

Isle of Wight

Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment

March 2015

Housing, Planning and Regulatory Services

Isle of Wight Council. 310315 v.1

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Executive Summary

The objective of this report is to provide an update to the Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment 2006 (GTTSAA).

This report provides up to date evidence about the accommodation needs of GTTS and determines the extent to which the Isle of Wight Council needs to plan for the provision of permanent and transit sites to accommodate them. It also seeks to determine what is needed now, in the near future, and also to form a projected need for sites and pitches going forward until 2027.

This report provides the evidence base to enable the council to comply with its requirements towards Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople under the Housing Act 2004, the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 and Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2012.

The study covers all Gypsies (including English, Scottish, Welsh and Romany Gypsies) and Travellers (including Irish Travellers, New Travellers and Van Dwellers) that have been able to be identified on the Island during the undertaking of this project. For ease of reference, all of these groups are referred to as 'Gypsies and Travellers'.

Gypsies and Irish Travellers are recognised in law as distinct ethnic groups and are legally protected from discrimination under the Equalities Act 2010. Other travelling groups are not.

The report also covers the needs of people travelling for fairs and circuses and other Travelling Showpeople. This report refers to all of these groups as 'Travelling Showpeople'.

This report provides additional evidence to the Isle of Wight Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2014 which focuses upon the housing need of the 'settled' population. This report indicates the current requirement and forecasts new arising housing need for Gypsies and Travellers by specific Area Action Plan (AAP) areas, as identified in the Island Plan. The requirements are then projected forward to 2027.

The primary research data in this report determines the extent of current Gypsy and Traveller sites, and encampments, and incidences of Travelling Showpeople 'yards' on the Island. It also details locations of any current 'tolerated' or 'otherwise allowed' sites, and unauthorised encampments. This information has been used in conjunction with other available secondary and demographic data to estimate levels of need.

The research showed that there are no council or Registered Provider owned or managed Gypsy and Traveller pitches on the Island.

94 people identified themselves as Gypsies or Irish Travellers in the Census 2011. These are most likely to be living in 'bricks and mortar' as Census forms are only delivered to 'settled' accommodation.

It is considered that the majority of Gypsies and Travellers observed by the research were not identified in Census 2011 as they are living in caravans and other vehicles on unauthorised 'temporary' sites. Many of these unauthorised sites have been in existence for several years and are

unofficially 'tolerated'. One site has been the subject of a judicial process and no action may be taken until a transit or other site is provided.

The research found 33 unauthorised caravans/vehicles on a total of 13 sites. Of the 13 sites, these are located in nine parishes, across three AAP areas. Further detail is provided within the report with tabulated data for reference.

Therefore, taking into consideration government guidance on new household formation rates issued by the Planning Minister in 2014, it is considered that the most robust option for determining future net household formation rates is to use the 2012 Household projection figures for the Isle of Wight issued by the Office of National Statistics (published 27 February 2015). This approach also maintains consistency with the figure in the SHMA.

As there is currently no pitch provision at all on the Island, we have determined that one observed caravan/ converted vehicle equals one household , and therefore one pitch requirement.

The total pitch provision required for Gypsies and Travellers until 2027 on the Isle of Wight is for 38 pitches. These figures should be seen as the projected amount of provision which is necessary to meet the statutory obligations towards identifiable needs of the population arising in the area. Recommendations for numbers of pitch sites and sizes for each AAP are provided in detail within the report.

The observed population appears to have remained fairly settled in the same place or nearby vicinity since the previous assessment carried out in 2006. Therefore, this report recommends that a permanent site provision should be located within Ryde AAP which already has with the highest number of observed vans and caravans.. This site should comprise of 11 pitches, rising to 12 by 2027.

This report recommends the need to plan for a transit site within the Medina Valley (most likely Newport) , as this has the most observed "travelling" travellers. This site should comprise 4 pitches, rising to 6 by 2027.

The research carried out for this report does not indicate any evidence of a current resident population for Travelling Showpeople, nor any new household formation indication. Therefore, it is not considered that there will be any current or on-going need for any plots or yards on the Island for this group.

It is important when determining new site provision to also take into account the needs of the 'settled' Gypsy and Traveller population not currently considered to be living in caravans or on sites. However, within the scope of this assessment, it is not currently possible to determine any evidenced desire from them to return to living on a caravan site without conducting extensive consultation. It is recommended that any future consultation with this group of residents would need to be facilitated through an established Gypsy and Traveller organisation to ensure the best likelihood of achieving a significant responses.

1. Introduction

Housing Needs Assessment

- 1.1. The needs assessment seeks to provide an evidence base to enable the council to comply with its requirements towards Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople under the Housing Act 2004, the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 and Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2012 (PPTS).
- 1.2. The main objective of this document is to provide the council with up-to-date evidence about the accommodation needs of this group on the Isle of Wight area currently and up until 2027.
- 1.3. This work provides additional evidence to the Isle of Wight Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2014 which focuses upon needs of the 'settled' population and forecasts the number of new dwellings to 2027 and beyond.
- 1.4. The key consideration of this report is to determine the locations of current sites and unauthorised encampments and to use this information in conjunction with other demographic data to estimate levels of need to enable the future provision of pitches and sites for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople on the Isle of Wight over the period to 2027.

What are sites and pitches?

- 1.5. A pitch is an area which is large enough for one household to occupy and typically contains enough space for one or two caravans, but can vary in size. A site is a collection of pitches which form a development exclusively for Gypsies and Travellers and/or Travelling Showpeople.
- 1.6. A common form of Gypsy and Traveller site is a publicly-provided residential site, either by a council or by a Registered Provider (often a Housing Association or specific housing provider for this population group). Pitches on public sites are generally allocated through a site waiting and location preference list. The costs of running the sites are usually met from the rent paid by the residents and from any funding allocated from the provider towards this expense.
- 1.7. Many Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople live on private sites. These often result from individuals or families buying areas of land and then obtaining planning permission to live on them. Households can also rent pitches on these sites. Generally, the majority of Travelling Showpeople 'yards' are privately owned and managed.
- 1.8. The Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population also often utilise 'Transit' sites due to their nomadic way of living. Transit sites tend to contain many of the same facilities as permanent residential sites, except that there is a maximum period of residence which can vary from a few days or weeks, to a period of months.
- 1.9. An alternative to a transit site is an 'emergency stopping place'. This type of site typically has restrictions on the length of time someone can stay on it, and usually very limited facilities designed

for a temporary occupation. Some councils also operate an accepted 'encampments' policy where short-term stopovers are tolerated without enforcement action.

1.10. Of wider concern is the presence of unauthorised encampments and site developments on land which does not have planning permission to use for residential purposes. Unauthorised encampments can occur on land owned by Gypsies and Travellers themselves, on that owned by other landowners, and on council or highways land. These are not usually considered 'tolerated' sites by the council, although because of legal and other considerations they can sometimes be in place for some time.

Definition of 'Gypsies and Travellers'

1.11. PPTS (2012) sets the definition of 'Gypsies and Travellers' for the purposes of the Planning system:

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

(PPTS (2012), Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), March 2012).

1.12. Within the main definition of 'Gypsies and Travellers' there are a number of main cultural groups which include:

- Romany Gypsies
- Irish Travellers
- English, Scottish or Welsh Travellers
- New Travellers.

1.13. Gypsies and Irish Travellers are recognised in law as distinct ethnic groups and are legally protected from discrimination under the Equalities Act 2010.

1.14. New Travellers do not have recognition as a distinct ethnic group, but in common with the rest of the population they do have protection under other Equalities Act categories if appropriate.

1.15. Alongside Gypsies and Travellers, a further group to be considered for determining housing need and potential site provision is Travelling Showpeople. These are defined as: *Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their family's or dependant's more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently* (PPTS 2012)

1.16. The report covers the needs of all groups identified above; but for ease of reference we have referred to the population collectively as Gypsy and Travellers, and as Travelling Showpeople, where relevant.

GTTSAA 2006 and Island Plan Core Strategy

- 1.17. The IWC carried out a Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTTSAA) in 2006 to provide an assessment of housing need and pitch requirements in accordance with the settlement hierarchy set out within Policy SP1 of the Island Plan Core Strategy, the Local Development Plan, (adopted in 2012).
- 1.18. Policy DM6 of the Core Strategy confirms that:
- “The Council will meet the identified need for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople pitches by allocating sufficient sites within the Area Action Plans and Delivery and Management DPDs.....”*
- 1.19. Paragraph 7.101 of the Core Strategy confirms that in the 2006 GTTSAA, carried out by David Coultie Associates, a need for 24 pitches (including one transit site) was identified to be provided between 2006 and 2011.
- 1.20. Following work at the regional level to ascertain housing needs to 2016, this figure was increased to 27 (including one transit site) to take account of potential new family formation.
- 1.21. Paragraph 7.102 of the Core Strategy confirms that taking account of Core Strategy period of 2011-2027, along with the fact that there had been no previous delivery of authorised sites, the council considered that the provision of 27 pitches would be required to be delivered between 2011 and 2021 to meet the identified need. It also identified that further monitoring would be carried out to identify any future need between 2021 and 2027 to ensure that additional land could be allocated if required.
- 1.22. It is within this context that this updated GTTSAA has been carried out in February/March 2015 in order to provide an updated evidence base over the period to 2027. This assessment also seeks to update any evidence for new and future pitch requirements and shows the requirements in the identified Area Action Plans geography, along with the area covered by the remainder of the Island covered by the Delivery and Management DPD.

The Duty to Co-operate and Local Housing Markets

- 1.23. The Government has reformed the policy framework for planning housing provision, and has revoked the policy for setting Regional Spatial Strategies. This returns the responsibilities for determining policies for housing provision to councils. The 2011 Localism Act now includes a ‘Duty to Co-operate’ (DtC) on the council. This duty applies to the preparation of development plan and other local development documents, and to activities which can ‘reasonably be considered to prepare the way’ or support them (such as the preparation of evidence-base studies such as this).
- 1.24. The (DtC) is a legal test to which development plans must comply. The Council is required by Section 110(2) of the Localism Act to *“engage constructively, actively and on “an on-going basis”* with its neighbourhood LAs with regard to the planning of future housing need.

- 1.25. Therefore, an upward adjustment to planned housing numbers in one area may have the result of increasing in or out migration and therefore will trigger an additional requirement to assess the impacts under the (DtC).
- 1.26. Councils also have a duty to cooperate with adjoining districts when setting pitch targets for likely permanent and transit sites and have to take the requirement into consideration when assessing the potential future accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
- 1.27. Unless the local area can be considered a separate 'housing market area' this means, working collaboratively with neighbouring councils to identify need and allocate land for sites provision which would also go towards meeting that need across the identified local area and with reference to identified need in the adjoining councils.
- 1.28. However, both of the recent Isle of Wight Strategic Housing Market Assessments (SHMA) 2007 and 2014 do identify the Isle of Wight as a separate Housing Market Area. This means that the requirement to plan for neighbouring councils requirements does not apply..
- 1.29. The findings from the SHMA 2014 also confirm that any suggested requirement for Gypsy and Traveller pitch numbers only needs to include assessed Island current and future needs. However, it also means that any requirement for authorised sites and transit pitches will need to be met on the Island itself.
- 1.30. The council will be consulting with its neighbours as part of the statutory planning process .

Short-term encampments

- 1.31. The council are responsible for any action that arises from encampments on its own land. Issues regarding encampments on Highways and other public land are usually resolved in partnership with the relevant public owner, Island Roads and the Police. Any encampment on private land is the responsibility of the landowner themselves.
- 1.32. The approach to the management of encampments varies depending on the circumstances.

2. Legislation and Guidance

Planning, accommodation and needs

- 2.1. Decision-making for policy concerning Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople sits within a complex legislative and national policy framework. As well as PPTS the following additional legislation and guidance is relevant when constructing policies relating to this group.
 - National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (NPPF);
 - Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments Guidance October 2007;
 - The Human Rights Act 1998;
 - Equalities Act 2010 ;
 - The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as subsequently amended);
 - Homelessness Legislation and Allocation Policies;
 - Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994;
 - Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003;
 - Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004;
 - Housing Act 2004;
 - Housing Act 1996 (in respect of homelessness).
- 2.2. The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 is particularly important with regard to the issue of planning for Gypsy and Traveller site provision. This repealed the duty of councils from the Caravans Act 1968 to provide appropriate accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers. However, at this time Circular 1/94 did support maintaining existing sites and stated that appropriate future site provision should be considered.
- 2.3. The Housing Act 2004 Section 225 requires councils to assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Showpeople, alongside the need for other types of housing, when conducting Housing Needs Surveys. This issue was not included in the SHMA 2014, thus necessitating this GTTSA.
- 2.4. Circular 1/06 'Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites', released by DCLG in January 2006, replaced Circular 1/94. This suggested that the provision of authorised sites should be encouraged to reduced unauthorised ones.
- 2.5. The Government announced in 2012 that the previous guidance contained in Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites (Circular 01/06) and Planning for Travelling Showpeople (Circular 04/07) was to be repealed, along with the requirements within Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) concerned with council pitch provision.
- 2.6. The new document, PPTS (2012) is intended to be read in conjunction with the National Planning Policy Framework when determining land allocations for new pitches. Therefore the aims of PPTS (2012) are that in respect of meeting identified need for new Gypsy and Traveller sites LPAs should make their own assessment of need for the purposes of planning and:

- work collaboratively to develop fair and effective strategies to meet need through the identification of land for sites;
- plan for sites over a reasonable timescale;
- protect any Green Belt and rural spaces from inappropriate development;
- promote more private Gypsy and Traveller site provision (while recognising that there will always be some Travellers who cannot provide their own sites);
- aim to reduce the number of unauthorised developments and encampments and make enforcement more effective;
- ensure that their Local Plan includes fair, realistic and inclusive policies;
- increase the number of Traveller sites in appropriate locations with planning permission, to address under provision and maintain an appropriate level of supply;
- seek to reduce tensions between settled and Traveller communities in plan-making and planning decisions;
- enable provision of suitable accommodation from which Gypsies and Travellers can access education, health, welfare and employment infrastructure;
- have due regard to the protection of local amenity and local environment.

2.7. PPTS (2012) confirms that Planning Authorities should also set 'pitch targets' for Gypsies and Travellers and 'plot targets' for Travelling Showpeople. These should address the likely permanent and transit site accommodation needs of these groups in their area; also working collaboratively with their neighbouring district Planning Authorities. PPTS (2012) confirms that Local Plans should:

- identify and annually update a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient for five years' worth of provision against locally set targets;
- identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6- 10 and, where possible, for years 11-15;
- relate the number of pitches or plots to the circumstances of the specific size and location of the site and the surrounding population's size and density;
- protect local amenity and environment.

2.8. A key element to the new policies is that they still represent a continuation of the aims of previous Gypsy and Travellers site provision; especially with regard to the requirement that councils have a duty to ensure a five-year land supply to meet the identified needs for Traveller sites. However, PPTS (2012) also notes that:

'Where there is no identified need, criteria-based policies should be included to provide a basis for decisions in case applications nevertheless come forward. Criteria-based policies should be fair and should facilitate the traditional and nomadic life of Travellers, while respecting the interests of the settled community.'

Policies for tackling Gypsy and Traveller inequalities

2.9. In April 2012 the Government issued a further document relating to Gypsies and Travellers: *'Progress report by the ministerial working group on tackling inequalities experienced by Gypsies and*

Travellers' (DCLG April 2012). This built on the 'protected status' under the Equalities Act 2010 for Gypsies and Travellers, and contains 28 further commitments to help improve their circumstances and outcomes across a range of areas. These included:

- identifying ways of raising educational aspirations and attainment of Gypsy and Traveller children;
- identifying ways to improve health outcomes for Gypsies and Travellers;
- encouraging appropriate site provision;
- tackling hate crime against Gypsies and Travellers and improving their interaction with the criminal justice system;
- improving knowledge of how Gypsies and Travellers engage with services that provide a gateway to work opportunities;
- sharing good practice in engagement between Gypsies and Travellers and public service providers.

Funding for Gypsy and Travellers sites

- 2.10. The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) administers a grant funding programme for Gypsy and Traveller sites. This welcomes bids from councils, Gypsy and Traveller communities, Housing Associations and private development partner groups, as well as working with other Registered Providers.
- 2.11. Currently (2015), the HCA has confirmed allocations for all of its funding for the 2015/19 allocation round. However, it is possible that further funding may become available if some planned sites are unable to be delivered over the course of the programme.
- 2.12. Therefore, the council is able to liaise with HCA area development teams on new site proposals which would then be eligible to access any future funding that might become available due to other non-provision. It is currently envisioned that a future Government will continue this element of site funding.
- 2.13. Currently, all new Pitches provided by either a council or Registered Provider receive New Homes Bonus equivalent to Council Tax (based on the national average for a Band A property), plus an additional £350 per annum for six years. This would equate to around £8,000 pounds per pitch.

3. Methodology

3.1. This section sets out the methodology undertaken to identify the housing needs of GTTS.

Desk-based research

3.2. The council sought to gather background information regarding the current Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population on the Island . To do this information was collated from the following available sources:

- Census data;
- detail of all authorised public and private sites;
- detail of any identified travelling Showpeople's yards;
- figures reported for Traveller Caravan Counts;
- records of any unauthorised sites and encampments;
- information on planning applications and appeals;
- information on any other current enforcement actions;
- previous GTTSAA's and other relevant local information.

3.3. This data has been analysed in conjunction with the outcomes of the other elements of the study to allow the council to complete a review of the needs of travelling communities.

Survey of travelling communities

3.4. The council sought to physically identify as many pitches as possible as part of the approach. This was to avoid potential under or over estimates of current and future needs.

3.5. All sites (including unauthorised sites) were visited by officers of the council determine the levels of occupation on each site. Where it was not possible to undertake an interview, officers captured as much information as possible about the site from residents on adjacent sites or pitches and from observations carried out at the time.

3.6. All of the site fieldwork was undertaken in February 2015.

Census data: 'Bricks and Mortar' households

3.7. The Census 2011 carried out for the Office of National Statistics (ONS) included a question on 'ethnic group' and for the first time included a dedicated option for respondent to enter their Ethnic group as 'Gypsy or Irish Traveller'.

3.8. The Census figures only record ethnicity as part of the overall population count and so therefore do not provide an estimate of the number of Gypsy or Irish Traveller households living on the Island.

- 3.9. Although the Census 2011 did gather details on accommodation type as well as ethnicity, it is not possible to correlate this information to determine which of the respondent and identifying themselves as Gypsies or Irish Travellers are living in 'bricks and mortar' accommodation.
- 3.10. However, due to the nature of how the Census 2011 was gathered (on permanent dwellings) it is considered that these residents are living in 'bricks and mortar' accommodation and do not form part of the 'currently travelling' population.

Traveller caravan count

- 3.11. One source of local information available on the Gypsy and Traveller population derives from the bi-annual Traveller Caravan Count which is conducted by each council on a specific date in January and July of each year, reported to DCLG. This is a statistical count of the number of caravans on both authorised and unauthorised sites across England.
- 3.12. With effect from July 2013, DCLG has renamed the 'Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Count' as the 'Traveller Caravan Count.' This does not reflect any changes to the coverage of the count but brings its title into line with the terminology used for planning policy purposes. It is also consistent with the fact that its scope is wider than caravans lived in by ethnic gypsies and travellers, but also includes non-traditional travellers.
- 3.13. As this count is of caravans and not households, it makes it more difficult to interpret for a study such as this because it does not count pitches or resident households. It must also be remembered that the count is merely a 'snapshot in time' conducted by the LA on a specific day, and that any unauthorised sites or encampments which occur on other dates will not be recorded. Likewise any caravans that are away from authorised sites on the day of the count will not be included.

Assessing Current and future need for pitches and plots

- 3.14. Current need on the island is evidenced from the following sources:
- observed households living on authorised sites;
 - observed households on unauthorised sites for which planning permission is not expected;
 - households living on sites with temporary planning permissions;
 - concealed households;
 - households in 'Bricks and Mortar' wishing to move to sites;
 - households on waiting lists for public sites.
- 3.15. Total future need is made up of the following components:
- forecasted new household formation;
 - projected in-migration.

Assessing future household growth

- 3.16. It is important when determining future household growth and requirements for new sites, that the rate of new household formation is considered.
- 3.17. Household formation rates are often the subject of challenge at appeals or examinations and can be difficult to determine. This is especially so for 'hard to reach' population groups such as Gypsies and Travellers.
- 3.18. However, previous attempts to engage the Gypsy and Travellers community on the Island have resulted in a very low response rates. The nature of their nomadic lifestyle, also makes assessing future household growth problematic as the numbers people and family groups present at any one time may not be an indication of the future.
- 3.19. Therefore, for this updated research we have sought to determine a practical way of determining this figure to ensure that the Council can plan for the correct amount of pitches currently, and to enable it to make a reasonable estimate for growth to meet future need. This approach is set out in Section 3.21 below.

Government advice on calculating future site requirements

- 3.20. In March 2014 letter from the Planning Minister clarified the 2010 Government's position on how Planning Policy should seek to determine household formation rates for Gypsies and Travellers:

'Following the recent consolidation of planning guidance we will be seeking to consult on updating and streamlining the remaining elements of traveller planning practice guidance and also on strengthening traveller planning policy. We will ensure that any new guidance supports councils to accurately assess their needs and would remove ambiguous references to the 3% growth rate figure, which, I stress, is only illustrative. This would, once published, have the effect of cancelling the last Administration's guidance.' 'I can confirm that the annual growth rate figure of 3% does not represent national planning policy. The previous Administration's guidance for local authorities on carrying out Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments under the Housing Act 2004 is unhelpful in that it uses an illustrative example of calculating future accommodation need based on the 3% growth rate figure.'

The guidance notes that the appropriate rate for individual assessments will depend on the details identified in the local authority's own assessment of need. As such the Government is not endorsing or supporting the 3% growth rate figure, though in some cases it has been reported that inspectors have, in considering the level of unmet local need when demonstrating specific traveller appeals, used the 3% growth rate figure in the absence of a local authority's own up-to date assessment of need.'

Mid-year household figures and growth predictions 2012

- 3.21. It is therefore considered that the most robust option for determining future net household formation rates for Gypsies and Travellers on the Isle of Wight is to use the 2012 Household projection figures issued by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) (27 February 2015) as shown in

Table 1. This approach maintains consistency with the calculation methodology utilised for net growth in the SHMA over the plan period for the Core Strategy.

Table 1: Numbers of households and percentage increase Isle of Wight 2012- 2027

| Isle of Wight UA | Household number 2012 | Projected household number 2027 | Percentage Increase |
|------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| | 61534 | 69427 | 12.83% |

Source: ONS Household Projections 2012, Table 425 Total change, average change and percentage change in household projections for Local Authority districts, England 2012-2037

- 3.22. Therefore, for the purposes of this GTTSAA it is considered that this percentage increase figure should be utilised. This would give a predicted uplift of existing Gypsy and Traveller Households of 12.83% over the whole Island Plan period.
- 3.23. For the purposes of this report, and in light of the data collected, we intend to consider one observed caravan/ converted vehicle to equal one household.
- 3.24. The current and predicted pitch requirements for Travelling Showpeople have been identified separately in Sections 4 and 5 below.

4. Evidence of Gypsies and Travellers on the Isle of Wight

Census 2011: Ethnicity

- 4.1. The Census 2011 records 94 persons living on the Island who identified themselves as being of Gypsy or Irish Traveller ethnicity. This represents 0.1% of the population. However Census figures do not provide enough correlated information to enable determination of how many of the people identifying as Gypsy or Irish Travellers are living in the same or in different households.
- 4.2. For the purposes of this report the Census 2011 records have been grouped into Parishes as shown in Tables 2 to 5 below. This represents the nearest units of geography that can be compared to the areas utilised in the Area Action Plans (AAPs).

Table 2: Census 2011, Total Respondents White; Gypsy or Irish Traveller: Bay AAP

| Parish | Ethnic Group (KS201EW) White; Gypsy or Irish Traveller |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Lake | 0 |
| Newchurch | 1 |
| Sandown | 5 |
| Shanklin | 3 |
| Total | 9 |

Table 3: Census 2011, total respondents White; Gypsy or Irish Traveller: Medina AAP

| Parish | Ethnic Group (KS201EW) White; Gypsy or Irish Traveller |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Cowes | 11 |
| East Cowes | 1 |
| Gurnard | 0 |
| Newport | 47 |
| Northwood | 0 |
| Whippingham | 0 |
| TOTAL | 59 |

Table 4: Census 2011, total respondents White; Gypsy or Irish Traveller: Ryde AAP

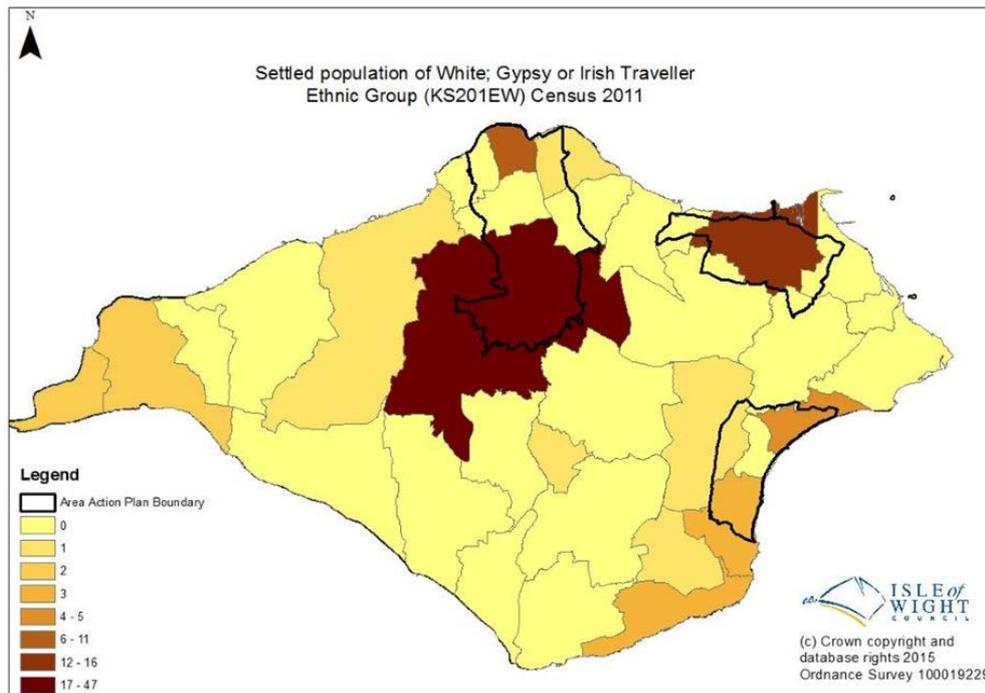
| Parish | Ethnic Group (KS201EW) White; Gypsy or Irish Traveller |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Fishbourne | 0 |
| Havenstreet and Ashe | 0 |
| Nettlestone and Seaview | 0 |
| Ryde | 16 |
| TOTAL | 16 |

Table 5: Census 2011, total respondents White; Gypsy or Irish Traveller: Rest of the Island

| Parish | Ethnic Group (KS201EW) White; Gypsy or Irish Traveller |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Arreton | 0 |
| Brading | 0 |
| Bembridge | 0 |
| Brighstone | 0 |
| Calbourne | 1 |
| Chale | 0 |
| Chillerton and Gatcombe | 0 |
| Freshwater | 2 |
| Godshill | 0 |
| Niton and Whitwell | 0 |
| Rookley | 1 |
| Shalfleet | 0 |
| Shorwell | 0 |
| St Helens | 0 |
| Totland | 2 |
| Ventnor | 3 |
| Wootton Bridge | 0 |
| Wroxall | 1 |
| TOTAL | 10 |

- 4.3. It is considered that these Census respondents are most likely to be formed from the 'not currently travelling' population, and to be living in settled 'bricks and mortar' accommodation. This is because Census forms are routinely delivered to all known 'permanent dwellings'. Therefore, it is thought very unlikely that the population living in caravans, even in long established locations, were contacted by Census collectors.
- 4.4. Two examples of this we can be reasonably sure of, are in regard to those travellers known to be living Brighstone and Shalfleet Parishes, where there are long-established unofficial sites, and yet no Gypsies or Irish Travellers are identified as living in the parish on the Census returns.
- 4.5. A map showing the distribution of Census returns for White; Gypsy or Irish Traveller by Parish and AAP is shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Settled population of White; Gypsy or Irish Traveller (KS201EW) Census 2011



People living on unauthorised sites

- 4.6. Of the population identified in previous GTAA not in settled 'bricks and mortar' accommodation, around two thirds considered themselves to be either New Travellers or 'Van Dwellers'. Of the remaining, 18.2% identified themselves as English Travellers, 9.1% Irish Travellers, 9.1% Scottish Travellers and 4.5% Welsh Travellers.
- 4.7. From information given by people that the council has had recent contact with who are currently residing on unauthorised sites, it is considered that the majority of the people living in most of the settlements we know of would still be most likely to fall into the categories of 'New Travellers' or Van Dwellers.

Travelling Showpeople

- 4.8. Contact with the Travelling Showpeople through the council Amenity Sites Licensing team has confirmed that neither of the groups who run summer events are island-based. The same groups have been visiting for some years and interviews carried out for the previous GTTSA confirmed that they had permanent winter quarters and yard facilities on the mainland.
- 4.9. It has been confirmed with the Licensing Team that the two shows that were previously identified as running in the summer months (June-August) are still the only ones who come to the Island. One group has recurring use of a space on private land and the other does request licences for council land, and are usually here for 4-6 weeks during the summer season. We have not found any evidence of any travelling shows coming for winter months.

- 4.10. The research has not identified any requests for planning permission for Travelling Show 'home yards' nor any incidences reported from Planning Enforcement where any groups have set up unauthorised encampments.
- 4.11. There were no show groups present during the study period. It is believed from anecdotal evidence from the Amenities Licencing Team that the Travelling Showpeople who come here for the summer months are work/family groups and that no other people who would represent Island-based Travelling Showpeople are employed by them during the season.
- 4.12. It has currently not been possible to ascertain any further information on future need. At the time of the 2006 survey, one show group declined an interview and the other confirmed that they were based on the mainland and did not ever envision requiring accommodation facilities on the Island.

Caravan count

- 4.13. The IWC has complied with the requirements for the twice-yearly DCLG Travellers Caravan count. Over the past five years the amounts of sites recorded for the count has remained relatively static at around 16-18 pitches. This is a 'snapshot' of recorded incidences observed on the one day, and so any vehicles not on site at the time was not recorded.
- 4.14. However, for this needs assessment a further count has been undertaken. This has confirmed that the main unauthorised sites that were known of in 2006 are still in existence now. However, the information gathered from recent observations, has indicated that there are now possibly some people living in vans on unauthorised sites not known of before.
- 4.15. Consequently, some additional units have been identified that had not previously been recorded. Interview information was not able to be obtained for these units. It is not known therefore, if the new incidences are people who identify themselves as 'Gypsies and Travellers' or if they are there due to other reasons (such as being unable to access other affordable accommodation).
- 4.16. 5 'new' incidences were recorded, one which was noted as parked up on a roadside. All of these were of single units. Therefore it is believed that the previous traveller count may either have been an underestimation of the number of vans on sites that had not previously been found, or which had not been present on the day the count was taken.
- 4.17. However, this update has included two sites with more than one caravan present where previously it was understood that 'temporary' or 'tolerated' planning had been agreed. It has now been confirmed that this was not so.
- 4.18. It is important to note that the 'sites' recorded on the count do not relate to the amount of potential 'pitch' requirements (which is based on the number of vans now identified at observed sites).

Locations of caravans /vehicles used for residential occupation

4.19. Through the desk-based and observational research carried out we have sought to identify all current authorised and unauthorised sites and encampments. This work has identified that there are:

- no public permanent sites owned by the Council;
- no transit sites owned by the Council;
- 2 'private sites' with a temporary permission;
- one unauthorised site which is the subject of a legal judgement, meaning that the residents; cannot be moved until a site is built for them;
- 10 other observed unauthorised sites.

Caravan/other vehicle count February 2015, by Parish

4.20. 32 units were identified with one other considered likely to be occupied at least some of the time, making 33 potential units. Of the unauthorised encampments observed, only three are on previously unknown sites and each of those is of a single vehicle. However, there has been an observed increase in units present on at least 3 other unauthorised sites that were already known to be in existence.

4.21. Although a Caravan Count can only be a snapshot in time, it is considered that the recent observations confirm of caravans/converted vehicles in the locations below does confirm the previous counts.

4.22. Therefore we consider that this constitutes the best knowledge available regarding the 'preferred' locations of the 'New Travellers' and other Gypsies and Travellers currently living in caravans and other vehicles on the Island.

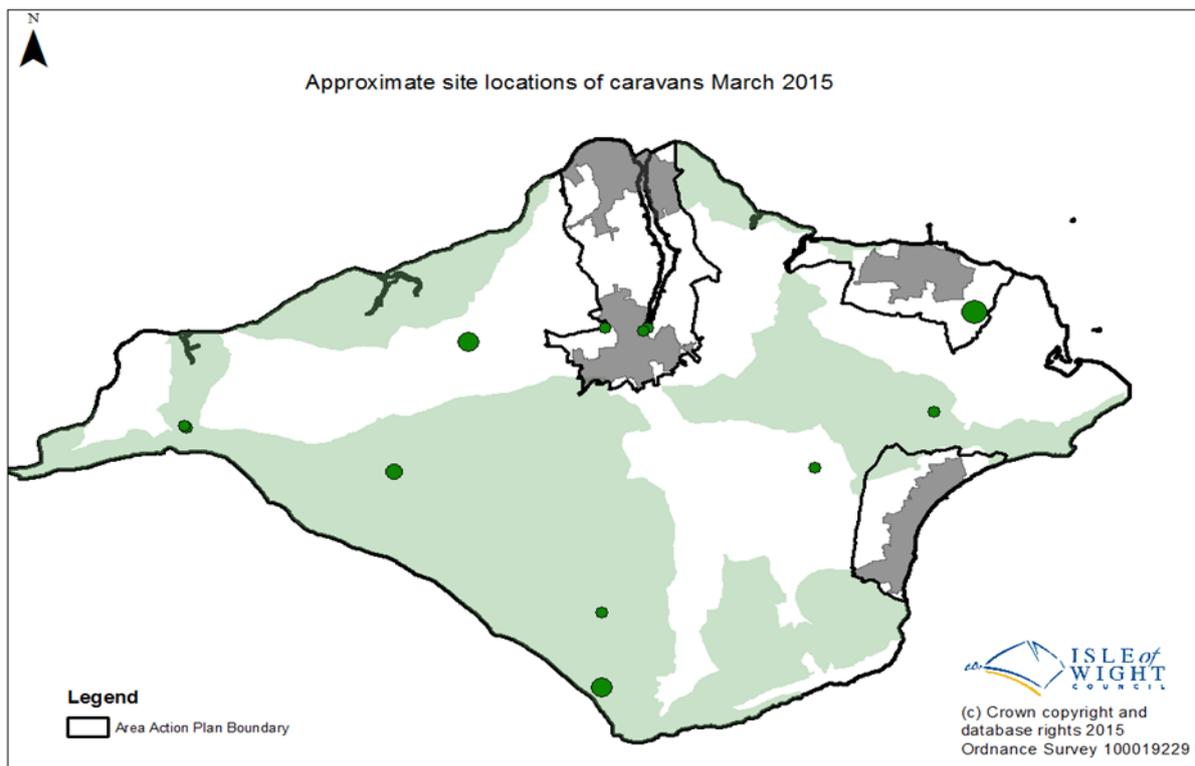
4.23. Table 6 below shows the amount of caravans /other vehicles and number of unauthorised sites per Parish observed in a series of visits undertaken during February 2015.

Table 6: Caravans /other vehicles observed February 2015.

| Parish | Number of caravans/ vehicles observed | Number of sites per Parish |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Brading | 1 | 1 |
| Brighstone | 3 | 1 |
| Chale | 6 | 2 |
| Calbourne | 1 | 1 |
| Freshwater | 2 | 2 |
| Newport | 4 | 3 |
| Newchurch | 1 | 1 |
| Seaview and Nettlestone | 11 | 1 |
| Shalfleet | 4 | 1 |
| Total | 33 | 13 |

- 4.24. The recent count identified that at least one unauthorised site identified in the previous GTTSAA has now been cleared and has been secured. Another previously known unauthorised site now looks, on observation, to be empty. However, it does show signs of some recent vehicle movement and the gate is just padlocked, so it is possible that people may just be temporarily absent.
- 4.25. Figure 2 below shows the approximate locations of caravans and converted vehicles observed in a supplementary Caravan Count undertaken specifically for this report in February 2015.

Figure2: Approximate location of occupied caravans and vehicles: February 2015.



- 4.26. The February 2015 count identified 23 confirmed signs of residency in vans, trailers and other converted vehicles on sites which do not appear on the existing Planning Enforcement lists from 2006 to 2015. However, 4 of these units are currently on a site which has been the subject of a judicial order previous to 2006 and which enables the occupants to stay until a transit site is provided.
- 4.27. A further 5 units which have been the subject of former enforcements since 2006 (and which have not received permanent residential habitation permissions) were observed as showing signs of current occupation during the inspections carried out.

Estimating the numbers of residents on observed sites

- 4.28. The previous GTTSAA estimated that 81% of the households identified on unauthorised sites were comprised of single adults under 60 years old, with most of those in the 25 to 44 year age group. At the time only three children had been identified.
- 4.29. Of those currently observed and contacted, evidence suggests that this is still largely the case. At one site the officer was informed that there were nine people on site in February 2015, of which only two residents are under 50. .
- 4.30. However, given the amount of vehicles seen at one of the newly identified sites, and at some of the previously enforced unit locations, it is considered that there are least two occupants per unit. One other unauthorised site seems to also be in occupation by at least two adults over the age of 40.
- 4.31. It has been possible to ascertain that there are children on one unauthorised site which does not have any planning permission but has been there for some years. However, it has not been ascertained if they live there permanently or if the residents identify themselves as Gypsies and Travellers. There are no signs of any children on any of the other observed sites.
- 4.32. Due to the rural nature of the majority of the unauthorised sites there was little evidence of overcrowding of units.

Population mobility

- 4.33. The previous GTTSAA identified that the Isle of Wight does not form part of any established 'traditional' Gypsy and Traveller routes. In support of this, it is noted that since the publication of that report there have been no incidences recorded of any traditional 'Fairs' or other similar events being held on the Island, which Gypsies and Travellers may attend as part of their regular travelling routes.
- 4.34. A reason that the Island may not be part of any established route is possibly due to the additional requirement and expense of accessing the Island by ferry. This study has also confirmed that, in the years subsequent to the publication of the last GTSAA, there has been only one reported occurrence of a Traveller vehicle known to have arrived on to the Island and setting up a camp.
- 4.35. Therefore, we can find no evidence of significant in or out migration.
- 4.36. There have been two main summer events/fairs (separate to the Island music festivals) run by Travelling Showpeople identified; one of which is a yearly Circus arrival. These have not changed locations since the last assessment. One of these which is always held on the same private land and does not move elsewhere, and the other travels to several Island sites utilising IWC licenses to access the land.
- 4.37. Both of these Travelling Showpeople groups have identified to the Amenity Licencing team that they have 'Winter quarters' off-Island.

Current encampments: mobility and access to services

- 4.38. Of the three most established unauthorised sites (Westridge, Shalfleet and Brighstone Forest), Westridge has the most access to services, has been established the longest and has a very small amount of pitch size fluctuation.
- 4.39. The research team has made contact the residents, and they have reported that of the 11 vans and vehicles, there is access to water but not for washing. There is mains drainage, and power from self-sourced renewable energy. The residents considered minimal additional on-site amenity would be required to ensure the long term use of the site.
- 4.40. Of the observed vehicles in the Medina Valley, most of these were considered to be 'parked up' rather than seeking to staying in one area. They do not have access to any services on site, do not appear to have set up any supplementary power generating sources and it is presumed that they use public facilities for their sanitary needs when required.
- 4.41. From observations previously made (and confirmed recently), some of these vehicles come and go. This confirms previous anecdotal evidence gathered from the last GTTSAA interviews, and also assertions made by people living in vehicles, with whom discussions were held in the intervening period. It is considered from previous contact with people living in the vehicles in this area, that they work during the week in the Newport area and often park in other locations at weekends and other times.
- 4.42. It not known what arrangements are in place in Brighstone Forest nor Shalfleet (which are both long-term encampments) for accessing water and sanitation, but observation shows wind and solar power use as well as wood-burning. Unfortunately, the researcher was unable to access anyone on site to discuss the matter at the time of inspection.
- 4.43. Of the 'previously enforced' sites that were observed, all five are on farm premises. It is assumed that they either have been able to 'hook up' to electricity or that they rely on wood-burning, gas bottles or other power generation.
- 4.44. It has not been possible to ascertain any arrangements for water and sanitation, in vans and vehicles in the other observed locations. However, two observed unit appeared to be utilising wood burners and gas bottles. It is assumed that the others were most likely doing likewise.

Concealed households

- 4.45. A concealed household is one who is living within another household, would wish to form their own separate family unit, but is unable to do so because of a lack of space on public or private sites. The interviews that were able to be carried out with residents for this research did not identify any concealed households.

5. Estimating New Household formation and pitches required

- 5.1. Because of the ongoing evidence of unauthorised sites remaining in the same places since the previous GTTSA, and which was also highlighted in that last assessment, it is considered that the population in many cases have been living in the same areas of many years. There has also been no confirmed evidence of significant in or out migration which changes in the numbers travellers previously recorded.
- 5.2. Therefore, it is recommend that all caravans currently situated on unauthorised sites should be assessed as requiring a pitch rather than being considered as simply visiting or passing through.
- 5.3. As determined in paragraph 3.21 above, a 12.83% uplift has been applied to uprate the number of pitches required for Gypsy and Traveller Households to 2027.
- 5.4. Therefore it is estimated that the current pitch requirement would be the same as the current amount of vehicles observed. This would make 33 pitches.
- 5.5. Utilising the uplift of 12.83% would therefore mean that at 2027 there is a need to plan for an additional five households/pitch spaces making a requirement of **38 pitches in total over the plan period**.

Suggested locations of new pitch provision

- 5.6. It is suggested above that the population does appear to be relatively settled with little in or out migration. Also in many cases people living on unauthorised sites presently seem to have been living in the same places and / or areas for several years.
- 5.7. Therefore, we consider that any provision of authorised sites should be located primarily within the areas where the identified Gypsies and Travellers are now.
- 5.8. The figures below suggest that a primary authorised site of 11 pitches, rising to 12 by 2027 possibly be located within Ryde AAP area, with a secondary site of 4 pitches, rising to 6 by 2027 located within the Medina Valley AAP area with no site being required in the Bay AAP.
- 5.9. It is considered that the rest of any authorised pitches should then be split between locations over the rest of the island. Table 7 below shows the suggested area locations based on the percentages of observed caravans and other vehicles in the rest of the island.

Table 7: Pitches required by 2020 and by 2027, by AAP and rest of island

| | Current percentage of unauthorised sites 2015 | Number of pitches required by 2020 | Number of additional pitches required by 2027 |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Ryde AAP | 33% | 11 | 1 |
| Medina Valley AAP | 13% | 4 | 2 |
| Bay AAP | 0% | 0 | 0 |
| Rest of the island | 54% | 18 | 2 |
| Total | 100% | 33 | 5 |

Site types required

- 5.10. It is considered that currently the main need is for at least one authorised permanent site. The research has indicated that that this would be of greatest benefit in the Ryde AAP as it is in the area which has the largest and most settled population of travellers.
- 5.11. To meet identified need, this primary permanent site should comprise of at least 11 pitches and preferably have the capacity to provide one additional pitch anticipating predicted future need.
- 5.12. It is also considered that an additional Transit site also be provided. Doing this would enable the council to take any action required on unauthorised encampments, and also would provide 'stopping over' places for those that need it .
- 5.13. It is considered that he most suitable area for a Transit Site would be within Medina AAP. This is in consideration of the observed vehicles 'parking up' in the area for periods on a regular basis.
- 5.14. The Transit site should consist of four pitches rising to six by 2027.

Provision for Travelling Showpeople

- 5.15. As there has been no identified Island residency or new household formation of Travelling Showpeople, it is not currently considered that there is need to provide any dedicated plots or 'yards' for this group.

Provision for Gypsy and Irish Travellers currently living in 'Bricks and Mortar'

- 5.16. It is also important to consider that some of the people identifying as White; Gypsy or Irish Traveller in the Census figures above, if currently living in 'Bricks and Mortar' could be doing so because of no other alternative; and that some of this group might prefer to return to living on a site if one was made available for them.
- 5.17. This is relevant because, as a protected group under the Equalities Act 2010, any site provided should be available to this group as well as to what is considered to be the main group currently occupying caravans and other vehicles on the island:- namely New travellers and Van dwellers.

- 5.18. The only practical approach to ascertain if this is a correct assumption, would be to identify as many households in 'bricks and mortar' as possible and to carry out a specific Housing Needs Survey for this group to determine their future accommodation needs. This would need to include an option to express a wish to move to a permanent pitch on the Island.
- 5.19. In practice, it is considered that it would be very difficult to achieve a statistically reliable dataset for this group. Advice given by the Hampshire Gypsies and Travellers Liaison Unit is that they feel the only way to achieve any significant response at all would be to liaise with potential respondents through established Gypsies and Travellers newsletters and internet sites.
- 5.20. Therefore, whilst there is anecdotal evidence of 94 Gypsies or Irish Travellers that are most likely to be settled in 'bricks and mortar' housing shown in the most recent Census figure, it is not currently possible to determine an evidenced desire from them to return to living on a caravan site.