

local leadership academy



providing Gypsy
and Traveller sites

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foreword

This workbook has been designed as a learning aid for elected members who need to understand the issues involved in planning and providing authorised sites for Gypsy and Traveller communities. As the planning guidance in relation to this has changed recently, the workbook is equally relevant to both newly elected members and those who have been community representatives for some time.

For the purposes of the text, we have used the definition of 'Gypsies and Travellers' adopted under the Housing Act 2004, which means:

- (a) Persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or of living in a caravan; and
- (b) All other persons of a nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin, including:
 - i. Such persons who, on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependant's educational or health needs or old age, have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently; and
 - ii. Members of an organised group of travelling show-people or circus people (whether or not travelling together as such).

The workbook provides essential guidance on the planning framework for Gypsy and Traveller sites, the issues that need to be considered locally and, most importantly, the impact on the roles and responsibilities of ward members. It does not cover the details of the new guidance but helps you to think through some of the key issues from a ward councillor perspective.

This workbook can be used as a stand-alone learning aid or as an adjunct to other material you may cover. It is also designed to serve more as a direction marker rather than a road map – a guide rather than a rigid set of rules.

In practical terms, the document will take between two to three hours to work through. You do not need to complete it all in one session and may prefer to work through the material at your own pace. The key requirement is to think about the issues raised and how these relate to your local area, the people you serve and the council you represent.

introduction

In working through the material contained in this workbook you will encounter a number of features designed to help you think about the planning and provision of Gypsy and Traveller sites. These features are represented by the symbols shown below:



guidance – this is used to indicate guidance, research, quotations, explanations and definitions that you may find helpful.



challenges – these are questions or queries raised in the text which ask you to reflect on your role or approach – in essence, they are designed to be thought-provokers.



case studies – these are 'pen pictures' of approaches used by councils elsewhere to illustrate how others have tackled the planning and provision of sites for Gypsies and Travellers.



hints and tips – these represent a selection of good practices which you may find useful.



useful links – these are signposts to sources of further information, outside of the workbook, which may help with principles, processes, methods and approaches. A full list of useful additional information is also set out in Appendix A of the workbook.

a place to live and thrive

All of us want strong and prosperous communities - communities where everyone has the opportunity to have a decent home and can live without fear of prejudice or disadvantage. Decent homes are important for the health and well-being of the people who live in them, and poor housing or accommodation helps areas, and the people who reside in them, to get a bad reputation. This can often make those areas unpopular places to live, which, in turn, may lead to the breakdown of communities.

National government is working with local authorities and other partner agencies to make all council and housing association housing decent by 2010. It is also seeking to improve conditions for vulnerable households in privately owned housing, particularly those with children.

an historical perspective

Romany Gypsies have lived in Britain for around 600 years and people have travelled from community to community for even longer. Irish Travellers too have a long tradition of visiting Britain having travelled and lived here for generations. Wherever they have gone, Gypsies and Travellers have fiercely maintained a separate identity – indeed this pride in their traditions is an integral part of their culture.

The desire for a decent home is something we all share and this is true for settled and Gypsy and Traveller communities alike. But there are some specific problems faced by Gypsy and Traveller communities which local authorities are being encouraged to address, not least of which is the inadequate provision of authorised sites on which they can live and thrive alongside others.

While much of this agenda is about the planning responsibilities and powers that local authorities have to facilitate change and improvement, there are important roles that ward members can play in understanding and responding to the needs of both the settled and Gypsy and Traveller populations. And with some 90 per cent of local authorities in England and Wales having Gypsies and Travellers either living in their areas or passing through, this is clearly an agenda that demands attention.

“ Councils need to make special efforts to involve Gypsies and Travellers in the planning process because of problems like low literacy and a lack of awareness of the planning system
Siobhan Spencer,
Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group ”

changes in the planning system

Recent changes in legislation and planning guidance have resulted in greater pressure on local authorities to provide spaces and places for Gypsies and Travellers to live peacefully alongside settled communities. The new framework envisages:

- Adequate provision must be made for authorised sites – with around a quarter of Gypsy and Traveller caravans occupying unauthorised sites, it is recognised that this can be a source of friction with settled communities.
- The planning system and property rights must be respected and effective enforcement action must be taken promptly against problem sites.
- Anti-social behaviour must be dealt with promptly and effectively to prevent further harm to relationships between the two communities.

It has been recognised that the key to a reduction in unauthorised camping is to increase the supply of authorised sites. Various recent studies have also concluded that providing more sites in suitable locations is essential in avoiding tensions between Gypsies and Travellers and others in the community.

↔ planning guidance

the new approach provides for:

- Local authorities to take the lead in assessing the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers alongside those of the settled population.
- The locally assessed needs of Gypsies and Travellers to be incorporated into a 'Regional Spatial Strategy'.
- Each local authority to play its part in meeting that need through the planning system by identifying appropriate sites in local plans.

Local authorities must then develop a strategy which addresses the need arising from the accommodation assessment, through public or private provision.

'Local Authorities and Gypsies and Travellers: Guide to Responsibilities and Powers', ODPM, 2006

The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) has recently issued some good practice guidance on planning for Gypsies and Travellers (Appendix A lists its publications). This covers four areas of the planning process:

- communication, consultation and participation
- accommodation needs assessment
- accommodation and site delivery
- enforcement

“ ✨ Once we started talking, they realised that the Travellers were losing out like the settled community also is from the shortage of sites an Irish traveller ”

While much of this concerns the statutory procedures and recommended approach that your council will need to adopt, it is important to stress that ward members have a key representational role within this planning framework.

representing the Gypsies and Travellers in your area

Dealing with the people in your ward, understanding the issues and concerns they face, and being equipped with the skills, confidence and ability to take action in response to their queries, is an important and valuable task for any ward member. As a community leader, you have a responsibility to represent the voices of all sections of the community. This includes championing the interests of Gypsies and Travellers who often find it difficult to articulate their issues or concerns given some of the tensions and conflicts that can arise with others in the community. In this sense, your challenge is to 'speak for the unheard'. But just how much do you know about the Gypsies and Travellers in your council area?

Knowing as much as you can about the Gypsies and Travellers in your area is the first step towards understanding their needs and concerns and dealing with the issues and problems they may face. But be careful to find out the facts, rather than believing the myths, rumours and misinformation that are often peddled about Gypsies and Travellers. Your officers - particularly those involved with housing and planning or those dedicated to working with Gypsies and Travellers - should be able to provide you with accurate, up to date, information on the nature of these communities.

Because Gypsies and Travellers are 'seldom heard' groups, it is important that ward members act to represent their views in the same way as they would for any other community group. When discussing the planning or provision of Gypsy and Traveller sites, this may involve one or more of the following:

- **listening** – actively finding out what Gypsies and Travellers think and want through surveys, discussions or meetings.
- **questioning** – using sympathetic questioning to get to the 'heart of an issue', to generate thoughts and ideas and to challenge extreme views, uninformed opinions and misleading information.
- **advocacy** – ensuring that local voices are 'heard' when issues are debated and decisions are taken. This can often involve speaking up for those Gypsies and Travellers whose views are unspoken, under-represented or frequently ignored.
- **facilitating** – helping individuals and groups to come together to discuss issues affecting the area, to debate different points of view and to reach consensus on possible solutions.
- **sharing information** – talking to people and providing information in Plain English to enable them to understand local government planning processes, e.g. avoiding the use of council jargon and technical or legalistic language.

↔ challenging the stereotypes

Research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation has shown that stereotypes of 'New Travellers' as workshy layabouts and dole scroungers are greatly exaggerated. The research, conducted with New Travellers in the south west of England, examined their lifestyle and employment patterns. Researchers found that half of those surveyed were working at the time and most had worked in the previous year. Temporary jobs and self-employment generated the most work. The research concluded that the challenge for policy makers is to enable Travellers to gain greater access to paid work while maintaining their mobile, community-based lifestyle.

'Making a living: Social security, social exclusion and New Travellers', Joseph Rowntree Foundation, May 2007

✦ some facts about Gypsies and Travellers

Both Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers are recognised ethnic minorities, with their own languages, and are protected by Race Relations legislation.

Out of around 16,000 Gypsy and Traveller caravans in England, about 12,000 are on authorised, legal sites.

Less than one square mile of land would be needed to accommodate every unauthorised caravan in England.

Gypsies and Travellers are subject to the planning system in the same way as any other person – their developments are subject to the same policies and guidance.

Large unauthorised developments are rare and the average size of an authorised development is only four caravans.

Gypsies and Travellers are the most excluded ethnic minorities in this country, e.g. studies suggest that nearly 18 per cent of Gypsy and Traveller mothers will experience the death of a child – compared with less than 1 per cent of mothers in the settled community.

It is much cheaper to provide a site than to enforce against unauthorised encampment in areas that have no site provision – when Bristol City Council built a site they saw their enforcement costs drop from £200,000 a year to £5,000 a year.

? Think about the Gypsy and Traveller communities in your council area: the different groups; where they settle; how they live; how they provide for themselves and the infrastructure that exists to support them. Write down what you know:

How many Gypsies and Travellers live in, or pass through, the area? What is their ethnic make up and where do they live?

What are the customs, values, languages and beliefs of these communities?

What industries or workplaces locally employ Gypsies and Travellers?

What support services are they able to access and what potential barriers do they face (e.g. health, education, housing, welfare etc.)?

How well do the children of Gypsy and Traveller communities do in local schools?

Reflect on your responses to the questions above and read the fact sheet in Appendix 2. How well do you feel you know these people now? Could you learn more? Would you feel comfortable to be asked any of these questions by one of your constituents or the local media?

Representing the views of Gypsies and Travellers in your area may not be easy given the opinions of some of the settled community and the tensions that the introduction of permanent sites can create. However, it is important to recognise that as a ward member you have the ability to influence how people behave and contribute to discussions regarding the scope for authorised sites. You can positively influence other peoples' perceptions by demonstrating:

- energy and enthusiasm
- a calm, even tempered, disposition
- an ability to be flexible and adaptable to different people and situations
- strong listening and observation skills
- an ability to act impartially
- self confidence and gravitas
- empathy and perceptiveness.

“ Sometimes we need the help of people from the settled community to help explain what the council people are telling us
an Irish Traveller ”

? representing the Gypsies and Travellers in your area

Consider your influence as a ward member in the following situations – consider what approaches and tactics you could employ to ensure that the views of Gypsies and Travellers are heard alongside others in the community:

(a) You have been invited to chair a public meeting to discuss views on the location of a permanent site for New Travellers – a vocal group from the settled community is threatening to dominate the discussions and ‘shout down’ any views expressed by New Travellers.

b) An extremist political organisation is circulating racist and inflammatory material in your ward about the ‘threats posed by Gypsies’.

responding to the needs of Gypsies and Travellers

There are four good reasons to make the accommodation and site needs of Gypsies and Travellers a priority:

- **'doing nothing' is not an option** – the shortage of sites can only get worse, leading to an ongoing unmet need, more unauthorised sites and more community tension. No council can afford to ignore the issue and planning across different authority areas should help.
- **action should help to contribute towards positive health and education outcomes for these communities** – Gypsies and Travellers are believed to experience the worst health and education status of any disadvantaged group in England. The lack of good quality, permanent sites restricts access to many health, education and welfare services. This not only affects their general well-being, but means that many Gypsies and Travellers are not sufficiently integrated into settled communities, helping to further reinforce stereotypical views that these groups 'don't fit in'.
- **your council has a duty to promote good race relations** – planning, site provision and enforcement activity all impact on race relations generally and the way in which services are delivered to Gypsies and Travellers. In developing policies and making decisions, your council will need to ensure that its actions are consistent with the legal duty to promote good race relations, equality of opportunity and community cohesion.

- Funding is available and providing authorised sites could save your council money – where there is a need for public subsidy, central government is making funds available for providing and refurbishing authorised sites. While enforcement activity against unauthorised camping can be expensive, the provision of authorised sites should reduce the need for enforcement activity and therefore save money. As residents of these sites will pay rent and council tax, just like the settled community, the sites should pay for themselves.

In summary then, an increase in the provision of authorised sites should help to reduce existing tensions, provide for greater engagement and understanding of community needs and reduce costs – in fact, a 'virtuous circle' of provision (see diagram).

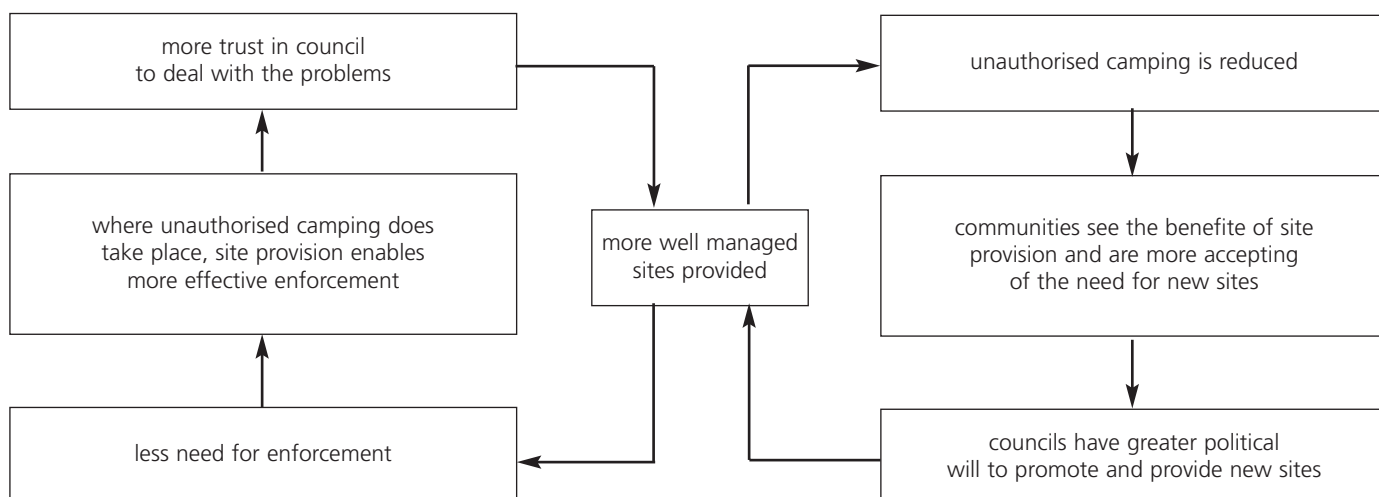
Ω the experience of introducing authorised sites

The creation of permanent sites for Travellers can be contentious and sometimes results in strong local opposition. Researchers in Scotland visited three authorised sites that had been up and running for over a year to gauge the views of objectors and neighbours.

The study found that all sites were well run and the problems experienced by site neighbours were far less than they had anticipated. Many neighbours' fears had been based on previous experience of unauthorised sites and most domestic householders had no specific complaints - many acknowledged that their previous opposition had been groundless.

'Neighbours' views of official sites for travelling people', Joseph Rowntree Foundation, December 1996

* the vision – virtuous circles



taking into account the well-being of the area

The council has a legal duty to promote the social, economic and environmental well-being of the local community. This is important for ensuring that all decisions and actions taken by the council are balanced and take into account all likely impacts on people, places and habitats. This applies to the planning processes for deciding how best to provide spaces and places for Gypsies and Travellers

who are also part of the “local community”: providing sites is likely to improve their education and health outcomes and their wider life chances. Understanding how the provision of new authorised sites might affect the well-being of the area is not always as clear-cut as we might imagine:

? what about the well-being of the area?

Imagine the council is considering the introduction of a new site in your ward for the caravans of a Gypsy and Traveller community. Consider how this development might impact on the well-being of your ward area (both positive and negative impacts):

Possible social impacts:

possible economic impacts:

possible environmental impacts:

Reflect on the issues you have identified. What further questions would you want to raise as part of the planning process? What could be done to remove or minimise any potentially negative impacts you have identified? What role could you play as a ward member in assisting with the planning process?

site design and management

It is essential that both new and existing Gypsy and Traveller sites are designed and managed so that they are desirable, effective and sustainable, offering a decent and safe environment in which these communities may live. While much of this is subject to detailed planning legislation and guidance, ward members should ensure that they have an early oversight of any plans put forward for site design or management. Crucial within this will be the need to constantly challenge to what extent these plans and proposals have involved Gypsy and Traveller communities and are clear to all interested parties – the planning process should be as transparent as possible so that all members of the community can understand the decisions that have been taken and why.

making the planning process more transparent

Doncaster's Gypsy and Traveller Strategy, published in 2006, highlighted that Gypsies and Travellers often have a lack of knowledge about the planning process. It called for the planning process to be more transparent and, where applications were rejected, better explanation of the reasons for the decision. The council's Gypsy liaison team works with Gypsy and Traveller applicants to help them submit better planning applications, and involves the local Planning Aid where necessary.

dealing with problem sites

As well as providing guidance on the provision of new official sites for Gypsies and Travellers, central government has provided new guidance to enforce existing legislation relating to problem sites. This sets out the range of powers available to councils.

Adequate site provision is seen as the key to effective enforcement and to ensure that enforcement powers are used effectively. Members should recognise that enforcement powers are available to tackle two types of unauthorised sites:

- **Unauthorised encampments** – where people camp on land that they do not own without the owner's permission. This is viewed as 'trespassing'.
- **unauthorised development** – where people own the land but do not have planning permission or where settlers have consent from the owner to occupy the land but the development does not have planning permission.

The enforcement powers available to local authorities for tackling unauthorised encampments include:

- **negotiated solutions** – these avoid confrontation and are often the best way of managing a situation.
- **possession orders** – issued by courts to enable landowners (including local authorities) to remove people from the land they are trespassing on.
- **orders issued under the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994** – these can direct unauthorised campers to leave land or allow for the removal of campers.

remedies for tackling unauthorised developments include:

- **temporary stop notices** – these can be issued by local authorities to stop further development for a period of 28 days.
- **enforcement notices** – these can be issued by local authorities and require a development to be stopped on a long-term basis as well as requiring the site to be reinstated to its previous condition. As appeals against enforcement notices suspend the effect of the notice, authorities will often issue a stop notice at the same time as an enforcement notice.
- **injunctions** – local authorities can apply to a court for these to prevent someone from continuing with or beginning to carry out development. This is usually sought when other remedies have been used.

enforcement in Kent

Kent's approach to dealing with unauthorised encampments aims to 'avoid conflict, cost and delay'. Fundamentally, this means engaging with both Gypsies and Travellers and other local residents as the council's experience suggests that this is the most effective way of meeting its aims. As well as getting to know the Gypsy and Traveller communities in its area, the council has also set up a dedicated 'report and information' telephone number. However, where unauthorised encampments continue to pose a problem the council uses the powers available to act swiftly.

tackling anti-social behaviour

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 identifies anti-social behaviour as behaviour which causes or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more people who are not in the same household as the perpetrator. There are a wide range of tools and powers available to the police and local authorities to address the causes of anti-social behaviour, ranging from early intervention to court proceedings. These include:

- action under the 'Respect' agenda – initiatives include family intervention projects to tackle 'neighbours from hell' and parenting classes for parents struggling with troublesome children.
- **acceptable behaviour contracts** – written contracts between a person involved in anti-social behaviour, a local authority and other partner agencies. The contract specifies a list of anti-social acts which the person has been involved in and which they agree not to continue.
- **anti-social behaviour orders** – a civil order which can be used to tackle a wide range of anti-social behaviour in different situations and settings. A breach of one of these court orders is dealt with as a criminal offence with a maximum five year sentence for an adult. Orders last for two years.

There are also a wide range of powers available to tackle 'fly-tipping', i.e. the illegal deposit of any waste onto land.

tackling anti-social behaviour in North Yorkshire

Following a prolonged period of anti-social behaviour by one family that repeatedly set up unauthorised encampments, a number of authorities in North Yorkshire issued an Anti-Social Behaviour Order against four of the most senior male members of the family. The Order prohibited them from using a wide range of anti-social behaviour, e.g. camping on any private land without the landowner's express permission and taking fencing and gate posts for firewood.

? tackling anti-social behaviour

Imagine you have been asked to attend a multi-agency meeting to discuss how best to tackle anti-social behaviour in your ward area. Two particular matters have been brought to your attention – both concern alleged anti-social behaviour on an unauthorised encampment by Romany Gypsies. Write down any ideas you have for tackling the two matters which you would wish to present to the meeting:

(a) A Gypsy family has complained to you about the frequent examples of anti-social behaviour that have been committed against them on the site, e.g. an assault on a family member, an attempted arson attack on one of their caravans and threatening behaviour by someone from the settled community.

(b) You have been contacted by Mrs Drake, an elderly constituent on a housing estate close to the site, who wants the council to take action to tackle her concerns. She tells you that a playground on the estate has become a 'no go' area for local children as Gypsy teenagers are using abusive and threatening behaviour. Cars have been abandoned close by and some caravans on the Gypsy site are being used for drug dealing.

Look again at the ideas you have written down. To what extent have you rushed into a list of possible 'solutions' to the problems presented before considering the need to check out the relevant facts? Has the fact that this is an unauthorised encampment clouded your judgement about any possible anti-social behaviour? If the problems presented are accurate, you might expect to have received comments or complaints from other residents. Could you speak to other people in the area, of different ages and from different communities, to get a more balanced view? If the anti-social behaviour is taking place, isn't it likely that the partner agencies (e.g. the police) will have some evidence for this? It may be that both complainants have presented an accurate picture and action is indeed needed to tackle a growing community problem, but some early legwork and a few reality checks might help to strengthen your understanding of what is really going on.

a final word

The key to success in providing Gypsy and Traveller sites is to involve the community in every stage of the planning process. Engaging Gypsies and Travellers and understanding fully their needs, wants and aspirations is essential, as is open and honest consultation with settled communities. If the planning process is transparent and based on a degree of trust between all interested parties this can only help to overcome any tensions or opposition that may be faced. Ward members have an important part to play in all of this, representing the diversity of local views, challenging the decision makers and championing the interests of the 'seldom heard'.

“ ✦ You can only influence behaviour through building relationships and communication
Bill Forrester,
Head of Gypsy and Traveller Unit,
Kent County Council ”

? where do you go from here?

Look back over the material contained in earlier sections of this workbook and consider the following:

(a) What key action points can you identify in the way that you might better understand Gypsy and Traveller communities or get involved in planning for the provision of authorised sites, i.e. what three or four things might you start doing, keep doing or stop doing?

(b) Have you identified any gaps in your knowledge or shortcomings in your personal skills? If so, please set these out below and identify how any further training or development might help you, e.g. further reading/research, attending courses, coaching, mentoring, work shadowing etc.

appendix a

sources of further information

printed publications

Case Study: **Spaces and Places for Gypsies and Travellers**,
IDeA (Planning Advisory Service) / English Partnerships
(Advisory Team for Large Applications), 2006.

**Common Ground: Equality, Good Race Relations and Sites for
Gypsies and Irish Travellers**,
Commission for Racial Equality, 2006.

**Definition of the Term 'Gypsies and Travellers' for the
Purposes of the Housing Act 2004**,
Department for Communities and Local Government, 2007.

**Enforcing Planning Control: Good Practice Guide for Local
Authority Planning Authorities**,
Department of Environment, 1997.

**Local Authorities and Gypsies and Travellers: A Guide to
Responsibilities and Powers**,
Gypsy and Traveller Unit, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2006.

**Making a Living: Social Security,
Social Exclusion and New Travellers**,
Joseph Rowntree Foundation/Policy Press, 2001.

Neighbours' Views of Official Sites for Travelling People
(Housing Research Paper),
Joseph Rowntree Foundation/Planning Exchange, 1996.

**Planning for Gypsies and Travellers - RTPI Good Practice Note
4 – Part A: Communication, Consultation and Participation**,
Royal Town Planning Institute, 2007.

**Planning for Gypsies and Travellers -
RTPI Good Practice Note 4 – Part B: Gypsy and Traveller
Accommodation Needs Assessment**,
Royal Town Planning Institute, 2007.

**Planning for Gypsies and Travellers -
RTPI Good Practice Note 4 – Part C: Accommodation and Site
Delivery**,
Royal Town Planning Institute, 2007.

**Planning for Gypsies and Travellers -
RTPI Good Practice Note 4 – Part D: Enforcement**,
Royal Town Planning Institute, 2007.

**The Provision and Condition of Local Authority
Gypsy/Traveller Sites in England**,
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2004.

useful websites

www.communities.gov.uk/index

Wide range of information on planning for Gypsy and Traveller sites, travelling showpeople, accommodation assessments, planning policy statements etc.

www.communities.gov.uk/gypsiesites

Provides planning and housing guidance on how the new planning framework for the provision of Gypsy and Traveller sites will work.

www.cre.gov.uk/gdpract/sci/partnership.html

Information on the CRE Safe Communities Initiative's work with Gypsies and Irish Travellers.

www.defra.gov.uk/environment/localenv/flytipping

Guidance on the available tools and powers for tackling fly-tipping.

www.idea.gov.uk

Contains case studies on Gypsy and Traveller sites around the country under its 'Community Cohesion' section.

www.lga.gov.uk/Publication.asp?Section=0&id=-A783B111

Report of the LGA Gypsy and Traveller Task Group.

www.nagto.co.uk

The website of the National Association of Gypsy and Traveller Officers.

www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2000/20000034.htm

Information on the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

www.respect.gov.uk/

Provides comprehensive guidance on all of the available tools and powers to tackle anti-social behavior.

appendix b

Gypsy and Traveller fact sheet

facts about Gypsies and Travellers

Myths, rumours and misinformation surround the presence of minority ethnic groups such as Gypsies and Travellers and these can be hard to rebut. However, below are some facts about Gypsies and Travellers that can be used to discredit many of the more popular myths.

- Romany Gypsies have been in Great Britain for over 600 years, and Irish Travellers have also lived and travelled here for generations.
- Both groups are recognised ethnic minorities and are protected by Race Relations legislation.
- Out of around 16,000 Gypsy and Traveller caravans in England, about 12,000 are on authorised, legal sites.
- Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers have their own languages; Romany Gypsies particularly have very strict customs about hygiene and cleanliness, developed over many years to cope with living on the roads.
- Less than one square mile of land would be needed to accommodate every unauthorised caravan in England.
- 91 per cent of all local authorities in England and Wales have Gypsies and Travellers either living in them or passing through.

facts about planning

Gypsies and Travellers are subject to the planning system in the same way as any other person. Their developments are subject to policies and guidance like any others.

Despite what you may have seen in the media, large unauthorised developments are actually very rare, and the average size of an authorised development is only 4 caravans.

Local authorities are not required to build sites, but where they do the Government has grant funding available to cover the cost of this. The requirement on local authorities is to identify land that is suitable for sites, just as they identify land for businesses or for other types of housing.

other facts

Gypsies and Travellers are the most excluded ethnic minorities in this country. Studies suggest that nearly 18 per cent of Gypsy and Traveller mothers will experience the death of a child - compared with less than 1 per cent of mothers in the settled community.

It is much cheaper to provide a site than to enforce against unauthorised encampment in areas that have no site provision - when Bristol City Council built a site they saw their enforcement costs drop from £200,000 a year to £5000 a year.

Source: **Communities & Local Government (CLG) Website.**
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1509346>



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