

# Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation Assessment 2021

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South Tyneside Council

Final Report  
December 2021

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## Table of Contents

Executive Summary .....	5
1. Introduction.....	8
Overview .....	8
Who the study covers .....	8
Report structure.....	9
2. Policy and local context .....	10
Government policy and guidance .....	10
Considering ‘Cultural’ and ‘PPTS’ need.....	12
3. Methodology .....	13
Introduction.....	13
Phase 1: Literature/desktop review and steering group discussions .....	13
Phase 2: Fieldwork survey and interviews with Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople .....	13
Phase 3: Needs assessment and production of report.....	14
4. Review of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population and existing provision of pitches and plots .....	16
2011 Census population and household estimates .....	16
Caravan Count information.....	17
Local site and yards.....	18
5. Gypsy and Traveller pitch, Travelling Showperson plot and transit site requirements.....	20
Gypsy and Traveller need .....	20
Transit requirements.....	20
Travelling Showperson need .....	21
6. Conclusion and response .....	22
Local Plan policy recommendations .....	22
Future updating .....	24
Appendix A: Gypsy and Traveller Fieldwork Questionnaire .....	25
Appendix B: Glossary of terms.....	28
Appendix C: Log of contact with local residents .....	30

## List of Tables

Table 4.1	People from households identifying as White Gypsy or Irish Traveller by accommodation type.....	16
Table 4.2	Households identifying as Gypsy Traveller by accommodation type .....	16
Table 4.3	Bi-annual Traveller caravan count figures January 2016 to January 2020 South Tyneside.....	17
Table 4.4	Annual Travelling Showpeople caravan count figures January 2015 to January 2020 .....	18

# Executive Summary

## Introduction

The South Tyneside Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2021 (GTAA) provides evidence to identify the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople across the borough.

There is one Gypsy and Traveller site in the borough. Exceptionally, it has not been possible to obtain up to date information on the occupants of the pitches. This is despite several site visits, assistance by planning agents and repeated attempts to engage with one of the site occupants. The site is gated and therefore not possible to access without the owner's permission.

In these exceptional circumstances, it is recommended that the council continues to draw upon the findings of the previous 2014 GTAA and prepares a criteria-based policy for the development of new sites. It is recommended that any application is accompanied by an up to date assessment of pitch occupants.

## Population and current accommodation provision

The 2011 Census identified a total of 9 people and 7 households in South Tyneside where the Household Reference Person had a 'White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller' ethnicity. All households were living in bricks and mortar accommodation..

Culturally appropriate provision includes one private site with 11 pitches located at West Pastures, off Newcastle Road, West Boldon. The land at West Pastures has been used for residential purposes since July 2008 but households living on the site were identified in the 2011 census.

The bi-annual DCLG Traveller caravan count (Jan 2016 to Jan 2020) reported an average of 14 caravans. The annual Travelling Showperson caravan count (undertaken each January) has consistently showed zero caravans on Travelling Showperson's yards.

## Planning policy requirements for needs assessments

The 2021 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states in Paragraph 62 '*the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policy (including travellers)*'. A footnote in the NPPF then states '*Planning Policy for Traveller Sites sets out how travellers' housing needs should be assessed for those covered by the definition in Annex 1 of that document*'.

The 2015 Planning Policy for Traveller Site (PPTS) document states that '*local planning authorities should make their own assessment of need for the purposes of planning*' and '*ensure that their Local Plan includes a fair, realistic and inclusive policies to increase the number of traveller sites in appropriate locations with planning permission, to address under provision and maintain an appropriate level of supply*'.

In the absence of further guidance on preparing GTAA's, the methods adopted by arc<sup>4</sup> reflect the PPTS, build upon those methods established through previous guidance, our practical experience and decisions made at planning inquiries and appeals.

### 'Cultural' and 'PPTS need'

Government policy encourages authorities to meet the needs of all Gypsies and Travellers. The PPTS is used to plan for the accommodation needs of those Gypsies and Travellers who continue to lead a nomadic habit of life, even if they are temporarily not travelling. The NPPF is used to plan for the accommodation needs of those Gypsies and Travellers that no longer lead a nomadic habit of life. In both respects policy requires need to be assessed and then a five year supply of sites to meet that need to be identified as part of the Local Plan.

### Plan periods

Need has been assessed over a short-term 2021/22 to 2025/26 and longer-term 2025/26 to 2038/39.

## Gypsy and Traveller pitch requirements

### Overall residential need

There is an overall minimum need for 11 additional Gypsy and Traveller residential pitches across the borough over the period 2021/22 to 2039/40. This is based on the 2014 GTAA evidence of need which was annualised and then applied to the new plan period. This can be broken down into a short-term five-year minimum need (2021/22 to 2024/25) for 3 pitches and long-term minimum need (2025/26 to 2038/39) for 8 pitches.

The method to calculate need is exceptional and is the optimal way of assessing future need given that interviews with the Gypsy and Traveller community has not been possible. It is assumed that all of the need is from households who meet the nomadic habit of live definition set out in the PPTS.

### Travelling Showperson plot requirements

There are no Travelling Showperson's yards in the borough but there is an Amusement Park Caravan Site on South Promenade, South Shields. No need for additional Travelling Showperson need has been identified.

### Transit need

There are a low level of unauthorised encampments in the borough. it is recommended that the council considers areas for temporary stopping and develops a negotiated stopping policy to address any short-term needs that arise from households traveling through the borough.

## Policy recommendations

Government policy encourages authorities to meet the needs of all Gypsies and Travellers through the NPPF for those who no longer travel and the PPTS for those who have a nomadic habit of life. The overall need that the council needs to plan for is 11 pitches over the period 2021/22 to 2039/40. There is a need for 3 additional pitches in the first five years of the local plan and 8 for the remainder of the plan period.

It is recommended that the Local Plan sets out criteria-based policies to inform future planning applications for small private sites should they arise over the plan period.

There is no identified need for Travelling Showperson plots but it is also recommended that the Local Plan sets out similar criteria-based policies.

It is recommended that the council considers temporary stopping areas and negotiated stopping arrangements to meet the needs from Travellers passing through the borough.

# 1. Introduction

## Overview

- 1.1 In April 2021, arc<sup>4</sup> was commissioned by South Tyneside Council to prepare the 2021 Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation Assessment (GTAA).
- 1.2 The overall scope of the study is to ensure that the council has a robust evidence base to determine an appropriate level of residential pitch and transit provision over the period to 2039 and to identify the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers to meet both the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS)-defined need and the council's obligations under section 124 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016.

## Who the study covers

- 1.3 The GTAA 2021 adopts the definition of 'Gypsies and Travellers' set out within PPTS, which was published by the government in August 2015. This sets out the following definition of 'Gypsies and Travellers':  
*'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, but excluding members of an organised group of Travelling Showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.'*<sup>1</sup>
- 1.4 In addition, PPTS 2015 provides the following 'clarification' for determining whether someone is a Gypsy or Traveller:  
*'In determining whether persons are "gypsies and travellers" for the purposes of this planning policy, consideration should be given to the following issues amongst other relevant matters:*
  - a) *whether they previously led a nomadic habit of life*
  - b) *the reasons for ceasing their nomadic habit of life*
  - c) *whether there is an intention of living a nomadic habit of life in the future, and if so, how soon and in what circumstances.'*<sup>2</sup>
- 1.5 The following definition of 'Travelling Showpeople' is set out in PPTS 2015:  
*'Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family's or dependants' more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above.'* (MHCLG Planning policy for traveller sites August 2015 Annex 1, para 3)

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<sup>1</sup> DCLG Planning policy for traveller sites August 2015 Annex 1, para 1

<sup>2</sup> DCLG Planning policy for traveller sites August 2015 Annex 1, para 2



1.6 In addition:

*‘For the purposes of this planning policy, “pitch” means a pitch on a “gypsy and traveller” site and “plot” means a pitch on a “travelling showpeople” site (often called a “yard”). This terminology differentiates between residential pitches for “gypsies and travellers” and mixed-use pitches for “travelling showpeople”, which may/will need to incorporate space or to be split to allow for the storage of equipment.’ (MHCLG Planning policy for traveller sites August 2015 Annex 1, para 5).*

1.7 For the purposes of this study, therefore, Gypsies and Travellers live on pitches on sites, whilst Travelling Showpeople live on plots on yards.

## Report structure

1.8 The GTAA 2021 report structure is as follows:

- **Chapter 1 Introduction:** provides an overview of the study.
- **Chapter 2 Policy and local context:** presents a review of the national policy context which guides the study
- **Chapter 3 Methodology:** provides details of the study’s research methodology.
- **Chapter 4 Review of current Gypsy and Traveller population and provision of pitches/plots:** reviews estimates of the Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population across the borough and existing site/yard provision.
- **Chapter 5 Pitch/plot/transit requirements:** focuses on current and future pitch/plot requirements.
- **Chapter 6 Conclusion and strategic response:** concludes the report, providing brief summary of key findings and policy recommendations.

1.9 The report is supplemented by the following appendices:

- **Appendix A** Gypsy and Traveller survey questionnaire.
- **Appendix B** Glossary of terms

## 2. Policy and local context

- 2.1 This study is grounded in an understanding of the national legislative and planning policy context that underpins the assessment and provision of accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
- 2.2 This chapter sets out the policy context within which this GTAA has been prepared, including a consideration of the previous GTAA for the borough.

### Government policy and guidance

- 2.3 The 2021 National Planning Policy Framework states in Paragraph 62 *'the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies'* It then lists a number of groups including Travellers. A footnote to the paragraph states *'Planning Policy for Traveller Sites sets out how travellers' housing needs should be assessed for those covered by the definition in Annex 1 of that document'*.
- 2.4 The 2015 Planning Policy for Traveller Site (PPTS) document states that *'local planning authorities should make their own assessment of need for the purposes of planning'* and *'ensure that their Local Plan includes a fair, realistic and inclusive policies to increase the number of traveller sites in appropriate locations with planning permission, to address under provision and maintain an appropriate level of supply'*.
- 2.5 Policy A of the 2015 PPTS relates to evidence needed to plan positively and manage development. This states *'in assembling the evidence base necessary to support their planning approach, local planning authorities should:*
  - *pay particular attention to early and effective community engagement with both settled and traveller communities (including discussing travellers' accommodation needs with travellers themselves, their representative bodies and local support groups);*
  - *co-operate with travellers, their representative bodies and local support groups; other local authorities and relevant interest groups to prepare and maintain an up-to-date understanding of the likely permanent and transit accommodation needs of their areas over the lifespan of their development plan, working collaboratively with neighbouring local planning authorities; and*
  - *use a robust evidence base to establish accommodation needs to inform the preparation of local plans and make planning decisions.*
- 2.6 In the absence of further guidance on preparing GTAAs, the methods adopted by arc<sup>4</sup> reflect Policy A of the PPTS; build upon those methods established through previous guidance; our practical experience and findings from planning inquiries and appeals.
- 2.7 The calculation of pitch/plot requirements is based on established DCLG modelling methodology, as advocated in *Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment Guidance* (DCLG, 2007). Although this guidance was

formally withdrawn in December 2016, in the absence of any updated guidance on the subject, it continues to provide a good practice approach for needs modelling.

2.8 Policy B of the 2015 PPTS relates to planning for traveller sites and requires Local Plans:

- to be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development and consistent with the policies of the NPPF; and
- to set pitch targets for Gypsies and Travellers and plot targets for Travelling Showpeople as defined in Annex 1 which address the likely permanent and transit site accommodation needs of travellers in their area, working collaboratively with neighbouring local planning authorities.

2.9 Policy B (paragraph 10) sets out that local authorities should, in producing their Local Plan:

- a. identify and update annually, a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years' worth of sites against their locally set targets;
- b. identify a supply of specific, developable sites, or broad locations for growth, for years 6 to 10 and, where possible, for years 11-15;
- c. consider production of joint development plans that set targets on a cross-authority basis, to provide more flexibility in identifying sites, particularly if a local planning authority has special or strict planning constraints (local planning authorities have a duty to cooperate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries);
- d. 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; and
- e. protect local amenity and environment.

2.10 Policy B (paragraph 13) sets out that local authorities should ensure that traveller sites are sustainable economically, socially and environmentally and therefore ensure that their policies:

- a. promote peaceful and integrated co-existence between the site and the local community;
- b. promote, in collaboration with commissioners of health services, access to appropriate health services;
- c. ensure that children can attend school on a regular basis;
- d. provide a settled base that reduces both the need for long-distance travelling and possible environmental damage caused by unauthorised encampment;
- e. provide for proper consideration of the effect of local environmental quality (such as noise and air quality) on the health and well-being of any travellers who may locate there or on others as a result of new development;

- f. avoid placing undue pressure on local infrastructure and services;
- g. do not locate sites in areas at high risk of flooding, including functional floodplains, given the particular vulnerability of caravans; and
- h. reflect the extent to which traditional lifestyles (whereby some travellers live and work from the same location thereby omitting many travel to work journeys) can contribute to sustainability.

### *Intentional unauthorised development*

- 2.11 The planning policy statement issued with PPTS 2015<sup>3</sup> (and confirmed by Ministerial Statement<sup>4</sup>) makes clear that if a site is intentionally occupied without planning permission this would be a material consideration in any retrospective planning application for that site. Whilst this does not mean that retrospective applications will be automatically refused, it does mean that failure to seek permission in advance of occupation will count against the application.
- 2.12 In addition, PPTS 2015 (Paragraph 12) makes clear that in exceptional cases where a local authority is burdened by a large-scale unauthorised site that has significantly increased their need, and their area is subject to strict and special planning constraints, then there is no assumption that the local authority will be required to meet their Gypsy and Traveller site needs in full. This is intended to protect local planning authorities with significant land constraints from being required to provide for additional needs arising directly from large sites such as Dale Farm (a large unauthorised site in Essex).

### Considering ‘Cultural’ and ‘PPTS’ need

- 2.13 Paragraph 62 of the 2021 NPPF recognises the need to assess a range of community needs including those of Travellers. Government policy encourages authorities to meet the needs of all Gypsies and Travellers. The PPTS is used to plan for the accommodation needs of those Gypsies and Travellers who continue to lead a nomadic habit of life, even if they are temporarily not travelling. The NPPF is used to plan for the accommodation needs of those Gypsies and Travellers that no longer lead a nomadic habit of life. In both respects policy requires need to be assessed and then a five year supply of sites to meet that need to be identified as part of the Local Plan. This approach also reflects the council’s obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equalities Act 2010 and the Housing and Planning Act 2016 section 124.

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<sup>3</sup>[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/457632/Final\\_Chief\\_Planning\\_Officer\\_letter\\_and\\_written\\_statement.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/457632/Final_Chief_Planning_Officer_letter_and_written_statement.pdf)

<sup>4</sup><http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2015-12-17/HCWS423/>

## 3. Methodology

### Introduction

- 3.1 The GTAA research method is grounded in an understanding of the requirement of the NPPF and based on an established methodology which regularly withstands scrutiny at planning inquiries and hearings.
- 3.2 The methodology has comprised:
- A desktop analysis of existing documents, including data on pitches/sites, plots/yards and unauthorised encampments.
  - Site/yard visits and attempted household interviews with Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople;
- 3.3 The information gathering has been carried out in three phases, as outlined below:
- Phase 1: Literature/desktop review.
  - Phase 2: Survey of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople across the borough and stakeholder consultation.
  - Phase 3: Needs assessment and production of the GTAA 2021 report.

### Phase 1: Literature/desktop review and steering group discussions

- 3.4 We have reviewed relevant literature, including legislative background and best practice information; and analysis of available secondary data relating to Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the borough. The research has been overseen by a steering group comprising local authority officers.

### Phase 2: Fieldwork survey and interviews with Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

- 3.5 Our aim is to obtain interviews from all households living on sites and yards using a standard questionnaire (Appendix A). This questionnaire has been carefully designed in consultation with councils, feedback from community representatives and planning agents. Site visits took place during April 2021 and households were left with a leaflet explaining the work. Despite repeated attempts (see Appendix C log) it was not possible to obtain detailed information on site occupants in 2021.

## Phase 3: Needs assessment and production of report

- 3.6 A detailed explanation of the pitch requirements is contained in Chapter 5.

### Pitches and households

- 3.7 One of the key challenges faced when assessing Gypsy and Traveller pitch requirements is the actual nature of pitches and how this relates to the number of households they can support.
- 3.8 PPTS 2015 refers to the need for local planning authorities to *'identify and update annually, a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years' worth of sites against their locally set targets'* and *'relate the number of pitches/plots to the circumstances of the specific size and location of the site and the surrounding population's size and density'* (PPTS 2015, paragraph 10).
- 3.9 Planning decision notices usually refer to the number of pitches on a site or the specifics of what can be on a pitch e.g. statics, tourers; or specific individuals and/or households.
- 3.10 As part of the GTAA, it is essential that the characteristics of sites, the number of pitches and how many households these can support is carefully considered. There are a range of issues which need to be considered when reviewing site and pitch characteristics and their potential implications for future pitch and site requirements which are now summarised.

### Site and pitch size

- 3.11 There are no definitive parameters for site or pitch sizes. Previous Design Guidance (DCLG, 2008) states in paragraph 4.4 that *'Gypsy and Traveller sites are designed to provide land per household which is suitable for a mobile home, touring caravan and a utility building, together with space for parking. Sites of various sizes, layouts and pitch numbers operate successfully today and work best when they take into account the size of the site and the needs and demographics of the families resident on them'*.
- 3.12 Paragraph 4.47 states that *'to ensure fire safety it is essential that every trailer, caravan or park home must be not less than 6 metres from any other trailer, caravan or park home that is occupied separately'*.
- 3.13 Paragraph 7.12 states that *'as a general guide, it is possible to specify that an average family pitch must be capable of accommodating an amenity building, a large trailer and touring caravan (or two trailers, drying space for clothes, a lockable shed (for bicycles, wheelchair storage etc.), parking space for two vehicles and a small garden area'*.
- 3.14 Paragraph 4.13 states that *'smaller pitches must be able to accommodate at least an amenity building, a large trailer, drying space for clothes and parking for at least one vehicle'*.
- 3.15 As a general guide, it is suggested by arc<sup>4</sup> that the minimum pitch size is 25m by 25m (625 square meters or 0.0625 hectares). This would support a twin-unit chalet/mobile home (15m x 6.5m), a tourer, an amenity shed/building (5m x

4m), two vehicle spaces (minimum 2.4m x 4.8m for each space) and turning circle for vehicles, amenity space and a small garden area/play space. Residential units need to be 3m from the pitch boundary and at least 6m apart. A slightly larger pitch of 25m by 30m (750 square meters or 0.075 hectares) would be appropriate for larger household units requiring several residential units.

- 3.16 It is generally accepted amongst the Travelling community that private sites of up to 6-10 pitches are appropriate. Public sites tend to be larger and have policies and procedures in place to ensure the effective management of sites.

### Occupancy

- 3.17 A pitch may accommodate more than one family unit, for instance it could include a family, older children who have formed their own household and other family members. This could lead to potential overcrowding and this is considered as part of the GTAA household survey.
- 3.18 Private sites may restrict occupancy to close family/friends. This limits opportunity for others to move onto the site but this restrictive occupancy may provide for emerging needs within a household, for example as grown-up children (previously living within a parent(s) or grandparent(s) home) form independent households of their own.
- 3.19 Quality, size of pitch and proximity of caravans on pitches vary dramatically.

### Response

- 3.20 For each site, a pragmatic and reasonable judgement should be made as part of the GTAA regarding the number of pitches or sub-divisions on sites. This may relate to the number of families living on sites, and could include a consideration of the potential intensification of sites (for instance through further sub-division, extension or use of vacant areas within the site). Capacity and layout of sites should be identified through site observation (directly or indirectly through Google maps or similar), planning history and local knowledge of planning, enforcement and liaison officers.
- 3.21 Pitches can become intensified or sub-divided once planning applications have been approved. These sub-divisions tend to be tolerated by councils. Often pitches become subdivided to provide space for newly-forming households, particularly from family members. The potential for pitch intensification/sub-division was considered on site visits and respondents were asked whether intensification/sub-division was possible on the site they lived on.

## 4. Review of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population and existing provision of pitches and plots

- 4.1 This chapter looks at the current picture in terms of the current population and demography of Gypsies and Travellers across South Tyneside before going on to explore the extent and nature of provision across the borough.

### 2011 Census population and household estimates

- 4.2 The 2011 Census (Tables 4.1 and 4.2) identified a total of 9 people and 7 households in South Tyneside with a Household Reference Person who identified as having a White Gypsy or Irish Traveller ethnicity. All lived in bricks and mortar accommodation. The Traveller site located in South Tyneside was developed after the 2011 census.

**Table 4.1 People from households identifying as White Gypsy or Irish Traveller by accommodation type**

Local Authority	Total: Accommodation type	House or bungalow	A flat, maisonette or apartment	A caravan or other mobile or temporary structure
South Tyneside	9	8	1	0

Source: 2011 Census CT127

**Table 4.2 Households identifying as Gypsy Traveller by accommodation type**

Local Authority	Total: Accommodation type	House or bungalow	A flat, maisonette or apartment	A caravan or other mobile or temporary structure
South Tyneside	7	6	1	0

Source: 2011 Census CT0128



## Caravan Count information

- 4.3 Snapshot counts of the number of Gypsy and Traveller caravans were requested by the government in 1979 and have since been undertaken every January and July by local authorities. An annual count of Travelling Showperson caravans takes place every January. The counts provide a source of information on the number of caravans located on authorised and unauthorised sites but do not record the actual number of pitches on sites/yards.
- 4.4 The figures for the last nine Traveller caravan counts for South Tyneside are set out in Table 4.3. Data shows an average of 77 caravans across the borough during the period Jan 2016 to Jan 2020. Of these, 89% were on council sites and 11% on private sites.

**Table 4.3 Bi-annual Traveller caravan count figures January 2016 to January 2020 South Tyneside**

Date	Authorised sites with planning permission		Unauthorised sites without planning permission	Total
	Social Rented	Total Private	Total Unauthorised	
Jan 2016	0	21	0	21
Jul 2016	0	16	0	16
Jan 2017	0	14	0	14
Jul 2017	0	11	0	11
Jan 2018	0	11	0	11
Jul 2018	0	13	0	13
Jan 2019	0	15	0	15
July 2019	0	15	0	15
Jan 2020	0	10	0	10
Nine-Count Average* (Jan 2016- Jan 2020)	0	14	0	14
Nine-Count % Average* (Jan 2016- Jan 2020)	0%	100%		100.0%

Source: MHCLG Traveller Caravan Count, Live Table 1 (January 2020)

- 4.5 Over the period 2015 to 2020 there were no reported Travelling Showperson caravans across South Tyneside in the MHCLG caravan count statistics (Table 4.4). There are a number of households living at the Amusement Park Caravan Site, South Promenade, South Shields but this is not classified as a Travelling Showpersons yard.

**Table 4.4 Annual Travelling Showpeople caravan count figures January 2015 to January 2020**

Count	Authorised sites with planning permission		Unauthorised sites without planning permission	Total
	Social Rented	Total Private	Total Unauthorised	
2015	0	0	0	0
2016	0	0	0	0
2017	0	0	0	0
2018	0	0	0	0
2019	0	0	0	0
2020	0	0	0	0
Six-Count Average	0	0	0	0
Six-Count % Average	0	0	0	0

Source: MHCLG Travelling Showpeople Caravan Count, Live Table 3 (January 2020)

## Local site and yards

- 4.6 Broadly speaking, authorised sites are those with planning permission and can be on either public or privately-owned land. Unauthorised sites are made up of either longer term<sup>5</sup> unauthorised encampments<sup>6</sup> that have been in existence for some considerable time and so can be considered to be indicative of a permanent need for accommodation (in some instances local authorities class these as tolerated sites and do not take enforcement action to remove them); and unauthorised developments, where Travellers are residing upon land that they own and that does not have planning permission (see Appendix B for more detailed definitions).
- 4.7 Table 4.5 sets out the range of sites and Travelling Showperson's yards across South Tyneside. The table also shows the number of household survey responses or where data have been obtained from site management data.
- 4.8 Culturally appropriate provision includes one private site (with 11 pitches) which was granted planning permission in 2014 having been lived on since July 2008. There are no Travelling Showperson's yards in South Shields but there are 24 caravans located on the the Amusement Park Caravan Site on South Promenade, South Shields.

<sup>5</sup> Approximately three months or longer

<sup>6</sup> Please note that unauthorised encampments also encompass short-term illegal encampments, which are more indicative of transit need, see para 7.10 for more information on these encampments.

Table 4.5 List of Gypsy & Traveller sites (as at April 2021)									
Site Code	Site/Yard Name and Address	Postcode	Type of Site	Ownership	Total Pitches	Households	Household Data obtained		
							2021 Interview	Site management data	Total
Priv1	West Pasture, off Newcastle Road, West Boldon		Permanent Authorised	Private	11	11	0	0	0
<b>Total Gypsy and Traveller Pitches</b>					<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Travelling Showperson Plots</b>					<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>

Source: Council data 2021, site survey and fieldwork 2021GT

## 5. Gypsy and Traveller pitch, Travelling Showperson plot and transit site requirements

### Gypsy and Traveller need

- 5.1 Given the challenge of engaging with Gypsies and Travellers, it has not been possible to calculate short-term (over the next 5 years) or long-term needs (to 2039) using up to date information.
- 5.2 However, the 2014 GTAA did manage to obtain information from households living on West Pastures. This analysis identified a need for 14 additional pitches through new household formation over the period 2013 to 2036 (23 years). This was based on need from a total of 23 children on the site and the 2014 GTAA reasonably assumed that 50% would require pitch accommodation in the future.
- 5.3 Given the exceptional circumstance that no interviews have been achieved in the 2021 study, it is recommended that the need identified in the 2014 study is annualised (resulting in an annual need of 0.61 pitches) and applied to the Local Plan period 2021 to 2039 (18 years). This results in a total minimum need for 11 additional pitches 2021 to 2039. This can be broken down into a short-term five-year minimum need (2021/22 to 2024/25) for 3 pitches and long-term minimum need (2025/26 to 2038/39) for 8 pitches.

### Transit requirements

- 5.4 There are a number of ways to deliver temporary places where Travellers can stop whilst passing through a local authority area. These include transit sites, stop over areas and negotiated stopping.
- 5.5 A good indicator of transit need is unauthorised encampment activity. Over the past five years 2016 to 2021, there were 9 incidences of unauthorised encampment activity (2016 = 0, 2017 = 1, 2018 = 3, 2019 = 4 and 2020=1) or an average of 1.8 each year.
- 5.6 Given this low level of unauthorised encampment, a transit site is not recommended but the council should consider temporary stopping and negotiated stopping arrangements.

#### *Temporary stop over provision*

- 5.7 A temporary stop over area is land which can be used on a temporary basis if unauthorised encampments occur or likely to occur. They can be fields, areas of hardstanding or a mixture of both. Temporary facilities can be provided when the temporary stop over is in use, for instance portable toilets and rubbish collection.

#### *Negotiated stopping*

- 5.8 Negotiated stopping involves councils making an agreement with Gypsies and Travellers on unauthorised encampments. The terms of the agreement can vary but usually include the provision of portaloos, waste disposal, water; the

length of the agreement can vary but tends to be around 28 days; and users agree to comply with rules for behaviour and use of the site.

#### *Policy response*

- 5.9 Given the low level of unauthorised encampments, it is recommended that the council considers areas for temporary stopping and develops a negotiated stopping policy

### Travelling Showperson need

- 5.10 Several Showpeople living on the Amusement Park Caravan Site were spoken to and made aware of the research. There was no further contact and it is assumed that there is no additional needs arising from the site which needs to be addressed through the provision of a Showperson's yard.

## 6. Conclusion and response

- 6.1 This concluding chapter provides a brief summary of key findings and recommendations.

### Current accommodation

- 6.2 There is a relatively new Gypsy and Traveller community at West Pastures who moved onto land in July 2008 and a site was granted planning permission in 2014. The future need in the borough is linked to the families living on this site. There are no Travelling Showpersons' yards in the borough.

### Future residential need

- 6.3 Government policy encourages authorities to meet the needs of all Gypsies and Travellers through the NPPF for those who no longer travel and the PPTS for those who have a nomadic habit of life. The overall minimum need that the council needs to plan for is therefore 11 pitches over the period 2021/22 to 2039/40. This is based on the need established in the 2014 GTAA which has been annualised and applied to the new plan period. Despite repeated visits and attempts to engage with representatives living at West Pastures, it has not been possible to update the evidence base.
- 6.4 It is recommended that the Local Plan sets out criteria-based policies to inform future planning applications for small private sites should they arise over the plan period.
- 6.5 There is no identified need for Travelling Showperson plots but it is also recommended that the Local Plan sets out similar criteria-based policies.

### Transit /stop over need

- 6.6 It is recommended that the council considers temporary stopping areas and negotiated stopping arrangements to meet the needs from Travellers passing through the borough.

## Local Plan policy recommendations

- 6.7 Local Plan policy recommendations for residential pitches for Gypsies and Travellers and residential plots for Travelling showpeople are set out below.

### Gypsy and Travellers

- 6.8 The 2021 GTAA has identified a need for additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches across South Tyneside.
- 6.9 Where proposals for sites are brought forward on non-allocated land, proposals will be supported where:

1. Sites afford reasonable access to services and facilities, including health and schools.
2. Appropriate screening and landscaping is included within the proposal to protect local amenity and the environment.
3. They promote peaceful and integrated co-existence between the site and the local community.
4. They enable mixed business and residential accommodation (providing for the live-work lifestyle of Travellers).
5. They avoid undue pressure on local infrastructure and services.
6. In rural areas, the size of the site does not dominate nearby settled communities.
7. They are capable of accommodating on-site facilities that meet best practice for modern Traveller site requirements, including play areas, storage, provision for recycling and waste management.

### Travelling Showpeople

6.10 The 2021 GTAA recognised there is a Travelling Showperson community in South Tyneside but no specific additional needs were identified. Where proposals for Travelling Showperson yards are brought forward on non-allocated land, the proposals will be supported where:

1. Yards afford reasonable access to services and facilities, including health and schools.
2. Appropriate screening and landscaping is included within the proposal to protect local amenity and the environment.
3. They promote peaceful and integrated co-existence between the yard and the local community.
4. They enable mixed business and residential accommodation (providing for the live-work lifestyle of Travelling Showpeople).
5. They avoid undue pressure on local infrastructure and services.
6. In rural areas, the size of the yard does not dominate nearby settled communities.
7. They are capable of accommodating on-site facilities that meet best practice for modern yard requirements, including play areas, storage of equipment, provision for recycling and waste management.

## Future updating

- 6.11 The GTAA should be updated on a 5-yearly basis to ensure that the level of pitch and pitch provision remains appropriate for the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population across South Tyneside.



## Appendix A: Gypsy and Traveller Fieldwork Questionnaire

	Date and Time			
	Site Reference			
	Address			
	General Data Protection Regulation (2018) and Data Protection	GDPR came into effect from 25th May 2018. This provides rights of people to control personal data held about them by organisations		
		This study is being done for South Tyneside Council to identify if there is a need for more residential pitches and transit provision in the area. A report will be prepared based on the findings of these surveys. The information you provide will not be used for any other purpose.		
		The information you provide will not be used to identify you personally, will be kept strictly confidential		
		Can you please say if you are happy to carry on with the questionnaire on this basis?	Yes	No
1	Pitch/Property Type (and tenure if B&M)			
2	No. Statics/mobiles/chalets or bricks and mortar			
3	No. tourers/caravans			
4	Description of pitch occupancy			
5	No. households			
6	No. concealed households			
7	No. doubled up households			
8	Anyone else use this pitch as their home? If so, who			
9	Household characteristics			
		Gender	Age	Relationship to respondent
	Respondent			
	Person 2			
	Person 3			
	Person 4			
	Person 5			
	Person 6			
	Person 7			
	Person 8			
10	Ethnicity			
11	How many bedspaces are there on your pitch?			
12	Overcrowding of home	Y / N		
13	Overcrowding of pitch	Y / N		
14	Thinking back to when you were 15, were you living on a site, on the roadside or living in bricks and mortar housing?	S, R, B&M		
15	Where were you living? Record district/settlement name			

	In 2015, the Government changed its definition of Gypsies and Travellers for planning purposes. To be recognised as a Gypsy Traveller you or someone in your household has to travel. I'm now going to ask a few questions about whether you or someone in your household travels				
16	In the last year have you or someone in your household travelled?	Y / N			
17	Previous to the last year, did you or someone in your household travel?	Y / N			
18	Reason(s) for travelling				
19	Please describe when and where do you travel? (if relevant)				
20	Do you or a member of your household plan to travel next year?	Y / N			
21	Do you think you or a member of your household will travel in the next two to five years?	Y / N			
22	What reasons do you or your household have for not travelling now or in the future?				
	Where you plan to live in the future				
23	Are you planning to move to another place to live in the next 5 years?	Y / N			
24	Why are you planning to move ?				
25	Where are you planning to move to? (Same Site, Private Site in District, Council Site in District, Outside District (if so where), Bricks and Mortar housing). Try and get specific location				
26	What type of dwelling ? (caravan, trailer, chalet house, flat, bungalow)				
26a	If pitch, single (one static) or double pitch (for two statics)				
	If in B&M housing				
27	If you live in bricks and mortar housing, are you happy to live here or would you prefer to live on a pitch?	Happy Here / Prefer plot			
28	If you would prefer to live on a pitch is this because you have a 'cultural aversion' to living in bricks and mortar (this means it affects your mental health and makes you unhappy/ depressed)?	Y / N			
	Emerging households				
29	Emerging households: Are there any people in your household who want to move to their own pitch in the next 5 yrs?	Y / N			
		HH1	HH2	HH3	HH4
30	Where are you planning to move to? (Same Site, Private Site in District, Council Site in District, Outside District (if so where), Bricks and Mortar housing. Try and get specific location				
31	What type of dwelling ? (caravan, trailer, chalet house, flat, bungalow)				
31a	If pitch, single (one static) or double pitch (for two statics)				
32	Have they travelled / plan to travel ?	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N
33	If living in bricks and mortar do you have a 'cultural aversion' to living in bricks and mortar? (this means it affects your mental health and makes you unhappy/ depressed)	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N
	Additional residential pitches				
34	Scope to expand site (extend the boundary of the site)	Y / N			
35	No. additional pitches				
36	Scope to intensify pitches (put more pitches on the existing site)	Y / N			
37	No. additional pitches				
38	Are there any vacant pitches on the site which could be used by another family? If so how many pitches				
39	In general, is there a need for more authorised pitches ( for people to live on all the time?) in this district?	Y / N			
40	If so, how many are needed?				
41	Who should own them (Council, people from the Traveller Community, non-Travellers)				
42	Do you own any land or know of anywhere within the district which could be considered for development as a site?				

<b>Transit and temporary stopover need</b>			
43	Is there a need to provide places where people can stop whilst travelling through the district? This can include transit pitches or stopover places	Y / N	
44	Is there a need for transit pitches (for people stopping over temporarily) in the district? A transit pitch is intended for short-term use and usually includes space for two caravans, parking space and access to electricity, a toilet, washing facilities	Y / N	
45	If so, how many are needed?		
46	Who should manage them ? (Council, Traveller Community)		
47	Where should they be located?		
48	Is there a need for stopover places? A stopover place is land which can be used on a temporary basis and usually include access to portaloos, waste disposal and water	Y / N	
49	If so, how many are needed?		
50	Who should manage them ? (Council, Traveller Community)		
51	Where should they be located?		
<b>Residential history</b>			
52	How many years have you lived here?		
Routing	If more than five years	Go to Q58	
	If five years or less	Go to Q53	
53	Where did you move from? (District)		
54	Were you living on a Private Site, Council Site, Roadside or Bricks and Mortar housing?		
55	When you moved here, was the pitch vacant, a brand new pitch or had the pitch been created by dividing up an existing pitch?		
56	What were the reasons for moving here?		
57	Did you already have a connection with the area ? (e.g. family or friends living here; or you used to live here?)		
<b>Support needs</b>			
58	Do you or a member of your household have any health-related needs? Could you please explain what they are?		
<b>Final questions</b>			
59	Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about your housing or support needs?		
60	Do you know anyone in bricks and mortar housing looking to live on a pitch? If so, can you provide contact details		

## Appendix B: Glossary of terms

**Caravans:** Mobile living vehicles used by Gypsies and Travellers; also referred to as trailers.

**CJ&POA:** Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994; includes powers for local authorities and police to act against unauthorised encampments.

**CRE:** Commission for Racial Equality.

**DCLG:** Department for Communities and Local Government; created in May 2006. Responsible for the remit on Gypsies and Travellers, which was previously held by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (O.D.P.M.).

**Gypsies and Travellers:** Defined by DCLG *Planning policy for traveller sites* (August 2015) as “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, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such”. The planning policy goes on to state that, “In determining whether persons are “gypsies and travellers” for the purposes of this planning policy, consideration should be given to the following issues amongst other relevant matters: a) whether they previously led a nomadic habit of life b) the reasons for ceasing their nomadic habit of life c) whether there is an intention of living a nomadic habit of life in the future, and if so, how soon and in what circumstances”.

**Irish Traveller:** Member of one of the main groups of Gypsies and Travellers in England. Irish Travellers have a distinct indigenous origin in Ireland and have been in England since the mid nineteenth century. They have been recognised as an ethnic group since August 2000 in England and Wales (*O’Leary v Allied Domecq*).

**Mobile home:** Legally a ‘caravan’ but not usually capable of being moved by towing.

**Pitch:** Area of land on a Gypsy/Traveller site occupied by one resident family; sometimes referred to as a plot, especially when referring to Travelling Showpeople. DCLG *Planning policy for traveller sites* (August 2015) states that “For the purposes of this planning policy, “pitch” means a pitch on a “gypsy and traveller” site and “plot” means a pitch on a “travelling showpeople” site (often called a “yard”). This terminology differentiates between residential pitches for “gypsies and travellers” and mixed-use plots for “travelling showpeople”, which may / will need to incorporate space or to be split to allow for the storage of equipment”.

**Plot:** see pitch

**PPTS:** Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (DCLG, 2012 and 2015 editions)

**Roadside:** Term used here to indicate families on unauthorised encampments, whether literally on the roadside or on other locations such as fields, car parks or other open spaces.

**Romany:** Member of one of the main groups of Gypsies and Travellers in England. Romany Gypsies trace their ethnic origin back to migrations, probably from India, taking place at intervals since before 1500. Gypsies have been a recognised ethnic group for the purposes of British race relations legislation since 1988 (*CRE V Dutton*).

**Sheds:** On most residential Gypsy/Traveller sites 'shed' refers to a small basic building with plumbing amenities (bath/shower, WC, sink), which are provided at the rate of one per pitch/plot. Some contain a cooker and basic kitchen facilities.

**Showpeople:** Defined by DCLG *Planning policy for traveller sites* (August 2015) 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 own or their family’s or dependants’ more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above”.

**Site:** An area of land laid out and used for Gypsy/Traveller caravans; often though not always comprising slabs and amenity blocks or ‘sheds’. An authorised site will have planning permission. An unauthorised development lacks planning permission.

**Slab:** An area of concrete or tarmac on sites allocated to a household for the parking of trailers (caravans)

**Stopping places/stopover sites:** A term used to denote an unauthorised temporary camping area tolerated by local authorities, used by Gypsies and Travellers for short-term encampments, and sometimes with the provision of temporary toilet facilities, water supplies and refuse collection services.

**Tolerated site:** An unauthorised encampment/site where a local authority has decided not to take enforcement action to seek its removal.

**Trailers:** Term used for mobile living vehicles used by Gypsies and Travellers; also referred to as caravans.

**Transit site:** A site intended for short-term use while in transit. The site is usually permanent and authorised, but there is a limit on the length of time residents can stay.

**Unauthorised development:** Establishment of Gypsy and Traveller sites without planning permission, usually on land owned by those establishing the site. Unauthorised development may involve ground works for roadways and hard standings. People parking caravans on their own land without planning permission are not Unauthorised Encampments in that they cannot trespass on their own land – they are therefore Unauthorised Developments and enforcement is always dealt with by local planning authorities enforcing planning legislation.

**Unauthorised encampment:** Land where Gypsies or Travellers reside in vehicles or tents without permission. Unauthorised encampments can occur in a variety of locations (roadside, car parks, parks, fields, etc.) and constitute trespass. The 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act made it a criminal offence to camp on land without the owner’s consent. Unauthorised encampments fall into two main categories: those on land owned by local authorities and those on privately owned land. It is up to the land owner to take enforcement action in conjunction with the police.

**Wagons:** This is the preferred term for the vehicles used for accommodation by Showpeople.

**Yards:** Showpeople travel in connection with their work and therefore live, almost universally, in wagons. During the winter months these are parked up in what was traditionally known as ‘winter quarters’. These ‘yards’ are now often occupied all year around by some family members.

## Appendix C: Log of contact with local residents

Initial site visit – spoke to owner and give him contact details	26 Apr 2021
Follow up site visit and left letter to site owner encouraging him to contact me	20 May 2021
Call from site resident (owner's son)	June 2021
Follow up text messages and calls to arrange meeting	June and July (3 attempts)
Further attempts to arrange meeting	December (3 attempts starting 10 <sup>th</sup> Dec) with final text on 22 <sup>nd</sup> Dec prior to report deadline