' (ODPM, 2006a, p.8). This definition was later modified by case law to specify that *'gipsies [sic] travel for the purposes of work'*, and again amended following consultation in December 2004 in recognition of the fact that many Gypsies and Travellers stop travelling temporarily or permanently (ODPM, 2006a). This became the planning definition of 'Gypsies of Travellers'. The function differs from the housing definition in that it *'seeks to capture those with specific land use requirements arising from their current or past nomadic way of life'* (ODPM, 2006a, p.9). Hence the planning definition refers to:

'Persons of nomadic way of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds of their own or their family's or dependant's 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.' (ODPM, 2006a, p.9)

This definition contains no ethnic component, largely because some Gypsies and ethnic Travellers have no personal history of travelling and therefore no requirements under this legislation, while other non-ethnic travelling population groups (for example new travellers) may have.

The definition of 'Gypsies and Travellers' for the purposes of the Housing Act 2004 is currently under consultation but the proposed definition is as follows:

'Persons of nomadic way of life whatever their race or origin, including 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 all other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism and/or caravan dwelling.' (ODPM, 2006a, p.10)

This broader, more inclusive housing definition has been devised with some pragmatism, to ensure it captures all nomadic groups whose accommodation needs must be assessed. It is important to emphasise that this definition, outlined in the ODPM consultation paper, *Definition of the term 'gypsies and travellers' for the purposes of the Housing Act 2004* is, as the title suggests, a legislative definition: policy-makers and practitioners also need to consider the ways in which Gypsies and Travellers define themselves. It may also be amended in light of findings from the consultation period, which ran until May 2006, to ensure that the definition captures the right groups of people and to avoid any *'unjustifiable disproportionate impacts on any ethnic minorities'* (ODPM, 2006a).

2.2 Planning and Site Provision

One of the most significant historical developments in terms of site provision for Gypsies and Travellers was introduced in part 2 of The 1968 Caravan Sites Act which placed a requirement on local authorities to provide sites for local Gypsies 'residing in or resorting to their areas'. At the same time, however, it gave local authorities the power to designate 'no-go' areas for Gypsies and Travellers.

The obligation on local authorities in England and Wales to provide sites for Gypsies and Travellers ceased in January 1994 with the introduction of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (CJPOA). The CJPOA was seen by many as a response to increasing incidences of rural gatherings and trespass linked to the rave culture of the early 1990s; the participants were not the archetypal Gypsy or Traveller. This Act strengthened the law related to trespass, which the then Conservative Government deemed necessary to tackle 'the destruction and distress caused mainly to rural communities by trespassers' (the then Home Secretary, Michael Howard MP, cited in Sibley, 2001, p.425). The Act repealed part 2 of the 1968 Caravan Sites Act and also repealed section 70 of the Local Government, Planning and Land Act 1980, which gave powers to central government to meet the capital costs of the development of sites. Although local authorities still had *powers* to provide caravan sites for Gypsies and Travellers under section 24 of the 1960 Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act, they were under no legislative *obligation* to do so, and few used this power.

The detrimental effects of the 1994 CJPOA on Gypsies and Travellers, including the criminalisation of these populations and resultant insecurity have been well documented (Halfacree, 1996; Morris and Clements, 1999; Sibley, 2001): suffice to say here that it left *'roughly half the families counted in the government's own six-monthly census of Traveller caravans without a legal stopping place'* (Sibley, 2001, p.425). The result of this legislation was a shift in responsibility for site provision from Local Authorities to Gypsy and Traveller communities, who now effectively had to provide for themselves in the form of private sites, usually involving the purchase of land and subsequent application for retrospective planning permission. The Department of the Environment (DoE) Circular 1/94 *Gypsy Sites and Planning*, which set out planning policy in relation to site provision, did encourage local authorities to assess Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs and to identify appropriate locations for sites in their development plans (as well as deeming the development of Traveller sites on green belt land inappropriate). However, Circular

1/94 ultimately proved ineffective: most planning applications from Gypsies and Travellers were, and remain, unsuccessful.

DoE Circular 1/94 was replaced in February 2006 by ODPM Circular 01/2006 *Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites* (following the introduction of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act in 2004) in acknowledgement of the failure of the former to deliver adequate sites:

'Since the issue of Circular 1/94, and the repeal of local authorities' duty to provide Gypsy and Traveller sites there have been more applications for sites, but this has not resulted in the necessary increase in provision' (ODPM Circular 01/2006, p.4).

The intention of the new planning Circular is to create a level playing-field between Gypsies and Travellers on the one hand and the 'settled' (i.e. non Gypsy or Traveller) population' on the other. Key aims set out in the document include:

- ensuring that Gypsies and Travellers have fair access to suitable accommodation, education, health and welfare provision;
- reducing the number of unauthorised encampments;
- increasing the number of sites and addressing under-provision over the next 3-5 years;
- the protection of the traditional travelling way of life of Gypsies and Travellers;
- underlining the importance of assessing accommodation need at different geographical scales;
- the promotion of private site provision;
- avoiding Gypsies and Travellers becoming homeless where eviction from unauthorised sites occurs when there is no alternative to move into.

Circular 01/2006 outlines how establishment of the required number of pitches in Regional Spatial Strategies (RSSs) must translate into the allocation of sites in Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and that the two must generally conform. It goes on to say that *'planning policies that rule out, or place undue constraints on the development of [G]ypsy and [T]raveller sites should not be included in RSSs or DPDs'* (p.9). Examples of unacceptable reasons for refusing planning applications are also provided in an Appendix to the document. For instance, citing the lack of a local connection to an area is considered too restrictive given the nomadic way of life of many Gypsies and Travellers.

The Circular also encourages dialogue between local authorities and Gypsies and Travellers about accommodation needs prior to the development of RSSs and DPDs.

A key theme in the various recent publications about Gypsies and Travellers is the need for robust evidence to inform strategies and DPDs, primarily derived from housing needs assessments. However, transitional measures can be taken if other information points to the need for provision (for example the existence of significant unauthorised encampments) but the housing needs assessment has yet to be carried out. In such cases, site allocations can be made in advance of needs assessments, and other sources of information should be utilised, including:

- a continuous assessment of incidents of unauthorised encampments;
- the numbers and outcomes of planning applications;
- levels of occupancy, plot turnover and waiting lists for public sites;
- the status of existing sites;
- the biannual ODPM caravan count;

The above data sources should also be utilised for continuous monitoring of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs.

2.3 Guidance on Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments

Draft practice guidance for local authorities on undertaking accommodation assessments was released by the ODPM Gypsy and Traveller Unit in February 2006. As the guidance states, assessments of Gypsy and Travellers' accommodation needs are a statutory requirement under section 225 of the Housing Act 2004, which also requires Local Authorities to produce a housing strategy informed by the needs assessment. Previously, many local authority housing needs assessments were failing to assess or identify the needs of Gypsies and Travellers.

The definition of housing need in this guidance is varied slightly to acknowledge the different contexts in which Gypsies and Travellers live. The broad ODPM definition of housing need is 'households who are unable to access suitable housing without some financial assistance' (ODPM Gypsy and Traveller Unit, 2006a, p.7). The draft guidance sets out some of the distinctive requirements of Gypsies and Travellers which necessitate

moving beyond this definition. It states that housing need may also be evident in the context of caravan dwellers:

- who have no authorised site anywhere on which to reside;
- whose existing site accommodation is overcrowded or unsuitable, but who are unable to obtain larger or more suitable accommodation;
- who contain suppressed households 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.

And in the context of bricks and mortar dwellers:

- whose existing accommodation is overcrowded or unsuitable (including unsuitability by virtue of psychological aversion to bricks and mortar housing);
- that contain suppressed households who are unable to set up separate family units and who are unable to access suitable or appropriate accommodation.

The main purpose of the accommodation needs assessment is to quantify the needs of Gypsies and Travellers and to distinguish the types of provision required - that is, whether private sites, transit sites, socially rented sites or bricks and mortar housing, or a combination of these, are needed. The guidance acknowledges that different approaches may be required in different local contexts. For example, there are obvious difficulties with assessing the needs of a semi-nomadic population, such as determining the most appropriate geographical scale for the assessment, and the most suitable timeframe, given seasonal fluctuations in the population. Consequently the draft guidance suggests that it is important to update regularly the assessments, where they are less precise for certain groups, and where long-term forecasting is more difficult. This is a crucial requirement if accommodation needs are to be met in a coherent and consistent manner.

3. Gypsies and Travellers in Yorkshire and The Humber: The Current picture

This section draws together information from a range of different data sources to develop an understanding of the current regional situation in relation to:

- the size of the Gypsy and Traveller population;
- the current level of site provision;
- the spatial distribution of the population;
- the accommodation circumstances of Gypsy and Traveller households; and
- the different approaches and responses of local authorities within the region.

Given that data is, at best, 'patchy' several different primary and secondary sources have been utilised in an attempt to plug gaps in evidence, namely:

- the ODPM biannual caravan count;
- a short survey of local authorities conducted by the research team;
- data from a survey of local authorities conducted by the Government Office for Yorkshire and The Humber last summer; and

The above information sources have also been supplemented through various stakeholder discussions - both formal and informal - which have been important in understanding the different local contexts within the region. Indeed, local knowledge is extremely important in any accommodation assessment and can offer insights where information is poor. For instance, local Gypsies and Travellers and stakeholders can often be the only source of knowledge on where unauthorised encampments and housed Gypsies and Travellers are located.

Current levels of site provision are presented by local authority and the picture is a somewhat varied one in terms of the responses to, and accommodation of, Gypsies and Travellers. Firstly, a 'minimum count' of Gypsies and Travellers in the region is provided which draws on the sources mentioned above and points to the need for the additional provision of at least 300 pitches by 2010 across Yorkshire and The Humber as a whole. Second, the current level of site provision within the region is discussed, as this is a major factor influencing the spatial distribution of the population. This section of the report also addresses the varying accommodation situations in which Gypsies and Travellers find

themselves before exploring the different approaches to accommodating Gypsies and Travellers by local authorities in the region.

3.1 Establishing the size of the Gypsy and Traveller population in Yorkshire and The Humber

The lack of robust data on the Gypsy and Traveller population is a major barrier to developing a coherent understanding of accommodation needs. There are a number of data sources identified in the ODPM draft guidance on accommodation assessments that can be utilised in assessing need (see section 2.2) but currently these have not been exploited by the majority of local authorities within the region. As a result there are substantial gaps in the existing evidence-base which need to be addressed as a matter of urgency. These are discussed in more detail in section 6, along with guidance about how such data can contribute to a more detailed local understanding of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation issues.

3.1.1 The lack of data and information

As in other policy areas the goal of perfect information is unachievable, particularly given the complex dynamics of migration, but a lot more can be done both in terms of the collection and sharing of information, and how it is used. Many stakeholders complained about the lack of information about accommodation issues. Many also wanted more information sharing and stated that they often struggled to access data held in different departments within their own local authority. Other respondents reported that information that could be developed as indicators of need was not collected or simply did not exist.

That said, efforts were being made by local authorities to improve data collection and monitoring practices. For instance, Leeds City Council had established a mechanism for distinguishing planning applications from Gypsies and Travellers where previously they were not separately identifiable from the applications of the 'settled population'. Such practices are positive developments and should be shared with other local authorities if they prove effective.

Differences in knowledge and information between local authorities are partly explained by differences in resources and capacity, which is often dependent on the priority afforded to Gypsy and Traveller issues. For instance, Doncaster MBC has a relatively large Gypsy and Traveller team and consequently has developed data collection and monitoring systems, to the extent of carrying out their own monthly caravan count. This is not the case elsewhere.

Establishing the size of the Gypsy and Traveller population at any geographical scale is notoriously difficult. The only official government dataset on the population is the ODPM caravan count . The methodological rigour of this exercise has been criticised from a variety of quarters. In order to try and address the inadequacies of the official count, returns for Yorkshire and Humber have been cross-referenced with the results of the two aforementioned surveys of local authorities to arrive at a 'minimum count' of the size of the population within the region.

It is virtually impossible to establish the total population in any definitive way given the large numbers of Gypsies and Travellers residing in bricks and mortar housing within the region. The absence of ethnic coding in housing allocations, coupled with the fact that some Gypsy and Traveller households may wish to conceal their ethnicity for fear of harassment, renders any assessment of households in this sector rather hazardous.

Further problems are encountered when attempting to put a figure on numbers residing on unauthorised encampments, as these households are often very mobile. While a fairly reliable assessment of the total population resident on authorised sites can be obtained, a more pragmatic approach is needed for quantifying numbers in housing and on unauthorised encampments. Therefore, the picture provided here is indicative, rather than definitive, but it can contribute to a regional understanding of the size of the population and suggest ways in which methodological problems can be overcome.

3.1.2 Issues relating to the ODPM caravan count

While the biannual caravan count has been criticised, it at least provides a starting point from which to build up a picture of current levels of provision. A recent review of the caravan count found that most concerns related to perceived inaccuracies of the count, with every respondent to the research articulating reservations about its robustness. Others took the view that the process was intrusive and pointed out that the 'settled

community' does not have to undergo a similar exercise. The reasons for inaccuracies included:

- a lack of commitment to the count on behalf of some local authorities in terms of resources for it;
- the suggestion that some local authorities would wilfully reduce the number of caravans counted in a bid to minimise apparent need for provision;
- poor counting practices;
- geography: large rural authorities represent a particular challenge and there is no guarantee that all encampments will be identified;
- a lack of Gypsy and Traveller involvement in the caravan count, which may feed a degree of mistrust, especially if the local authority counting officers were also often responsible for the management of enforcement; and
- inconsistent definitions: for example, some local authorities include new travellers while others actively exclude them.

The adequacy of the count was also scrutinised in the report and four factors limiting its usefulness were cited. These were:

- perceived inaccuracies, as outlined above;
- the fact that the caravan count is a biannual snapshot and therefore cannot give an accurate reflection of unauthorised encampments, particularly where mobility is high.
- the count is of limited use, as it does not take account of Gypsies and Travellers residing in bricks and mortar housing; and
- information collected was often incomplete and too general to be of any use.

A further limitation is the fact that what is being counted are caravans as opposed to households, and therefore the official count tells us little about the number of households or their composition. Other concerns related to the uses of the count both from an 'anti-Gypsy and Traveller' perspective and a 'pro-Gypsy and Traveller' perspective. It was recognised that the information provided by the count was not neutral and that better information could be used to enhance control and enforcement. The report also highlighted some positive aspects about the caravan count. First, most local authorities were committed to the count and endeavoured to provide an accurate picture of the local situation as they could. Second, when information is analysed over time, some internal consistency over time, with higher counts always recorded in July than in January

and a relatively stable total figure (the total number of caravans counted in July 2003 was 1203, rising to 1349 in July 2005, when adjusted for an unusually high Doncaster figure, as shown below).

3.1.3 The caravan count in Yorkshire and The Humber

The caravan count is therefore far from perfect but it remains the only official source of information on the size and distribution of a relatively 'hidden' population. It should be treated with caution for the reasons outlined above but nonetheless can still be of use when utilised in conjunction with local knowledge. For instance the July 2005 count for the local authority district of Doncaster shows a massive increase in unauthorised encampments, rising from 60 to 261, which also has an impact on the overall regional figure. At first glance, this indicates a huge increase in demand but after discussion with local Gypsies and contacts at Doncaster Council it became apparent that this figure was greatly inflated by a faith event taking place on the day of the count.

The returns for the last five caravan counts for Yorkshire and The Humber are presented in *Table 1* below, by sub-region and by local authority. The last five counts are shown so that any recent discrepancies in the data can be more easily identified. The majority of local authorities exhibit a relatively stable count over time but there are some strange anomalies, such as the sharp increase in the number of unauthorised sites in Doncaster in July 2005. An analysis of trends enables such anomalies to be set in context and an allowance made for the duration of the event. Were such events to become regular gatherings, then there would be a case for accommodation needs to be assessed on a short-term, temporary basis around the same time every year, as happens in the district of Scarborough during the Seamer fair.

What stands out from *Table 1* is the variance across the region in terms of the level of provision and the numbers of caravans from one local authority to another. Surprisingly, the districts of Rotherham and Scarborough have returned zero figures for all the last five official caravan counts. A further three local authorities, namely Calderdale, Kirklees and North East Lincolnshire, have recorded counts of zero at some stage over the same period. In contrast, the districts of Hull, Leeds and York have consistently recorded totals above or around 100 caravans for each of the last five counts, and the equivalent Doncaster figure is over 300.

There are a number of reasons for these differences, which are discussed in section 5, but suffice to say here that the main factor is the varying level of provision. There are no authorised sites at all in the districts of Calderdale, Kirklees or Rotherham and so it is not surprising that these local authorities record the lowest caravan counts and contain the smallest Gypsy and Traveller populations. It would be inaccurate to assume that there is no accommodation need in those local authorities returning a zero in the official caravan count.

On the contrary, evidence from our interviews suggests the impact of a displacement effect, driven by a lack of provision coupled with enforcement action. For instance, we interviewed one Gypsy family in Doncaster who would rather be based in Rotherham but had to compromise over their preferred location. The same dynamic of 'deflected demand' was also evident in relation to the local authorities of Barnsley, Calderdale, North East Lincolnshire, Kirklees and Sheffield - all of which were the preferred locations for interviewees currently resident in neighbouring districts. It is likely that this scenario plays out in other local authorities too and this is something that quantitative local assessments should seek to establish. We were also told of roadside Gypsies and Travellers who often resorted to the district of Calderdale while they would have preferred to be based elsewhere.

Also, the presence of comparably high levels of provision in neighbouring authorities (such as Doncaster to Rotherham or Wakefield to Kirklees) may serve to maintain the status quo in those districts. This is certainly true of Doncaster which appears to be meeting the needs of Gypsies and Travellers from other districts from within the region, and sometimes outwith the region altogether.

Taking the region as a whole, then, there were a total of 1,549 caravans counted in July 2005 but as mentioned adjusting for the skewed figure in Doncaster gives a more consistent figure of 1,349; of which 1,088 are on authorised sites and 261 on unauthorised encampments. This total of 1349 shows some consistency with the results of the survey of local authorities which took place in March of this year. In a similar way to the caravan count the survey data provides a snapshot and caveats about its reliability are needed. Not all local authorities could provide the full information requested and several did not provide any response to the survey at all. Where this is the case, data from the 2005 GOYH baseline survey has been used to fill any gaps where possible, but there is likely to be a margin of error, particularly in relation to unauthorised encampments.

Table 1: ODPM Caravan Count results for Yorkshire and The Humber by local authority and sub-region - last five counts, 2003-2005.

UA/ LA/ Sub-region	Date	Total	Unauthorised sites	Socially rented authorised sites	Private authorised sites
TOTAL FOR YORKSHIRE & THE HUMBER	Jul-05	1549	461	777	311
	Jan-05	1295	171	750	374
	Jul-04	1306	276	741	289
	Jan-04	1210	174	686	350
	Jul-03	1203	165	730	308
The Humber	Jul-05	238	26	168	44
	Jan-05	217	8	153	56
	Jul-04	222	22	174	26
	Jan-04	130	22	63	45
	Jul-03	243	33	171	39
East Riding of Yorkshire UA	Jul-05	67	0	67	0
	Jan-05	55	0	55	0
	Jul-04	76	9	67	0
	Jan-04	53	0	51	2
	Jul-03	74	9	65	0
Kingston Upon Hull UA	Jul-05	124	23	101	0
	Jan-05	100	2	98	0
	Jul-04	109	2	107	0
	Jan-04	24	12	12	0
	Jul-03	130	24	106	0
North East Lincolnshire UA	Jul-05	2	2	0	0
	Jan-05	0	0	0	0
	Jul-04	7	7	0	0
	Jan-04	0	0	0	0
	Jul-03	0	0	0	0
North Lincolnshire UA	Jul-05	45	1	0	44
	Jan-05	62	6	0	56
	Jul-04	30	4	0	26
	Jan-04	53	10	0	43
	Jul-03	39	0	0	39
North Yorkshire	Jul-05	350	69	224	57
	Jan-05	303	15	231	57
	Jul-04	343	62	227	54
	Jan-04	293	15	242	36
	Jul-03	363	46	237	80

UA/ LA/ Sub-region	Date	Total	Unauthorised sites	Socially rented authorised sites	Private authorised sites
Craven	Jul-05	16	2	0	14
	Jan-05	14	2	0	12
	Jul-04	14	2	0	12
	Jan-04	14	2	0	12
	Jul-03	14	2	0	12
Hambleton	Jul-05	61	1	32	28
	Jan-05	53	5	20	28
	Jul-04	59	17	14	28
	Jan-04	26	3	16	7
	Jul-03	68	1	16	51
Harrogate	Jul-05	58	1	57	0
	Jan-05	69	0	69	0
	Jul-04	84	12	72	0
	Jan-04	59	0	59	0
	Jul-03	76	5	71	0
Richmondshire	Jul-05	33	23	10	0
	Jan-05	27	4	23	0
	Jul-04	23	4	19	0
	Jan-04	32	5	27	0
	Jul-03	24	6	18	0
Ryedale	Jul-05	17	3	14	0
	Jan-05	12	3	9	0
	Jul-04	9	0	9	0
	Jan-04	16	4	12	0
	Jul-03	32	22	10	0
Scarborough	Jul-05	0	0	0	0
	Jan-05	0	0	0	0
	Jul-04	0	0	0	0
	Jan-04	0	0	0	0
	Jul-03	0	0	0	0
Selby	Jul-05	39	0	24	15
	Jan-05	41	0	24	17
	Jul-04	38	0	24	14
	Jan-04	42	1	24	17
	Jul-03	41	0	24	17
York UA	Jul-05	126	39	87	0
	Jan-05	87	1	86	0
	Jul-04	116	27	89	0
	Jan-04	104	0	104	0
	Jul-03	108	10	98	0

UA/ LA/ Sub-region	Date	Total	Unauthorised sites	Socially rented authorised sites	Private authorised sites
South Yorkshire	Jul-05	636	261	171	204
	Jan-05	485	65	173	247
	Jul-04	431	65	166	200
	Jan-04	499	60	180	259
	Jul-03	404	27	188	189
Barnsley	Jul-05	43	0	43	0
	Jan-05	33	5	28	0
	Jul-04	43	5	38	0
	Jan-04	43	5	38	0
	Jul-03	39	0	39	0
Doncaster	Jul-05	535	261	70	204
	Jan-05	401	60	94	247
	Jul-04	323	50	73	200
	Jan-04	396	47	90	259
	Jul-03	311	27	95	189
Rotherham	Jul-05	0	0	0	0
	Jan-05	0	0	0	0
	Jul-04	0	0	0	0
	Jan-04	0	0	0	0
	Jul-03	0	0	0	0
Sheffield	Jul-05	58	0	58	0
	Jan-05	51	0	51	0
	Jul-04	65	10	55	0
	Jan-04	60	8	52	0
	Jul-03	54	0	54	0
West Yorkshire	Jul-05	325	105	214	6
	Jan-05	290	83	193	14
	Jul-04	310	127	174	9
	Jan-04	288	77	201	10
	Jul-03	193	59	134	0
Bradford	Jul-05	82	14	62	6
	Jan-05	81	8	61	12
	Jul-04	53	0	46	7
	Jan-04	93	20	67	6
	Jul-03	0	0	0	0
Calderdale	Jul-05	0	0	0	0
	Jan-05	0	0	0	0
	Jul-04	5	5	0	0
	Jan-04	0	0	0	0
	Jul-03	0	0	0	0

UA/ LA/ Sub-region	Date	Total	Unauthorised sites	Socially rented authorised sites	Private authorised sites
Kirklees	Jul-05	15	15	0	0
	Jan-05	2	0	0	2
	Jul-04	8	6	0	2
	Jan-04	4	0	0	4
	Jul-03	0	0	0	0
Leeds	Jul-05	141	68	73	0
	Jan-05	114	52	62	0
	Jul-04	120	57	63	0
	Jan-04	132	57	75	0
	Jul-03	98	15	83	0
Wakefield	Jul-05	87	8	79	0
	Jan-05	93	23	70	0
	Jul-04	124	59	65	0
	Jan-04	59	0	59	0
	Jul-03	95	44	51	0

Source: ODPM Caravan Count (odpm.gov.uk)

Most survey respondents had a fairly accurate overview on data pertaining to authorised sites but, for obvious reasons, the dynamic nature of unauthorised encampments represents a far greater challenge and some respondents could not provide numbers on these. Also, households resident on unauthorised encampments sometimes wish to remain 'hidden' for fear of enforcement action, so it is likely that there is an undercount of this population, both in the caravan count and in our survey results.¹ The seasonal fluctuations in recorded incidences of unauthorised encampments compound the difficulties in arriving at any definitive figure.

3.1.4 An estimate of the total number of caravans and additional pitch requirements in Yorkshire and The Humber

Our survey results thus provide a 'minimum count' of the total number of caravans in the region which puts this figure at 1,297 - 53 less than the 1,349 recorded in the July 2005 caravan count but, with missing information on unauthorised encampments for several

¹ Anecdotal evidence from stakeholders and researchers engaged in Gypsy and Traveller needs assessments suggests that the official caravan count is a consistent underestimate of around 10-15%.

local authorities, this figure is likely to be a significant undercount. Of those 1,297 caravans, 1,164 were on authorised sites and 133 on unauthorised encampments, almost half that in the caravan count.

Using this information it is possible to arrive at an initial estimate of total caravan numbers within the region. Thus, *Table 2* below gives an indicative estimate of the total number of caravans in the region derived from the information available. This figure is put at somewhere between 1,300 and 1,500 with *at least* 200 caravans on unauthorised encampments within the region at any one time and up to a maximum of 300.

Table 2: An estimate of the total number of Gypsy and Traveller caravans in the region.

Status of encampments	Number of caravans
Authorised	1,100-1,200
Unauthorised	200-300
Total	1,300-1,500

Source: ODPM Caravan Count; LA survey; Author's estimates

An initial, if partial, estimate of regional pitch requirements is also possible, although due to the lack of data on housed Gypsies and Travellers it is currently not possible to account for the accommodation needs of this group. Therefore **the estimate derived in *Table 3* below is likely to be significantly higher when housed Gypsies and Travellers are incorporated given the strong aversion to housing amongst the community, and should be revised as the findings from quantitative local assessments emerge.** The lack of a measure of overcrowding also gives rise to underestimation. Nevertheless it is essential that an informed estimate is arrived at from the data currently to hand in order to inform the RSS. The methodology used for this is set out in Appendix B.

The regional average number of caravans on unauthorised encampments over the last five official counts is 209. There is wide acknowledgement that this figure is inaccurate and so it is necessary to add a 15 per cent weighting, which is an estimate of the undercount consistent with the views of stakeholders, the Gypsy and Traveller community and other studies. This brings the average number of caravans on unauthorised encampments in the region at any one time to 241. Considering unauthorised

encampments alone this translates into the current need for a further 142 additional pitches across the region based on the regional average of 1.7 caravans per pitch.²

Table 3: An estimate of regional and sub-regional pitch requirements to 2010.

Variable	Yorkshire and The Humber Total	Humber	North Yorkshire	South Yorkshire	West Yorkshire
Current unmet need (pitches)	142	15	28	38	61
+ Future need to 2010 (pitches)	115	19	29	40	25
= TOTAL PITCHES TO 2010	257	34	57	78	86

Sources: Caravan Count, Survey of LAs; Author's estimates.

Of course this does not provide the full picture as there is still the need to account for those households in bricks and mortar housing who would occupy an authorised pitch if one was available, the extent of 'doubling up' on sites, and future need arising from population growth and new household formation. Estimates from the Cambridgeshire study put annual population growth at 3 per cent, which amounts to a total future need in Yorkshire and The Humber of 115 pitches up to 2010. **This gives a regional pitch requirement, excluding unmet need from Gypsies and Travellers in bricks and mortar housing, of 257 to address current and future need to 2010.** Once all local assessments are completed and there is a fuller quantitative understanding of the extent of site overcrowding and the needs of housed Gypsies and Travellers, then one would expect this figure to rise past 300 and beyond.

Estimates for the four sub-regions are also included but as the geographical scale gets smaller it is likely that the margin of error increases, so these estimates should be treated with caution, corroborated with the findings from local assessments and revised where necessary. For instance, the evidence from our interviews suggests that the current need for 15 pitches within The Humber region is a gross underestimate and, in all likelihood, reflects the problematic nature of the caravan count data, and accounting for

² This is consistent with other averages. For instance, the DCLG Gypsy and Traveller Unit work to an average of 1.7 caravans per pitch and the Cambridgeshire study conducted by Home and Greenfields derived the same.

overcrowding and those in housing, as outlined above. Moreover, stakeholders in Barnsley reported the current need for 66 additional pitches in that local authority alone which gives an indication of the level of underestimation.

Evidence from the available data and our interviews suggests that **there is need for additional pitches in every single local authority within Yorkshire and The Humber** but particularly in the larger urban districts such as Bradford, Hull, Leeds and Sheffield where need appears to be most acute.

In terms of the distribution of these pitches across the region there is simply not enough detailed information currently available to allocate additional pitch numbers to each local authority in turn. This would require a comprehensive quantitative assessment at the local level involving extensive consultation. It would not be feasible to attempt this at the regional scale. Indeed, local assessments should seek to quantify need in more detail and produce figures on additional pitch requirements by site type, that is, whether the need is for transit or permanent sites. Once methodologically sound assessments are completed throughout the region the above estimates may be revised as the scale of overcrowding and need from the housed section of the population becomes apparent.

It should be noted that this relatively high figure is the effect of limited new provision and there is an element of catching up built into these assessments. Over the last twenty years there has been just one new local authority or RSL site developed in the region - in Malton, North Yorkshire in 2002 - which caters for 11 pitches (and one warden). While there have been other developments - such as extensions to existing sites and development of private sites - there is a backlog of need to be addressed. Given natural population growth and new family formation among the Gypsy and Traveller community during this period it is safe to assume that there is a cumulative unmet need for accommodation. Thus, local authorities need to consider new household formation and population growth when developing development plan documents (DPDs).

Given that the above numbers are estimates it would not be appropriate to try and extrapolate the total Gypsy and Traveller population from these figures given the varying household compositions amongst the community. In any case a huge evidence gap remains in terms of the lack of reliable information about numbers in bricks and mortar housing. Only two respondents to our survey could provide a figure for the number of Gypsies and Travellers in housing in their districts and these are likely to be undercounts, given the different access to information across tenures. For instance, where ethnic

coding is present in housing allocations local authorities should be able to assess numbers in social housing with a relative degree of accuracy (unfortunately this does not happen widely at present) but accounting for owner-occupiers and private renters represents a much more difficult challenge.

Because of these considerations, assessing levels of unmet need with reference to incidences of unauthorised encampments is likely to provide only a partial understanding of the picture. One must also acknowledge the fact that bricks and mortar housing is rarely a reflection of active choice among the Gypsy and Traveller population, but is often an enforced situation due to old age, ill health or, most significantly, a lack of appropriate site provision.

3.2 Current levels of provision

There are two main types of provision in Yorkshire and The Humber, as in other regions: local authority or RSL sites, and private sites. Almost 60 per cent of all the caravans counted in July 2005 were located on local authority or RSL sites. The regional breakdown is shown in *Table 1*. Private authorised sites accounted for 23 per cent of total caravans counted, a relatively small proportion bearing in mind that the majority of Gypsies and Travellers aspire to living on private sites. This is due to the presence of two main barriers preventing many families from achieving their aspirational goal: financial constraints and the planning process. These constraints are examined further in section 5.

It is worth noting here that several interview respondents and stakeholders raised the idea of group housing schemes which have been used on sites in the Republic of Ireland. Given the problems of accessibility on many sites (see sub-section 4.4.3) there was much support for the development of bungalows on sites for the elderly. This was considered a favourable option, especially for the elderly and those with mobility problems, as it meant that family members could stay in close proximity to their support networks and avoid the isolation of bricks and mortar housing.

3.2.1 Local authority and RSL provision

Table 3 below shows current levels of local authority and RSL provision by sub-region and local authority. Again, the picture is a varied one, with some local authorities providing

more than others. Six local authorities offer no Council or RSL provision at all - Calderdale, Craven, Kirklees, North East Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire and Rotherham - whereas Doncaster, Hull and York can accommodate over 100 caravans. Some local authority officers expressed concern at the inequity across the region in terms of levels of provision and in some cases this was a factor preventing additional provision in areas where some already existed. Some stakeholders felt that other local authorities were doing little or nothing to accommodate Gypsies and Travellers and until this was addressed they would not entertain the thought of new provision within their own administrative boundary.

Sub-regionally, caravan capacities are fairly uniform, with the exception of The Humber, which caters for just 158 caravans on local authority or RSL sites. The other three sub-regions can accommodate around 260 each. Obviously, the dynamics influencing accommodation need vary within sub-regions and one would not expect to find the same level of provision in North Yorkshire as in West Yorkshire, for instance, given population differentials.

Many Gypsies and Travellers have reservations about RSL sites and this can result in a preference for private provision or even roadside stopping places. These reservations are examined more fully in section 4 and relate to:

- the poor quality environments in which sites are often located (e.g. on industrial land; near landfill sites; next to motorways);
- the size of the site: there appears to be a general preference for smaller, more manageable sites of around 8-12 pitches;
- the geographic location of sites: site vacancies in areas where Gypsies and Travellers do not want to stay are likely to remain vacant;
- poor quality amenities on sites and concerns over accessibility and the safety of children;
- the mixing of different communities: some Gypsies and Travellers perceive such sites to be more prone to conflict and anti-social behaviour
- a high degree of social control and regulation on sites.

The above issues resulted in virtually all interviewees expressing a preference or aspiration for private sites, usually on land they owned themselves.

Table 4: LA and RSL provision in Yorkshire and The Humber

Sub-region/local authority/site	Total pitches	Residential	Transit	Caravan capacity
TOTAL FOR YORKSHIRE & HUMBER	554	521	33	934
The Humber	119	97	22	158
<i>East Riding of Yorkshire UA</i>	51	29	22	57
Eppleworth Travellers Site, Eppleworth Road, Skidby	10	6	4	13
Woodhill Way, Cottingham	23	23	0	26
Woldgate Travellers Site, Bridlington	18	0	18	18
<i>Kingston Upon Hull UA</i>	68	68	0	101
Newington Park, Newington Street	10	10	0	12
Bedford Park, Bedford Street, Cleveland Street	10	10	0	16
Wilmington Park, Bedford Street, Cleveland Street	21	21	0	30
Bankside Park, Bankside	27	27	0	43
<i>North East Lincolnshire UA</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>North Lincolnshire UA</i>	0	0	0	0
North Yorkshire	176	176	0	260
<i>Craven</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Hambleton</i>	16	16	0	16
Thirsk Gypsy Site, Bankside Close, Sowerby	16	16	0	16
<i>Harrogate</i>	40	40	0	68
Spring Lane Caravan Park, Bickerton	20	20	0	32
Thistle Hill Caravan Park, Plompton, Knaresborough	20	20	0	36
<i>Richmondshire</i>	14	14	0	14
Limekiln Woods Caravan Site, Catterick	14	14	0	14
<i>Ryedale</i>	11	11	0	12
Tara Park, York Road, Malton	11	11	0	12
<i>Scarborough</i>	16	16	0	16
Seamer Gypsy Site, Hillside Close, Seamer	16	16	0	16
<i>Selby</i>	24	24	0	24
Lynwith Lane, Carlton	12	12	0	12
Burn Airfield, Burn	12	12	0	12
<i>York UA</i>	55	55	0	110
James Street City Traveller Site	20	20	0	40
Osbalwick Caravan Site, Outgang Lane	12	12	0	24
Water Lane Caravan Site, Clifton	23	23	0	46

Sub-region/local authority/site	Total pitches	Residential	Transit	Caravan capacity
South Yorkshire	132	122	10	251
<i>Barnsley</i>	28	28	0	43
Smithies Lane Travellers Site, Smithies Lane	28	28	0	43
<i>Doncaster</i>	59	49	10	118
Nursery Lane, Sprotborough	10	10	0	20
White Towers, Armthorpe Road	19	19	0	38
Little Lane, Long Sandall	10	10	0	20
Gibbons Lane, Kirton Lane, Thorne	10	0	10	20
Lands End Road, Thorne	10	10	0	20
<i>Rotherham</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Sheffield</i>	45	45	0	90
Long Acre View	14	14	0	28
Redmires Lane	17	17	0	34
Huntsman Gardens, Attercliffe	14	14	0	28
West Yorkshire	127	126	1	265
<i>Bradford</i>	47	47	0	94
Mary Street Gypsy Site, Off Bowling Back Lane	28	28	0	56
Esholt Gypsy Site, Esholt Lane, Baildon	19	19	0	38
<i>Calderdale</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Kirklees</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Leeds</i>	41	41	0	82
Cottingley Springs, Gelderd Road, Gildersome	41	41	0	82
<i>Wakefield</i>	39	38	1	89
Heath Travellers Site, Doncaster Road	39	38	1	89

Source: ODPM Caravan Count, July 2005.

3.2.2 Private sites

Consideration of levels of private authorised provision (see *Table 1*), the preferred accommodation choices for Gypsies and Travellers with the means to acquire their own land, gives an even more mixed regional picture. The vast majority of the 311 caravans on private authorised sites in Yorkshire and The Humber are accounted for by just three districts - Doncaster, Hambleton and North Lincolnshire - with two thirds found in

Doncaster. There are many and complex reasons behind this uneven picture and some of them are discussed below.

3.2.3 Reasons for varying levels of provision

The consequences of variable levels of provision across the region raise different issues for local authorities and can be a great hindrance to the preferred mobility patterns of Gypsies and Travellers. It is difficult to provide a definitive account of the reasons for such differences without any comprehensive assessment of local authority approaches and strategies, which is beyond the remit of this study. Nonetheless many stakeholders and Gypsies and Travellers have expressed opinions about why some local authorities lag behind in terms of suitable provision. These include:

- *a lack of political will*: some stakeholders suggested that local councillors saw little political merit in a commitment to accommodating Gypsies and Travellers, and in some cases this was considered the largest single barrier to increasing provision;
- *low priority* afforded to Gypsy and Traveller accommodation need within councils, which is often linked to the perception that the population is relatively small;
- *a history of tolerance*: historical and familial connections to particular areas or towns can give rise to a more tolerant council policy and local population response;
- *the planning process*: success rates for planning applications for the development of private sites vary from one local authority to the next.

A lack of political will was regularly cited by local authority officers and for many this was a cause of much frustration as they struggled to convince local councillors of the merits of new site provision. The importance of this factor is evidenced by the situation in Doncaster. Stakeholders there were of the opinion that a cross-party consensus on Gypsy and Traveller accommodation issues was key in facilitating new provision, and this is supported by the fact that the district is far and away the most accommodating and forward looking local authority on accommodation issues within the region. This situation, coupled with the historical presence of a Gypsy population in Doncaster going back 500 years, goes some way to explaining these differences but another key consideration is the lack of provision in neighbouring districts which undoubtedly contributes to the differentials in Doncaster.

3.3 Additional Planned Provision

There is very little planned in the way of new site provision within Yorkshire and The Humber. The results from our survey of local authorities reveal that just three districts have identified (or are currently in the process of identifying) new sites for development: Doncaster, East Riding and Wakefield. Doncaster's local development framework identifies the need for 25-30 new plots in the very near future: 20 on new private sites and 6 or 7 extra pitches on existing sites. Details on the other two are unavailable at present.

Table 5: Gypsy and Traveller Grant Programme Bids in Yorkshire and Humber

Site	Lead local authority or RSL	Type of scheme (refurb, new residential, new transit)	No. of existing pitches refurbished	No. pitches brought back into use/added through refurbishment	Cost
Esholt Lane	Bradford	Refurbishment	19		£199,452
White Towers	Doncaster	Refurbishment	19		£108,276
Nursery Lane	Doncaster	Refurbishment	10		£49,465
Woldgate Caravan Site	East Riding	Refurbishment	18		£418,500
Wilmington Park	Hull	Refurbishment	21	2 (new)	£91,500
Cottingley Springs (1)	Leeds	Refurbishment	41		£16,692
Cottingley Springs (2)	Leeds	Refurbishment	41		£15,165
Cottingley Springs (3)	Leeds	Refurbishment	41		£5,685
Cottingley Springs (4)	Leeds	Refurbishment	41		£356,556
Redmires Lane	Sheffield	Refurbishment	17		£393,750
James Street	York	Refurbishment	20		£301,665*
Clifton	York	Refurbishment	23		
Osbalwick	York	Refurbishment	12		
Total					£1,956,706

Source: Yorkshire and Humber Regional Housing Board.

* This figure refers to the total cost of the three refurbishments in York.

In recognition of the lack of progress in new site development, last year the ODPM identified sums of money from each region's single regional housing pot to facilitate a regional bidding round for a Gypsy and Traveller sites grant programme, for the period 2006-08. In the case of Yorkshire and The Humber a total of £2.632m was identified: £846k for 2006/07 and £1.786m for 2007/08. Seven local authorities in the region have submitted 13 bids between them for funds through the Grant Programme and these are shown in *Table 4* above.

Only Hull has sought to increase provision; bidding for a two pitch extension as part of a refurbishment to the site at Wilmington Park.³ The other 12 bids did not involve new provision or additional pitches on existing sites. While refurbishments are welcomed by the Gypsy and Traveller community given the poor state of many sites, in terms of increasing provision this represents a disappointing response, particularly considering that the funding is 100% capital grant for new provision (75% for refurbishments) and is open to all local authorities and registered social landlords. This may, in some cases, reflect the lack of current evidence from which to inform new site provision but it all also underscores the general state of inertia with regards to current site provision and would suggest that more needs to be done, both regionally and nationally, in convincing local authorities, and particularly Councillors, of the need to act.

The discussion above has highlighted the significant level of cumulative need which has grown as a result of a fairly stagnant pitch capacity in the region and if actions to address this are not forthcoming in the near future then the situation will only worsen, and will manifest itself in the form of continuously increasing incidences of unauthorised encampments and the further disenfranchisement of the Gypsy and Traveller community. This, in turn, can have a negative affect on relations between the Gypsy and Traveller population on the one hand, and local authorities and the 'settled' community on the other.

3.4 Local Authority approaches towards Gypsies and Travellers

There is no evidence of a common approach towards Gypsies and Travellers between local authorities at the regional or sub-regional scale. Indeed, the only area approaching consensus among stakeholders was in the view that unauthorised encampments are becoming more regular and larger. While the majority of local stakeholders recognised

³ Although, at the time of writing, it is unclear as to whether this extension will go ahead or not as development was said to have been put on hold.

the need for toleration and provision alongside enforcement in the face of this, there were differences in the priority afforded to one over the other. For some Councils, Gypsy and Traveller policy appears to revolve around enforcement and the moving on of unauthorised encampments with little priority afforded to accommodation within their district boundaries.

It is particularly enlightening to consider the approaches to Gypsies and Travellers by different local authorities. In a 2005 baseline survey of local authorities by the GOYH respondents were asked: *'Where does responsibility for Gypsies and Travellers sit within the Council?'* The responses highlight the lack of a common approach towards Gypsies and Travellers and their accommodation needs. Responsibility rested with the housing, neighbourhoods or communities function of the council in six cases, and with environmental services in a further three. Other responses included: planning, legal services and the Chief Executive's Office, and two local authorities adopted a cross-departmental approach.

The results of our own survey also shed some light on this matter as questions were asked on the existence of a local authority Gypsy and Traveller strategy and the employment of a Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer. Just three respondents stated that their local authority did have an official Gypsy and Traveller policy, while a further two had policies in place but only for dealing with unauthorised encampments. Six local authorities employ a Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer, one of which is on a part-time basis.

Indeed, the role of Liaison Officers was sometimes unclear and differed from one authority to the next. In some cases the role was centred more on enforcement and administrative duties with little in the way of active support and advice to the community. For example, one officer expressed frustration about his role and wished he had a wider remit and more support from colleagues. He referred to his role as *"reading meters, issuing bills and collecting money"* but stated that he goes beyond this and gives advice and support in the form of assistance with letters, benefit forms and general guidance. The respective Council was apparently unaware of this and he thought that they would not look too kindly upon it.

Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officers are often in the best position to act as intermediaries between the Gypsy and Traveller community and local authorities. Yet it would seem that this opportunity to build bridges is often not taken, as the role often involves enforcement and eviction duties which are particularly negative experiences for Gypsies and Travellers.

Consequently it is difficult to build the trust necessary for a positive and constructive relationship that could act as a springboard to more dialogue between the community and authorities.

The evidence presented in this section suggests that some local authorities are doing significantly more than others in their efforts to accommodate and support Gypsies and Travellers in their area. This, in turn, can impinge upon the mobility patterns of Gypsies and Travellers as some may avoid areas where they are aware of an enforcement driven policy in favour of those districts with a more pro-active stance. The effects of this situation are illustrated in section 4.

4. The situations, experiences and accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Yorkshire and The Humber

This section sets out the key issues in relation to Gypsy and Traveller accommodation need in Yorkshire and The Humber. It focuses on needs and preferences but also considers the related support needs in the realms of health, education and social care; all of which are directly affected by the level and quality of site provision. Inevitably, exploration of these issues draws attention to over-lapping concerns such as experiences of harassment, discrimination and the perceived erosion of culture, and these are also touched upon.

The intention is to provide a qualitative understanding of some of the generic issues and problems encountered in the daily lives of Gypsies and Travellers within the region, and how these relate to accommodation situations and needs. Such an understanding can then inform more quantitative assessments at the local level and will be of use in the design of questionnaire surveys in terms of developing an awareness of what needs to be addressed. Many stakeholders felt that a qualitative assessment was needed before any comprehensive attempt at quantifying need was carried out. Given the fairly recent arrival of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation issues on the policy agenda, some thought that they simply did not have enough knowledge on the characteristics and dynamics of the population.

The findings are based on qualitative, in-depth interviews and focus groups conducted with a total of 58 Gypsies and Travellers, which took place between March and July 2006. Insights are also drawn from interviews conducted with Gypsies and Travellers on a previous CRESR study based within the region (see section 6 for a full account of the research approach).

4.1 The Interview Sample

Table 5 below shows the accommodation type, ethnicity (or traveller group), and location by sub-region of each of the interview and focus group participants. The research team endeavoured to capture a representative sample consistent with the broad make-up of the Gypsy and Traveller community within the region.

Efforts were also made to incorporate the range of accommodation situations and ensure an appropriate geographical spread across each of the four sub-regions. This has been partly achieved, but the relatively short lifespan of the research study has called for an element of pragmatism in identifying and accessing respondents and, inevitably, there are some gaps. For example, we have been unable to consult with any circus people or bargees (boat dwellers), two groups whose needs should be incorporated into needs assessments stipulated in the ODPM draft guidance. Attempts were made to contact these groups, but the few people who we did identify were either unwilling or unable to participate in the research.

Table 5 shows that local authority or RSL sites were the most common accommodation type in our sample, with 25 respondents residing on these, but this partly reflects the fact that these sites are known to exist and easier to access than unauthorised encampments.

Table 6: Interviewee Characteristics

Accommodation type	No. of interviewees
LA/RSL site	25
Private authorised site	10
Unauthorised site	9
Unauthorised site (own land)	2
Bricks and mortar housing*	12
<i>Total</i>	<i>58</i>
Ethnicity/Traveller type	
Gypsies	27
Irish Travellers	19
Showpeople	5
New travellers	6
'Gorgers'†	1
<i>Total</i>	<i>58</i>
Sub-region	
Humber	14
North Yorkshire	11
South Yorkshire	15
West Yorkshire	16
Outside the region**	2
<i>Total</i>	<i>58</i>

Notes: * Of which 8 were Council/RSL tenants; 3 owner-occupiers; and one private renter.

† This respondent was not a Gypsy or Traveller herself but had formed a household with her Gypsy partner on a site in Hull.

** Interviewees in this group were outside the region but frequently resorted to sites or stopping places within the Yorkshire and Humber boundary.

Of the 11 interviewees on unauthorised encampments two were on land they owned themselves and were seeking retrospective planning permission; a further eight were on roadside encampments; and one respondent and her family had been granted permission from a private landowner. Nearly all participants had had some experience of living roadside in the past. Private authorised sites, the preferred accommodation option among most respondents where possible, accounted for ten interviewees and a further 12 were resident in bricks and mortar housing. Council or RSL housing was the most prevalent tenure among housed Gypsies and Travellers, although three owner-occupiers and one private renter were also interviewed.

What stands out starkly from the consultation with the Gypsy and Traveller community is how the lack of adequate site provision impinges upon all aspects of everyday life. In many cases the difficulty in accessing an authorised pitch served as a barrier to lifestyle choices, services and support networks including:

- the travelling way of life;
- economic opportunity;
- family support networks;
- education;
- healthcare;
- social care; and
- an active social life.

The inherent difficulties in living roadside, which was largely a forced situation, were also shown to have an adverse affect on psychological and physical well-being due to uncertainty and stress. For those respondents who had secured a pitch on an authorised local authority or RSL site, their situation was often only marginally better due to the peripheral locations and poor environments of sites. Similarly, bricks and mortar housing rarely reflected active accommodation choice, but more often than not was a last resort due to old-age or ill-health and the resultant problems of physical mobility on sites. The Gypsies and Travellers who appeared most satisfied with their present accommodation circumstances tended to be those who were currently residing on private authorised sites. The reasons for this are discussed in detail below.

First, the diversity of the population is considered and some differences between communities are examined. Second, changes in mobility and the underlying factors contributing to current travelling patterns are explored and reveal a complex process affected by several factors. Third, attention is turned to the different accommodation situations and experiences of the Gypsies and Travellers in the region. Finally, some of the preferences expressed by the community are discussed before related support needs are explored.

4.2 The diversity of the Gypsy and Traveller population

The findings from interviews and focus groups reveal a diversity of situations, mobility and experiences amongst the Gypsy and Traveller population. Perhaps the most apparent differences lie between new travellers and the rest of the Gypsy and Traveller population.

On the whole, new travellers tended to be well educated and hold permanent jobs, which served to limit the frequency and distance of any travelling patterns. Several new traveller respondents stated that they used to travel a lot more in the past but the demise of the festival circuit, the increased difficulty of travelling as a result of the 1994 CJPOA (see section 2), and changing lifestyles associated with the life course and starting a family meant that they now led a more settled life. In most cases the mobility of new travellers was a response to enforcement action and rarely an active choice. This is in stark contrast to many Gypsies, Irish Travellers and showpeople, where mobility was driven by a number of factors, including employment opportunities, familial ties, cultural events and a cultural wish to lead a nomadic way of life. While new travellers appreciated the freedom of being able to 'get up and go' whenever they wished, most were settled and tied to a particular place through employment, family networks and the desire for uninterrupted schooling for their children.

All the new travellers consulted also expressed a preference for rural locations and were attracted by the greenery and quiet life associated with the rural idyll. Thus, in some sense, the accommodation choices of new travellers were driven by the desire to lead a particular lifestyle and their preferences in terms of site provision reflected this:

"...the way I see it round here they wouldn't put a nice site up just off the green lanes in the Wolds, erm, so I wouldn't particularly want to move into the you know, an area

in Boston to live on a site, I might as well see if I can rent a Council house" (New traveller, male, 37).

Site location aside, the majority of new travellers had relatively basic requirements in terms of amenities and what they wished for in a site. If these requirements were to be met on sites all new traveller respondents said that they would be happy to reside there.

New travellers were also aware of their relatively low standing in the eyes of other Gypsies and Travellers and felt that they were not always accepted as 'real travellers'. While most had stayed on sites with Gypsies and Irish Travellers at some stage in their lives - reporting both positive and negative experiences of interaction - they felt that it would be difficult to reside on a mixed site, as this could lead to conflict. Most other respondents expressed this view, regardless of their travelling heritage.

Most new travellers also articulated the perceived differences between themselves and other nomadic groups in terms of responses to authority and, in particular, a better understanding of the planning system and their rights, as illustrated by the following quote:

"I think the way it seems to work, when the Gypsies get an eviction notice they tend to go fairly quick, to be on the move all the time, when the New Age Travellers sort of get an eviction it tends to be fought in court or disputed or you know, let's see how long we can get out of it if you know what I mean" (New traveller, male, 38).

There are also important distinctions to be drawn between other travelling groups. As mentioned earlier, Gypsies and Irish Travellers are protected under the Race Relations Act 1976 (amended 2000), whereas no other travelling groups are. This is in recognition of a cultural heritage of nomadism among those two groups both of which have their own language and distinct cultures. Such distinctions, where they influence needs, should be recognised so as to culturally sensitise services.

4.3 Patterns and Drivers of Mobility

When trying to develop an understanding of the drivers and patterns of mobility of Gypsies and Travellers it is difficult to over-emphasise the interdependent relationship between the level and location of site provision on the one hand, and patterns of travel on the other. The mobility stories of respondents were littered with references to authorised sites, with travelling patterns often dictated by the location and availability of pitches. Thus, nearly all respondents expressed discontent about the lack of choice afforded to them in terms of

authorised stopping places, which would enable them to travel without the constant threat of enforcement action and the distress and insecurity which accompanies that. Those Gypsies and Travellers currently engaged in travelling thought that a more strict enforcement regime was in place than in the past, but this had not been accompanied by additional provision. Consequently, this had constrained travelling and changed mobility patterns. The other key factor altering travelling trends was a decline in the traditional forms of employment associated with Gypsies and Travellers.

The mobility patterns of Gypsies and Travellers in the region varied greatly in terms of the reason, frequency and distance of travel. Understanding geographical mobility is a complex and dynamic process involving many different and changing determinants: there was no one over-riding reason for, or pattern to, travel. That said there were some recurring factors which acted as drivers of mobility including:

- employment opportunities;
- the location of sites;
- enforcement action;
- family networks;
- an attachment to place;
- seasonality; and
- cultural and religious events;

These are discussed in turn below. However it should be emphasised that mobility is not always driven by "rational" decisions such as the pursuit of economic opportunities, but sometimes simply involves the desire to travel as a cultural preference and as a means of maintaining one's cultural identity.

4.3.1 Changing Patterns of Mobility

It was clear from our analysis that the vast majority of Gypsies and Travellers prefer to have a settled base for the stability and security that this brings. Indeed, there was wide acknowledgement of the difficulties in sustaining a nomadic, or semi-nomadic lifestyle which had encouraged the tendency to settle. Consequently, for many respondents travelling was confined to the summer months involving shorter periods on the road before returning to their permanent residential pitch. Other interviewees, while acknowledging

that regular travel was more problematic than in the past, travelled more frequently - though this was sometimes due to the lack of an available pitch in their preferred location.

Mobility patterns have undoubtedly altered in recent years with two main reasons for this articulated by interviewees: changing employment trends; and an increase in the frequency and speed of enforcement action.

4.3.2 The pursuit of employment opportunities

There was a general consensus among respondents that the forms of employment Gypsies and Travellers were traditionally engaged in were becoming increasingly difficult to make a living from. For instance farm work, once an important source of summer income for Gypsies and Travellers, was said to be more and more limited in the face of farm mechanisation and competition from students and migrant workers. Those old enough to have witnessed the gradual decline in the traditional trades also spoke of a rural-urban migratory trend in the pursuit of alternative economic opportunities:

"When I was young we didn't stay in big towns. I was raised in the country, that's where we used to stay, down back lanes and keep away from people, we didn't bother people, they didn't bother us, we was well away from towns and that. And it's only since the work's changed that travellers have come to the towns" (Gypsy, male, 51).

The decline in farm work also meant that summer travelling patterns were now less predictable than in the past; when families followed a more rigid route corresponding to the harvests and demand for labour.

"No we don't have a set route to here, there. We used to years and years ago when we did a lot of farm work because you were governed by whatever was growing and whatever needed harvesting or whatever needed pickin'" (Gypsy, female, 46).

Similarly, a decline in the number of fairs and shows was putting a squeeze on the employment opportunities for showpeople and the respondent below forecast the continuing demise of a long, cultural tradition.

"I mean sites and fairs, sites for fairs are getting harder and harder, plus I mean there's the health and safety factor...I mean a lot of the shows and the galas now they're finding it hard and they can't get any backing to run them" (Showperson, female, 55).

This, in turn, had an affect on the travel patterns of showpeople as fairs and shows become thinner on the ground. The outcome of this was that travel was less frequent and over shorter distances, as in the case of the showperson below whose mobility was confined mainly to the North of England:

"We don't travel as far as we used to do but we do go as far as Newcastle and we go to Lancashire, oh, and Wales" (Showperson, male, 54).

That said, there are still a significant number of Gypsies and Travellers employed in the traditional occupations and this continues to have a bearing on travel patterns. This is obviously the case for showpeople but we also encountered Gypsies and Travellers working in the traditional trades of scrap metal, tree topping, tarmacking and building work. For those self-employed in these trades there is often a need to be continuously on the move as work dries up and customers become more difficult to find:

"If you're doing, like, garden clearance or tree toppin' you need somewhere where there's lots of houses, lots of people....The smaller the place is the less work you can 'have can't you? So the less time you'll stop there. Like [my sons] do a lot of that Leylandai topping, well, in three weeks or a month you've done a little place." (Gypsy, female, 49).

Even when this was the case there was no pre-ordained route to stick to and often no notion of how long a stay in an area might last. There were usual places frequented where trade links may exist and where there was a reasonable chance of doing business, but sometimes the choice of destination would be quite random with the only essential criterion being people for custom.

"Even if it were scrappin', it were just a matter of just going somewhere else and doin' it, and it's basically still the same now, not so much seasonal work, but a lot of people are still going off for the sake of work" (Gypsy, male, mid-60s).

It should be noted that not all interviewees had to travel for economic purposes. On the contrary, some were tied to an area through their work but would still travel during the summer for different reasons.

"Yeah I've travelled around Leeds, Wetherby, Doncaster, York, all stuff like that there...I've been all over England but based up in Yorkshire 'cos it was the trade area I was doing... You'd be away beginning of March to the end of May and then back to Yorkshire" (Gypsy, male, 58 - now housed in Castleford due to ill health).

There was also some evidence of increasing propensity for Gypsies and Travellers to enter into more into formal, permanent employment that was perhaps the preserve of

'gorgers' in the past. In such cases travelling was obviously limited due to the need to be close to the workplace - although there was one respondent employed as an engineer who made a 100-mile round trip to and from work everyday in the absence of provision in closer proximity to work.

4.3.3 Enforcement and the location of authorised sites

Perhaps the most obvious factor contributing to the mobility patterns of Gypsies and Travellers is the location of suitable sites and, related to that, enforcement action. Roadside encampments were said to be less tolerated than in the past and the following quote typifies the prevalent view that movements are now more constrained:

"When we was kids we used to stop on the same places, we used to move around, round the country just to wherever we was going to, move from that, ten mile further down the road, we could go where we was going" (Gypsy, male, 51).

The recollections of travelling patterns articulated by respondents were, more often than not, littered with references to particular towns where sites were located. Mobility patterns and location were often compromised due to a lack of provision and subsequent lack of choice, which was lamented by many respondents, some of whom felt that they did not really have a choice at all. In order to stay in their preferred location while at the same time maintaining some semblance of a travelling way of life, respondents had to resort to unauthorised encampments and regularly suffered the stress of enforcement action.

"You get moved on straight away. As you pull on. Nine times out of ten before you get your caravan hooked off they're there, and sometimes they will escort you out the boundary. Like you pull in Bradford they will escort you to the borders of Leeds" (Gypsy, male, 51).

Consequently, this has contributed to the preference for a settled base. Though this was driven by a range of circumstances, increasing incidences of enforcement and eviction were undoubtedly decisive factors in opting to settle. Indeed, the hassle and stress of pulling on the roadside was an ordeal avoided by most travelling households wherever possible, as the following quotes illustrate:

Respondent: *"Yeah, yeah I've been around like to different sites because the police just keeps torturing you, keep moving you like on and on, so the only thing now, you've got to get on the sites."*
Interviewer: *"So you kind of have to settle?"*

Respondent: *"Yeah you don't have a choice"* (Irish Traveller, female, 38).

"It's only like the last 20 years that peoples being going back to specific areas all the time. When I was little you didn't go back especially, now people do, they didn't used to, it's the site that's forcing them to do that" (Irish Traveller, female, 54).

In the absence of transit sites and tolerated, temporary stopping places a common strategy was to 'double up' on the pitch of a family member. This is a regular practice both in the winter for Gypsies and Travellers lacking a settled base; and in the summer to facilitate travelling and the visiting of family members. For instance, when visiting a local authority site at Bedford Street in Hull it was reported that 7 of the 10 pitches there were 'doubling up' which accentuated overcrowding on what was already a fairly congested site due to the limited space afforded to pitches. This arrangement only provided a temporary reprieve for most however as such stays are time-limited on the majority of sites:

Respondent: *"I travel a lot more than what she does, every 3 or 4 days I'm moved"*

Interviewer: *"Is that because you haven't got a permanent site?"*

Respondent: *"Yeah. I'm allowed 2 weeks on 'ere [Smithies Lane, Barnsley] then I have to be off for 4 weeks and I can come back"* (Irish Traveller, female, 27).

Permanent pitches within the region do not become available very often as turnover is particularly low, new provision rare, and most sites have relatively long waiting lists. For those without a pitch there is little option but to live on the roadside or 'double up'. Or, in the case of the Irish Traveller above, constantly alternate between the two.

4.3.4 Family Networks

Family networks and the support that they provide emerged as an important consideration informing decisions about where to locate and travel. Interviews revealed a strong tendency for self-help within the community, with childcare and caring for the sick and elderly often duties performed by members of the extended family.

"You really want to be where you've got relatives round about 'cos you just get used to that network of support of all sort of being together" (Gypsy, female, 46).

Given the strong familial ties and the benefits associated with residing close to the extended family it is perhaps unsurprising that every respondent spoke of a desire to be in close proximity to their family. Unfortunately this was not always possible and family

separation (in the geographical sense) and dispersal were commonplace due to the difficulties in securing an authorised pitch in the relevant area. Low turnover and the stagnant situation with regards to new provision, both in terms of new sites and extensions to existing ones, meant that new household formation was not being catered for.

Visiting family was a key reason for travel and the favoured accommodation choice when doing so was 'doubling up' on the pitch of relatives but this was not always possible. Some sites did provide one or two transit pitches for such occasions but these were in short supply.

4.3.5 Attachment to place

Related to family networks, and an issue informing the preference for a settled base, was an attachment to place; the favoured locations in which to settle were often chosen on the grounds of an affinity with that particular area. Most common were familial and historical ties which served to pull even the most transient of households back to their home town or city as in the case of the Gypsy and Irish Travellers below:

"I've grown up here but have travelled, come back but always been here. Not always this site but always Bradford. We've always pulled here" (Irish Traveller, female, 24).

R1: *"I've been in Leeds 45 year. I've travelled all round Yorkshire and Scotland, we travelled like all round Newark, Leicester and all these places, but we always come back [to Leeds]"* (Gypsy, female, 57).

Interviewer: *"But it doesn't sound like you come back here because the sites are good?"*

R2: *"Oh no, no, no"* (Irish Traveller, female, 60).

R1: *"We come back here cos we class Yorkshire, well, Leeds as home. Couldn't imagine being anywhere else."*

R2: *"Because this is your roots here in Leeds. It's like my parents, my sister, they're all buried here and, like, now my brothers and sisters are all dotted about the place and they all come back to Leeds"*

It was noticeable that in many cases the geographies of respondents were couched in terms of counties as opposed to towns and cities, and several respondents identified with "Yorkshire" more than they did with any particular place within it.

"Me Mum and Dads always been in Yorkshire, Bradford was mainly the place that we used to be and then me Dad died when we was all young and we went to

Wakefield from there, and then I got married when I was still in Wakefield and I moved here to Barnsley." (Irish Traveller, female, 26)

For households with a permanent pitch they were obviously tied to an area to a certain extent, but most still endeavoured to travel over the summer - though the length of time residents can spend away from a permanent pitch is often limited to around 6 weeks. Some interviewees, both on permanent sites and the more mobile, reported that when they did travel they missed their permanent residence and their family and neighbours, which served to always bring them back:

"You do get homesick, travelling up and down you can be three or four month away, yes you might be in a beautiful place, but you get homesick, you think 'right, I want to see the rest of the faces'. You always, even if you're away, you might be in London, wherever like, you drive back to Leeds to see everybody" (Gypsy, female, 28).

There were also some respondents for whom Yorkshire and The Humber was not their place of origin but had since adopted it as their home, in much the same way as any in-migrant to the region might.

"Well I'm from Middlesbrough. I've been on Middlesbrough me, but I've been 'ere for years. I go back to see my cousins but Leeds now, it's my home, 'ere and Castleford" (Gypsy, male, 23).

The majority of our interview sample did have some connection to the places they resided in, or resorted to, and for those unable to get an authorised pitch this was often cited as a reason why their accommodation needs should be met. Unfavourable comparisons with other BME groups, and particularly 'new immigrants', were often made by respondents who felt that their accommodation needs were playing second fiddle to larger and more visible minority groups.

The ODPM Circular 01/2006 *Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites*, states that a lack of connection to the local area is not acceptable grounds for the refusal of planning applications from Gypsies and Travellers, given the nomadic or semi-nomadic lifestyle of much of the population, and some respondents had picked up on this.

4.3.6 Seasonality

As mentioned, seasonality had an obvious affect on mobility patterns with many Gypsies and Travellers preferring a more settled base in the winter months, and travelling more in the summer. This evidence is also supported by the ODPM Caravan Count and our survey of local authorities, the majority of which spoke of seasonal fluctuations and an increase in caravan numbers throughout the summer. The following quote typifies these preferences:

"Usually like a couple of summer months, like probably from May probably through to September, through them summer months, that's when people tend to go away."
(Irish Traveller, female, 24)

The difficulty in travelling in winter also played a part in the preference for a settled base and seasonal trends in travel, as did changing attitudes towards formal education:

"Children went to school, because we did want them to have an education, 'cos I can't read and write so I wanted me children to be able to and that's why we bought this [land in Selby] to settle down" (Gypsy, male, 51).

While there was an obvious aversion to secondary schooling amongst many respondents some younger parents were happy for their children to progress right through the education system and in some cases this was the main factor in establishing a settled base:

"We've got a piece of land now...we bought it and we're trying to get it passed so we can settle there for good so the kids and that can get settled into school and everything" (Gypsy, female, 23).

For others formal schooling was favoured up to the age of 11, and necessitated a settled base for the majority of term-time, but come the summer holidays most families with young children were keen to get away from their permanent residence:

"I'd still go off in the summer, I'd still like to go off in the summer....And I've got a little boy who's comin' up to school age now, he'll be 4 in June so he starts school in September, I'd like him to go to school while we're here for like the whole 6 months and get a bit of teaching in" (Gypsy, female, 24).

The lack of play spaces on sites, the boredom endured by children (and associated mischief), and concerns over site safety were articulated as reasons for a period away from the site during the summer (see also 4.4.3). The quote below exemplifies these common sentiments:

"I don't travel. A lot of 'em go away in the summer but they all come back....It's the holidays, cos they're always cornered in on the site and the kids have nowhere to go or nothing, so in the summer they try to get 'em out and away from it" (Irish Traveller, female, 60).

4.3.7 Cultural and religious events

A number of cultural events taking place in the summer, such as horse fairs for instance, also influenced the mobility of some respondents who would not only attend the fairs but stay in the area for the lead up to the fair too. Within the region Brigg horse fair and Seamer fair were cited as particular events that involved a temporary influx of Gypsies and Travellers to those areas.

Interviewer: *"So when you go out in the summer do you mainly follow the missions?"*

Respondent: *"Yeah, the Light and Life conventions. They're normally organised beforehand so it's a bit easier. There's no rubbish left when we go and they hire the fields, the Light Life missionaries" (Irish Traveller, female, 26).*

"Yeah we still travel a bit with the missions. It's just now it's hard to go anywhere you see. I'm a born again Christian and we'll hire a field for a week.... You go to different parts of the country but the minute the Councils find out what we're doing they try and stop it" (Gypsy, male, 51).

4.3.8 Other factors influencing mobility patterns

One reason cited by several respondents for regular movements between stopping places was avoiding harassment. There was an awareness that the length of time spent on an unauthorised encampment, even in a discreet location, had a bearing on the likelihood of encountering harassment from the local 'settled population', which is captured in the quote below:

Respondent : *"We've been in Kirton-in-Lindsey, Scunthorpe, Hull, Brigg, Alford...all tree topping"*

Interviewer: *"How long do you stay in those places?"*

Respondent: *"About two weeks, because we liked to move on to another place, before people would like become uncomfortable over us being there, we liked to move beforehand" (Gypsy, female, 23).*

Finally, the less rational influences such as the simple desire to travel as a cultural preference or the wish for a change of scenery were also evident as factors precipitating migratory movements and these too need to be considered.

"You do get a lot of people who just want a change like anybody else in this country would, they'll say 'well we're moving down Dorset' or whatever" (Gypsy, male, 45).

For many Gypsies and Travellers maintaining some level of travelling is an important aspect in the maintenance and continuation of cultural heritage, and is a particular issue given the views of some respondents on the perceived erosion of culture.

4.4 Experiences of living on local authority and RSL sites

With the exception of three individuals, every respondent had some experience of living on local authority or RSL sites within Yorkshire and The Humber and the views articulated were almost universally negative. Virtually all interviewees spoke of some disaffection with official local authority sites, from issues over inadequate amenities and access to an outright aversion towards Council or RSL sites.

4.4.1 The aversion to local authority and RSL sites

In several cases respondents chose an uncertain life of eviction and enforcement action on the roadside, or moved into bricks and mortar housing - both of which can be particularly stressful experiences - as opposed to residing on local authority sites. The views expressed below capture the general perceptions of local authority and RSL sites among residents:

"My opinion of Leeds site, and I've lived there for ten year, I think it should be closed down, cos all it is is a tip and there's rats running up and down and all sorts" (Gypsy, female, 28).

"The one in Esholt is cleaner than this 'cos there's a lot of factories all around this one here [Mary Street site, Bradford], and that top road gets very dusty...Esholt's not without it's problems though" (Irish Traveller, female, 24).

"Well they're in grot areas aren't they? They're next to a sewage works or they're next to a council tip... I stopped on one next to a cement works so all dust and everything blew" (Gypsy, female, 23).

Indeed, the Esholt Lane site at Baildon provides a good illustration of some of the common grievances with LA sites. It could hardly have been in a more marginal and unsafe position, being in close proximity to a gun range, a sewage works and a river. The windy back road leading up to the site was also a particular cause of concern: *"it goes from 30mph where the houses are and past our site it goes up to 70"*. This scenario provides an example of the perceived difference in the treatment of the settled population in comparison to Gypsies and Travellers. Though Esholt Lane is a residential site the inhabitants there felt they were not afforded the same priorities as those in housing in terms of the planning restrictions placed on developments next to residential areas. This was not unique to Esholt Lane, rather, the same sentiments were evident when most local authority and RSL sites were talked about.

"Yeah [Mary Street, Bradford] was a good area at the beginning. It's turning more and more into an industrial area around us as it's gone on" (Irish Traveller, female, 25).

In the extreme, sites were sometimes likened to "compounds" or "open-air prisons" due to their isolated location and concrete aesthetics. Concerns were broadly related to three different issues: the location and environment of sites; site safety and accessibility; and amenities on sites.

4.4.2 The location of local authority and RSL sites

Indeed, the actual location of local authority sites was a common concern. Most council sites were in marginal, peripheral spaces in poor environments and were not located in what one would consider residential spaces. It was alleged by some respondents that one site, Smithies Lane in Barnsley, is built on top of a landfill site (though this is not actually the case) and also in close proximity to a recycling unit dealing with household waste, the smell from which caused great discomfort in the summer months:

"Years ago [the tip] was down the bottom before they put any plots on or anything and then they moved it up and out the way a bit, 'cos they filled all this in. It was just like a big hole and all that, proper rubbish, and they filled it all in and they built the site on top of it" (Irish Traveller, female, 38).

The fact that sites were often located in industrial areas some distance away from settlements, and therefore cut-off from local services and amenities, was a particular

problem and certainly does not speak to the current government rhetoric on sustainable communities.

"It's not like on a housing estate or anywhere, like it's not as if down 'ere it's only a five minute walk to the park or anywhere, you're in a derelict place with a big busy main road and nothing round it for miles" (Gypsy, female, 28)

This instilled a sense of isolation into the communities resident on sites in peripheral or industrial locations, and was also viewed by many respondents as a key factor limiting interaction with the settled community. In some cases this was thought to be a deliberate attempt at 'hiding' Gypsies and Travellers from the view of the settled population.

The poor quality environments in which sites are almost always located, only served to reinforce and maintain the view amongst Gypsies and Travellers that their well-being is of little concern to the respective authorities. Most thought that accommodation needs assessments would yield little in the way of improvements in living conditions due to the lack of commitment from Councils.

"Have you been to Bridlington? I wonder if you'll be heading there! That's next to a tip and it's disgusting, you wouldn't put a dog on that site...Nobody's interested in it, it's run by the council and they don't care" (Gypsy, female, 37).

4.4.3 Safety on local authority and RSL sites

Site safety was also a high priority and sites next to rivers and busy main roads were considered to be dangerous settings for raising young children, especially on sites where there was no fencing around pitches or barriers to the entrance.

"On that site at Wakefield there's children and big grown men that have drowned because the site is built on top of a lake, a big river thing and all" (Gypsy, female, 27).

The lack of space on sites, which in many cases was found to be accentuated by overcrowding, meant that vehicles were often manoeuvring in tight situations and many parents expressed grave concerns for the safety of children. This concern was also related to the lack of play spaces and the dangers associated with kids wandering off sites out of boredom.

"Every second you're looking out for them 'cos you're frightened that if they go down that way at all you know they're heading for danger 'cos there's them motors there all the time, and then there's the river if they wanders that way" (Irish Traveller, female, 26 - referring to Smithies Lane, Barnsley).

Safety on sites was also an issue for the elderly and those with physical impairments as the built environment was often not well suited to individuals with physical mobility issues. Accessibility in relation to sites seemed to be some way behind in terms of the advancements made in wider society with regards to elderly and disabled access. Those with impairments living on sites faced much more of a struggle than their contemporaries resident in social housing. The burden of care inevitably falls on the extended family and this raises health and safety issues for carers in the absence of a lack of disabled facilities to aid difficult movements such as those involved in bathing and showering.

Issues were also raised about the lack of footpaths and sufficient street lighting on roads leading up to sites. This meant that often women and children felt unsafe walking to and from sites and this was compounded by the absence of bus-stops in close proximity and was another factor contributing to social exclusion and the loss of independence.

4.4.4 Amenities on local authority and RSL sites

The recent CRE report *Common Ground* draws attention to the gulf in the quality of living conditions between local authority and RSL sites on the one hand and social housing on the other. This certainly chimes with the views expressed about site amenities which were deemed extremely poor and inadequate especially in comparison to the rents on sites. Rent costs were consistently compared to the equivalent for social housing and in many cases sites were more expensive. Respondents resident on Council sites felt that they were not getting value for money considering the poor quality of the site environment, inadequate amenities and the lack of maintenance and up-keep.

"Well I've stopped on about maybe 10 or 12 [Council sites] altogether, I think that people don't take the same pride on a slab on a council plot as they do on a private one, that's one thing that I find. So even if your slab's quite clean, or even the site's quite clean, like the entrance up to it'll just be tree clippings, tyres, loads of rubbish banked up either side" (Gypsy, female, 46).

As well as a lack of space on sites in general many respondents also bemoaned the dearth of basic storage facilities and the confined kitchen and utility spaces:

"You'd be better off on an illegal [sic] encampment 'cos all it is normally is a little toilet, a kitchen what you wouldn't put a cat in, and a little bit of a room" (Gypsy, female, 28 - housed in Leeds).

As the above quote illustrates amenities and the lack of space on sites led to a feeling that the situation was no better than living on the roadside, and there were instances when this was the preferred option. Consequently, many respondents stated that they would not consider staying on a council site unless improvements were made:

"We'd stop on them a lot more, a lot more, what I'd really like to see would be a network of really attractive to go on council sites, either permanent or transit and that would be lovely, if you just go on and say 'right well I'll 'ave a month on here, I'll hook my electric in, I'll put my rubbish there, I've got somewhere for a shower and me washing, I'll 'ave a month 'ere and then go onto another one'. I think it would be lovely" (Gypsy, female, 47 - living roadside due to aversion to LA sites).

It therefore follows that site improvements could make a significant contribution in helping to reduce incidences of unauthorised encampments, especially where this happens alongside the development of new provision.

4.4.5 Preferences and improvements for local authority and RSL sites

As well as the concerns relating to local authority and RSL sites expressed above, interviewees were also asked about their particular preferences and how sites could be improved. The preferences cited were very diverse and some have been touched upon already, but there were some issues which recurred over and over again and these are summarised below:

- *a better environment*: sites not next to sewage works, on industrial estates or under pylons etc.
- *a better location*: some sites were in isolated environments some distance from any local amenities or were in built up urban areas where harassment was more likely. There seems to be a preference for sites close to towns but not right in the middle of them, which could facilitate interaction with the 'settled community'. For instance, several respondents spoke positively of a site in Hull in close proximity to a housing estate.

- *a manageable size*: some sites were just too big and it was felt that in such cases there is an increased likelihood of arguments and conflict.
- *play spaces*: boredom was deemed a contributory factor to some anti-social behaviour amongst children and virtually all respondents expressed a preference for sites with a safe play area for children.
- *different sites for different communities*: this is a particularly difficult issue but most respondents thought that separate sites for Gypsies, Irish Travellers and new travellers was more appropriate.
- *communal spaces*: the lack of spaces for interaction on sites was often bemoaned.
- *site layout*: Gypsies and Travellers felt that if they had more of a say in the design of sites from the outset then they would be more adequate.
- *workspaces*: some respondents required spaces to carry out work which were often lacking on sites.
- *more space for vehicles*: for residents requiring commercial vehicles there is often limited space in which to park and there was a perception that this was dangerous with so many children about.
- *basic amenities*: most respondents said they would be satisfied with water, electricity, a wash-shed, adequate storage space, workspace, and refuse collection but often this was not forthcoming.

4.5 Experiences of living roadside

Among stakeholders there was a definite sense that unauthorised encampments were on the increase, and not only were they more common but stakeholders in West Yorkshire reported that they were also getting bigger. Large temporary encampments were evident at certain periods such as around the time of fairs in Brigg and Seamer for instance, or for funerals or faith events, but some local authorities were concerned about the regularity of other incidences not connected to any particular events taking place.

As can be seen from the discussion above, the coexistence of a lack of adequate levels of provision alongside fairly stringent enforcement policies was reported to have added to the difficulties of households without a permanent pitch. As well as the usual issues encountered when living on the roadside, such as access to water and basic amenities, there was widespread acknowledgement that staying on unauthorised encampments was more problematic than in the past. The majority of interviewees felt that enforcement action was much speedier than in years gone by and historical stopping places frequented in the past were now out of bounds. Consequently movements were more restricted and there was a distinct lack of choice and freedom in terms of travel.

"No, no you pull up. There's nowhere you can go on and say 'right I want to stay on here for maybe two week' you can't do that" (Gypsy, male, 27).

Constantly being moved on had a detrimental effect on most aspects of everyday life and there were cases where formal education was being disrupted by the regularity of eviction. This was found to have a severe effect on the well-being of Gypsies and Travellers living roadside who often spoke of the constant stress and worry of when they were going to be moved next. In some cases households had been moved on two or three times in one day and most roadside families were moved on regularly. The uncertainty of the roadside situation also makes planning ahead very difficult as households have no idea as to how long they are going to be in an area.

While there are some Gypsies and Travellers for whom living roadside is a preference, the majority do so out of necessity. All of the 11 interview respondents who were on unauthorised encampments wanted a permanent pitch on a site, and most had their names down on waiting lists, or had requested planning permission on land they owned. There was little optimism about securing an authorised pitch in the near future however as turnover is relatively low on most sites, the waiting lists are often very lengthy, and the success rate for planning applications from the Gypsy and Traveller population is very low.

4.6 Experiences of bricks and mortar housing

For most Gypsies and Travellers residing in bricks and mortar housing, their accommodation situation was a compromised one and rarely an active choice. Virtually

all the respondents who lived in housing spoke of the stress and psychological aversion to such an alien environment and we were told how this sometimes manifests itself in the form of personal and social problems such as depression, other mental illness and alcohol and drug abuse. For many, housing was a forced accommodation situation as a result of ill health or old age which meant that they were unable to continue their nomadic way of life.

"A lot of traveller people wouldn't be in houses unless they had to. You wouldn't be in a house if you weren't sick or your husband wasn't sick" (Gypsy, female, 57 - housed in Castleford due to husband's ill health).

The sometimes unforgiving built environment of official sites was also cited as a factor influencing moves into housing with the general progress in accessibility achieved in wider society lagging behind on sites. Problems for the elderly and those with physical impairments were particularly acute on sites due to a lack of disabled facilities. Consequently, family care was extremely important and always the preferred option except in severe cases of ill health. Housing was often perceived as a last resort but there was some suggestion that perhaps it was more common now as travelling was deemed to be increasingly difficult:

"I think it's the last resort before the coffin for a lot of people. There are some people, and it's become so difficult to travel in any way whatsoever, they say 'well we might just as well be in a house as this'" (Gypsy, female, 34).

Adapting to a sedentary lifestyle was a very difficult experience and often interviewees compared it to the 'settled population' being forced to live in caravans. For respondents who had always lived in a caravan or trailer the move into housing was an incredibly traumatic experience and led to feelings of isolation, anxiety and a sense of confinement.

"Now we've got a house at X but I don't like it...I literally feel like I'm in prison" (Irish Traveller, male).

Some housed Gypsies and Travellers missed the interaction, sense of security, and the community feel and togetherness that were experienced on sites and there was a sense that residing in bricks and mortar housing often meant having to forego the support of social networks.

"Well when you go out [on a site] you see people you know obviously, like when you're in a house very few people come to see you, so you're like stranded. I just feel safe in my own environment...I don't feel safe at all in my house" (Showperson, housed, female, 55).

"I think that [housed] Gypsies feel isolated from their own community, from their own way of life. Because we're all used to being like a good few of us together, that's how you get your social support, that's what you depend on, your social relationships with other people" (Gypsy, male, 55).

Housing also raised issues in terms of the identity of Gypsies and Travellers. For many their identity is bound up with a travelling way of life and/or the lifestyle associated with that: it provides a means for expressing themselves and their cultural identity. Consequently, a situation where Gypsies and Travellers are having to resort to housing was one of the mechanisms by which respondents felt that their culture was being eroded.

Several respondents also made a connection here to housing shortages in the sense that if they were able to remain on sites and not have to resort to housing then that would free up property for other people.

4.7 The preference for private sites

The vast majority of respondents expressed a preference for relatively small private sites and many aspired to purchasing and developing their own land for themselves and their families to reside on. Most respondents felt that the maximum number of pitches for a site should be around 10 or 12 which is consistent with the findings of the Leeds Baseline Census of Gypsies and Travellers and other studies outside the region. According to some respondents conflict was less likely on smaller private sites, they were better managed and residents had more control over their own environment. For many respondents, from all traveller groups, there was a feeling that it may not always be appropriate to mix different travelling groups on sites. While there were cases of positive and negative relations between different groups some interviewees were adamant that mixing would lead to conflict. Currently, there is no other choice but to mix in many cases as there are not enough sites; if there was more provision and Gypsies and Travellers had a choice then some respondents felt that interaction would happen anyway but it should not be forced.

"If I was on a planning committee I'd build one for Irish, I'd build one for English, let 'em integrate theirselves you know what I mean? Don't force 'em together, they'll get there in the end" (Gypsy, male, mid-60s).

Of course, the purchasing option is not available to all whose preference is for private sites due to financial constraints; and for those that do have the means to do so there are a number of barriers to overcome, not least the planning process.

"They [showpeople] don't expect the council to provide them with everything but all we want is planning permission if we do find a site" (showperson, female).

Some participants felt that the planning process was stacked against them and did not hold out much hope of being granted planning permission. The situation was apparently accentuated by the lack of dialogue between local authority planning officers and Gypsies and Travellers wishing to develop land. There was a perception that local authorities could be more pro-active and helpful in this sense and advise on criteria and circumstances in which planning applications stand more of a chance of being approved. This would also serve to prevent the wasted resources invested in planning applications.

4.8 Service needs and attitudes

There is currently some research ongoing within the region through the Supporting People programme which focuses on the service and support needs of Gypsies and Travellers and this will address these issues in more detail than is appropriate here. That said, as part of the qualitative assessment of accommodation need, information was also sought on the related service needs and experiences of respondents. The findings on this issue from our analysis are characterised by barriers to accessing key services and processes contributing to social exclusion across a range of service provision including education, health and social care among others. Each of these issues is discussed briefly in turn below.

4.8.1 Education

Most Gypsies and Travellers wished for a basic education for their children centred on literacy, but there was a very clear aversion to formal secondary school attendance evident amongst most respondents. Most parents wanted their children to attend primary school and then sought arrangements for post-11 education to take place on-site through the Traveller Education Service. This preference was based on a number of factors including:

- the fact that the traditional forms of employment do not require a formal education;
- fears that children may get into bad habits or fall in with the "wrong crowd";
- concerns over the national curriculum (and particularly sex education); and
- a lack of cultural sensitivity within the education system.

There was a very real sense, particularly amongst more elderly respondents, that formal education that was insensitive to the cultural needs of Gypsies and Travellers was contributing to an erosion of culture.

Constantly being moved on accentuates the difficulties for those families wishing to provide an education for their children. The vast majority of respondents wanted their children to have some form of education and some preferred a formal state education up to secondary school age while others wanted their children to be schooled on site by the Traveller Education Service (TES). The recognition of declining opportunities in the traditional forms of Gypsy and Traveller employment was a contributory factor to views on education:

"If he actually wanted to actually be taught all the way through I'd be quite happy for him to do that because like the days of scrappin' and tree toppin' and what not's all dying I think isn't it? It's all becoming like computers and that" (Gypsy, female)

A number of concerns about secondary schools were present with many parents fearing that their children may pick up 'bad habits' or fall in with 'the wrong crowd' at an age when children are becoming more independent. Yet, while some families wished for a winter base which would facilitate formal educational attendance, where preferred, this was sometimes hindered by a lack of site provision and enforcement action.

4.8.2 Health

Problems and barriers associated with access to healthcare were a common theme in interviews and focus groups. In most cases complaints related to the sense of differential treatment in healthcare between Gypsies and Travellers on the one hand and the 'settled population' on the other. For instance, at Cottingley Springs in Leeds many residents have experienced difficulties in registering with a GP and some put this down to active exclusion and spoke of GPs drawing their boundaries around the site. There was limited healthcare available on that particular site but this was felt to be sub-standard:

"There's a health bus but you can go to it for your children, needles, but it's just like a big old scrap bus what parks in middle of site and if you want anything doing you just have your children outside and queue up. Don't get me wrong people are lovely and helpful in it, that's just their job but why should you stand outside a bus when you can go to a normal doctors.....that's exactly how it's done on Leeds site" (Irish Traveller, female, 24).

The difficulty registering with a GP was evident throughout the region. Again, the lack of choice was unacceptable in the eyes of many and consequently trips to Accident and Emergency were usual practice. With generally worse underlying health problems among the Gypsy and Traveller population (CRE, 2006) it is likely that the problems in accessing healthcare are compounding an already inequitable situation. For instance the Leeds Gypsy and Traveller Census found that just over 2 per cent of the population are over the age of 60 years compared to a figure of 20 per cent for Leeds as a whole. The average life expectancy for the general population of Leeds is 78 years and this falls to 50 years for Gypsies and Travellers (Baker, 2005, p.10).

Associated with access to services was the common perception that often services are not sensitive to the distinct needs of Gypsies and Travellers. An illustration of this is provided by the quote below where the different cultural norms are not taken account of.

"You know we've got these like little coal fires and you should have this round and you should have that round, but mum were trying to explain that these babies had been always brought up with it so they know not to touch it" (Gypsy, female, 24).

A similar case was also brought to our attention when a young Mother got no benefit from a pre-natal class as it was geared towards babies being raised in houses. Consequently she had virtually no information or support that was useful and relevant to her situation.

5. Addressing unmet and future accommodation need in Yorkshire and The Humber

Addressing the under-supply of adequate Gypsy and Traveller sites is the most pressing issue in progress towards improving the well-being of the region's Gypsies and Travellers. As previous sections have outlined there is undoubtedly a regional imbalance between demand for Gypsy and Traveller sites on the one hand and existing provision on the other. Current under-supply of adequate accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers is having a detrimental effect on *all aspects of their everyday lives* and the situation is even more acute for those wishing to lead a nomadic or semi-nomadic way of life. In some cases members of the community feel that their lifestyle and cultural tradition is effectively being criminalized.

The lack of provision, of both permanent and transit sites, within the region contributes to a vicious circle of unmet need and increasing incidences of unauthorised encampments. These are often tackled through costly enforcement measures which only result in the presence of another unauthorised encampment elsewhere and a great deal of distress for those being constantly moved on. This, in turn, perpetuates a sense of injustice, discrimination and mistrust amongst the Gypsy and Traveller community as dealings with authority are, more often than not, extremely negative experiences. Evidence from stakeholders and Gypsies and Travellers suggests that unauthorised encampments within Yorkshire and The Humber are on the increase and this upward trend is likely to continue, as is the associated cost to local authorities in dealing with them, unless action is taken to address the situation.

Given the strong preference expressed for private sites and widespread aversion to local authority sites, the facilitation of an increase in private provision alongside improvements and growth in local authority and RSL provision, should be a key goal in addressing unmet accommodation need and reducing the number of unauthorised encampments. This will be of benefit to all: local authorities in terms of cost savings; Gypsies and Travellers in terms of their accommodation needs being met; and the settled community in term of less unauthorised encampments in unsustainable locations.

While recent policy developments and rhetoric on increasing site provision are positive much of the Gypsy and Traveller community are sceptical about the commitment to new and more adequate provision from local authorities. If further disenfranchisement

amongst the community is to be avoided actions need to be taken in the near future to increase provision. There are a number of factors that local authorities should give particular attention to when seeking to address accommodation need and these are summarised below.

- the need to involve Gypsies and Travellers in the identification of suitable site locations and in the design of sites. Too often sites are situated in poor environments with sub-standard amenities such that many Gypsies and Travellers will simply not reside there for any length of time resulting in wasted resources.
- identifying sites for additional provision should also involve consultation with the 'settled population' which should be accompanied by efforts to raise cultural awareness and dispel some of the myths that persist about Gypsies and Travellers
- the need for a common approach towards assessing Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs (see section 6).
- getting local Councillors on board: several stakeholders expressed the view that elected members will not act unless they feel forced to do so. This represents a task for regional and central government in applying pressure to local authorities resistant to accommodating Gypsies and Travellers. The Secretary of State has intervened in the past, in Brentwood, but this an unusual occurrence. If accommodation needs are to be met all local authorities need to play their part but currently some are doing significantly more than others. Until those currently offering no provision do so the development of new provision in other authorities may be curtailed due to the sense of inequity.
- the need for a better understanding of the situations and preferences of Gypsies and Travellers in bricks and mortar housing. The current lack of knowledge in this area represents a significant barrier to assessing and addressing current and future need.
- a more constructive dialogue between Gypsies and Travellers seeking to develop private sites and planning authorities. Early discussions could avoid the sunk costs of purchasing and developing land only to be refused retrospective planning permission. Planning departments could offer advice and support on the workings of the planning

system and the criteria to be considered in applications which should serve to improve success rates.

- the need for a network of transit sites in order to accommodate the frequent mobility of nomadic and semi-nomadic households and reduce incidences of unauthorised encampments.

6. A common approach to identifying and assessing Gypsy and Traveller accommodation need

The discussion above has highlighted the need for a more coherent approach towards Gypsy and Traveller accommodation issues at the regional, sub-regional and local level. One way of moving towards this goal is by ensuring a degree of commonality and consistency in local and sub-regional Gypsy and Traveller accommodation assessments. While *draft* guidance from central government on conducting assessments does exist (see section 2) and provides a good starting point, there is an element of discretion and pragmatism implicit in the guidelines. This section draws attention to some key aspects of accommodation assessments that require a level of consistency if a regional understanding is to be improved.

1. The need to involve the Gypsy and Traveller community

There are huge benefits from including the Gypsy and Traveller community in the research process. As well as consulting on issues such as appropriate methods and including members of the community on advisory groups or panels, involving Gypsies and Travellers in primary research and data collection for assessments engenders a sense of ownership and makes access to the community a less problematic task. It is imperative that the community be involved in order to identify and access respondents who may be sceptical about the possibility of positive outcomes from the research given past inaction. This research was conducted in partnership with members of the Gypsy and Traveller community and this collaboration has brought a number of benefits to the research process in terms of knowledge, time and cost.

Firstly, it would simply not have been possible to consult with as many Gypsies and Travellers as this study has were it not for the inclusion of two members of the community on the research team. Staff from the Gypsy and Traveller-led organisations Leeds GATE and Hull GATE played a central role in identifying, accessing and interviewing respondents. Their knowledge of the whereabouts of unauthorised encampments and housed Gypsies and Travellers, the most hard-to-reach sections of the community, was invaluable in ensuring that those in such situations were represented in the interview sample. This is of the utmost importance, especially for quantitative assessments which should seek to consult with as much of the population as possible.

Furthermore, on past research studies on Gypsies and Travellers where community members have not played a role, difficulties have ensued in terms of accessing the community and acquiring large enough samples. This problem is circumvented by the involvement of Gypsies and Travellers and serves to allay any fears as to what the information collected might be used for. For example, respondents are sometimes wary of interviews being recorded for transcription but in this particular study every single interviewee gave consent for interviews to be taped after being informed of the purpose and objectives of the research by community interviewers. In order to sustain community engagement in the research a consultation was facilitated which sought to corroborate initial findings with the experiences of the community. This also conveyed a sense of involvement in the wider community which is crucial for needs assessments to be effective. That is, there is a danger of consultation fatigue and this could result in disengagement particularly where it is felt that views are not being listened to and benefits not forthcoming.

As well as the positives related to accessing the community, issues of cultural sensitivity can also be addressed through collaboration with Gypsies and Travellers. This includes aspects of the research process such as questionnaire design as well as the practicalities of fieldwork. Gypsies and Travellers bring a cultural awareness that researchers cannot possibly be as well versed in and can draw attention to sensitive issues and potential areas of inquiry which may be out of limits. Moreover, they possess a wealth of knowledge on the everyday experiences and barriers of the community associated with accommodation and related service needs which also helps to inform research design.

Given the numerous accommodation assessments currently taking place or planned for the near future there is likely to be insufficient research capacity within the research community to meet these demands. The involvement of Gypsies and Travellers in the research can build capacity, knowledge of research methods, and develop skills within the community, which in turn can help to address the lack of research capacity. Conversely, collaboration benefits researchers through raising cultural awareness and benefiting from knowledge passed on from Gypsies and Travellers.

2. The need to combine quantitative and qualitative research methods

Where knowledge about accommodation issues and needs facing the Gypsy and Traveller community is relatively limited a qualitative assessment can provide a better understanding and inform the design of methodologies in quantitative assessments. One of the aims of this Report has been to contribute to this qualitative understanding in terms of an exploration of the generic accommodation and related issues affecting the Gypsies and Travellers of Yorkshire and The Humber. However, if local anecdotal evidence suggests specific issues and processes being played out in particular localities then it may be necessary to conduct a shorter exploratory assessment prior to, or as part of, the quantitative exercise. This would serve to inform questionnaire design and sensitise surveys to local circumstances.

Quantitative questionnaire surveys are essential if a comprehensive, quantifiable understanding of accommodation need is to be reached but can be quite limited in aiding an understanding of the issues facing Gypsies and Travellers. The questionnaire approach often involves rudimentary tick-box answers which are unable to account for the cultural differences within the population. A more open-ended qualitative interviewing technique is better suited for this purpose as it allows the respondent to dictate the issues (rather than have their own concerns dictated to them) and enables the capture of more information and the identification of causal and relational factors.

Moreover, experience from this study suggests that a more in-depth approach which allows respondents to talk about the issues which they feel are important and adversely affecting their lives is the preferred mode of consultation within the community. Often interviewees commented on the interview as a positive experience and wished that other people (sometimes referring to Council officers, service providers and other professionals) would have a chat and listen to their views in the way that interviewers did. This can act as a springboard to a more open dialogue, and where interviewers are drawn from the Gypsy and Traveller population, serves to build trust and capacity within the community.

3. The importance of timescales

In the majority of cases the timescales set for the completion of accommodation assessments are at best ambitious and at worst impossible. Given the huge bearing that seasonality has on the mobility patterns of Gypsies and Travellers it is crucial to conduct

fieldwork over two separate periods: once in the summer and once in the winter. Consequently, a more realistic timescale for completion of assessments is at least nine months in order to facilitate this. Even with the involvement of community interviewers identifying, accessing and consulting Gypsies and Travellers is a huge task and it takes a great deal of time and effort. This does not seem to be acknowledged in most assessments to date. Accommodation assessments set to unrealistic timescales are not likely to be as effective they are intended to be.

4. A consistent definition of Gypsies and Travellers

Accommodation assessments need to be assessing the circumstances of the same people. The ODPM housing definition (set out in section 2), currently open to consultation, should be used across the region to ensure that the needs of all those with a nomadic, semi-nomadic or previously nomadic way of life (i.e. heritage) are assessed. This should include Gypsies, Irish Travellers, showpeople, new travellers, boat-dwellers (barges) and circus people, where relevant.

5. The importance of acknowledging cross-boundary movement

There are particular advantages to Gypsy and Traveller accommodation assessments which are able to account for cross-boundary dynamics and the interdependent relationships between certain towns and places. In this sense, an assessment conducted at the sub-regional level could prove more enlightening in terms of a more comprehensive understanding of mobility patterns, and the links between levels of provision and the geographical distribution of the Gypsy and Traveller population. More localised assessments will also need to acknowledge cross-boundary linkages. For instance, an accommodation assessment confined to the administrative boundary of say Rotherham or Kirklees could not possibly provide an understanding of current or future accommodation need without also taking account of the situation in Doncaster or Wakefield, respectively.

Relying too heavily on Caravan Count data can give wrong impressions as to the scale of need in particular areas: if a local authority district consistently records a zero in the official caravan count this may be explained as much by enforcement policy and the absence of provision as low demand for sites.

One way of developing an understanding of cross-boundary dynamics is to include consultation with those outwith the study area to ascertain whether there is a displacement effect. This was found to be the case from our interview analysis with Gypsies and Travellers resorting to Doncaster as a result of little or non-existent provision in neighbouring districts. Certainly, this is more likely where districts offering relatively high levels of provision are cheek by jowl with those offering none. Indeed, stakeholders expressed concerns that needs assessments would point to need only in those districts currently offering provision and a more tolerant policy. This is a difficult issue to tackle but it is imperative that it is addressed as it could lead to tensions between local authorities and blame being passed back and fore with little new provision emerging.

6. Improving data collection and monitoring

Far and away the biggest barrier to climb in the process of accommodation need assessments is the lack of robust data to draw on. An already difficult issue is further accentuated by problems encountered in trying to access data which could serve as indicators of accommodation need. These problems were related to poor collection and monitoring practices, while in some cases useful data is not being recorded at all. Stakeholders also bemoaned the lack of sharing of data. This was the case between local authorities, within local authorities, and between local authorities and other organisations. The majority of stakeholders felt that the TES in particular could provide more information to inform levels of unmet accommodation need.

The most pressing requirement is ethnic monitoring of housing allocations in order to inform robust quantitative needs assessments. As can be seen from the pitch requirement estimates in section 3 of this Report, there remains a huge gap in the data which inhibits a full assessment of accommodation need. It is currently almost impossible to accurately assess the level of accommodation need on sites arising from those in bricks and mortar housing. All local authority and service provider data collection exercises should contain a category for Gypsy or Irish Traveller, protected as they are under the 1976 Race Relations Act (amended 2000). Where local authorities are already employing this practice, and it is working, this should be shared with other local authorities.

There is also much room for improvement in the recording and monitoring of unauthorised encampments and in distinguishing between planning applications from the Gypsy and Traveller and settle communities. While this may reflect a lack of resources and capacity,

or the low priority of Gypsy and Traveller issues within Councils, it is a key component of any quantifiable needs assessment.

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Appendix A: Local Authority Survey Template

REGIONAL GYPSY AND TRAVELLER PROJECT

1. Aims

The primary objective of this research project is to develop a better regional understanding of the current and changing needs of Gypsies and Travellers, including an assessment of factors that may impact on meeting current and future accommodation needs.

2. Outcomes

The project will increase knowledge and understanding of Gypsy and Traveller populations in the region. An assessment of the need for sites and facilities will be provided at regional, sub-regional and, if possible, district level. Our ability to provide accurate information at district level is contingent on the type of information we are able to secure from individual local authorities.

3. Information Requirements: What We Need From You Now

We require, as soon as possible, the following district level information. We would be grateful if you could provide the information on this form which can then be returned to Ryan Powell. The contact details are provided at the bottom of this form.

A. Current Provision

1. Numbers of authorised sites:

2. Location of each authorised site;
 - within the district
 - roadside or other site

3. Ownership of each authorised site (who?)
4. Number of pitches per authorised site
5. Who stays at each authorised site, e.g. Gypsies, Irish Travellers, new travellers?
6. Numbers of unauthorised sites
7. Location of each unauthorised site
 - o within the district
 - o roadside or other site without planning permission
8. Ownership of each unauthorised site (who?)
9. Number of pitches per unauthorised site
10. Who stays at each unauthorised site, e.g. Gypsies, Irish Travellers, new travellers?
11. Please provide the results of the January and July caravan counts in the last 12 months
12. Any seasonal trends in the district, e.g. summer, winter?

B. Planning Information - Applications

1. Number of planning applications for sites in the last 12 months
2. Location of sites for each planning application within the district
3. Number of pitches for each planning application (temporary or permanent?)

Who was each planning application for, e.g. Gypsies, Irish Travellers, new travellers?

4. Outcome of each planning applications

5. Who for? (Permanent or temporary)
6. LA site management records information relating to the following:
 - waiting list for sites
 - pitch turnover

C. Environmental Health Information - Complaints

1. Number of complaints by the settled population

D. Housing Management Information

1. Overall numbers living in houses *and* by
 - Gypsy
 - Irish Travellers
 - new travellers
2. Location of housed gypsies, by
 - Gypsy
 - Irish Travellers
 - new travellers

E. Contact information:

Please provide a contact name, email and telephone number in the district for:

- Planning officer with responsibility for Gypsies and Travellers.
- Housing manager with responsibility for Gypsies and Travellers
- Gypsy liaison officer

F. Contacting the Project Team

This project is being undertaken by a research team from Sheffield Hallam University. The research team consists of Ryan Powell, Tim Fordham and Emma McCoulough. The contact details for correspondence are:

Ryan Powell

r.s.powell@shu.ac.uk

0114 225 3073

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**Thank you for helping the Regional Gypsy and Traveller
project**

Appendix B: Methodology for Regional and Sub-regional pitch estimates: 5 year period, 2006-2010

Variable	Yorkshire and The Humber Total	Humber	North Yorkshire	South Yorkshire	West Yorkshire
Caravans on U/Es (5 count average)	209	22	41	56	90
+ 15% undercount	31	3	6	8	14
= Estimated caravans on U/Es	241	26	48	64	104
+ Need from the housed population**	-	-	-	-	-
/ Average caravans per pitch	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7
= Current need (pitches)	142	15	28	38	61
average total caravans (5 count average)	1273	210	330	451	281
Annual population growth of 3% (caravans)	39	6	10	14	8
/ Average caravans per pitch	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7
* time to 2010 (years)	5	5	5	5	5
= Future need to 2010 (pitches)	115	19	29	40	25
Current need (pitches)	142	15	28	38	61
* Future need to 2010 (pitches)	115	19	29	40	25
= TOTAL PITCHES UP TO 2010	257	34	57	78	86

Sources: Caravan Count (last five counts); Survey of LAs; Author's estimates.

** Currently there is insufficient data on the accommodation needs of housed Gypsies and Travellers to factor this into the estimates.