

Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation Assessment 2022/23

Swale Borough Council

Final Report
December 2023

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The Swale Borough Council Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation Assessment 2023 (GTAA) provides the latest available evidence to identify the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople across the borough.

The GTAA has included:

- A review of existing (secondary) data; and
- A household survey and site/yard observation. A total of 78 Gypsy and Traveller household interviews were achieved (69 interviews achieved in 2022/3 and data from 9 interviews achieved in 2018 were used for households that were not available to be interviewed) out of a total of 120 households living on Gypsy and Traveller sites, representing a 65% response rate.

To maximise response rates, fieldwork took place over a seven-month period September 2022 to March 2023, but there were some households who did not want to participate in the study. To compensate for this, when calculating future residential pitch need, data have been weighted to reflect the total number of households living on pitches.

Data have been carefully analysed to provide a picture of current provision and activity across the borough and an assessment of future need. The findings of the study provide an up-to-date, robust and defensible evidence base for policy development. Despite the lower level of response, we are very grateful to the Gypsy and Traveller communities across Swale Borough for their positive engagement with the work.

Population and current accommodation provision

The 2011 Census identified a total of 208 households in Swale Borough where the Household Reference Person had a 'White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller' ethnicity. Of these, 71.6% lived in bricks and mortar housing and 28.4% lived in a caravan or other mobile or temporary structure. The 2011 Census identified a total population of 688 people with a 'White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller' ethnicity and the 2021 Census reported 920 people. According to the 2021 Census, Swale Borough has the second highest Gypsy and Traveller population by local authority area across England and Wales.

There are a total of 232 pitches across 87 sites and 1 Travelling Showperson's yard with 1 plot. In summary, Gypsy and Traveller provision comprises 2 council sites (15 pitches), 67 private authorised sites (182 pitches), 3 private temporary authorised sites (12 pitches) and 15 unauthorised sites (23 pitches). Brotherhood Woodyard has 40 pitches and is an authorised Gypsy and Traveller site. The site manager stated that the occupants on the site were Gypsies and Travellers but following site observation it is our recommendation that the GTAA proceeds on the basis that the site is at full capacity and there is no net need arising from Brotherhood Woodyard.

The latest eight bi-annual DLUHC Traveller caravan counts (January 2018 to January 2023) reported an average of 301 caravans on Gypsy and Traveller sites and 5.6 caravans on Travelling Showperson's yards (January 2018 to January 2023). Of

caravans on Gypsy and Traveller sites, 5.1% were on council sites, 84.9% on private authorised sites and 10% on unauthorised sites. In 2023, no caravans on Travelling Showperson yards were identified.

Planning policy requirements for needs assessments

The 2023 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 fair, realistic and inclusive policies’ and ‘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 GTAAs, the methods adopted by arc⁴ reflect the PPTS, build upon those methods established through previous guidance, our practical experience and decisions made at planning inquiries and appeals.

In December 2023, DLUHC announced that the definitions of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople set out in PPTS have now reverted back to those of the 2012 PPTS. When considering future residential pitch needs, there is no longer a distinction between Gypsies and Travellers who have ceased to travel or continue to live a nomadic habit of life. The government intends to review the approach to this area of policy and case law in 2024.

Need assessment period

To support the preparation of the Local Plan, need has been assessed over a short-term period: 2022/23 to 2026/27 and longer-term period: 2027/28 to 2037/38.

Gypsy and Traveller pitch requirements

Overall need

There is an overall need for 114 additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches across Swale Borough over the period 2022/23 to 2037/38. Needs analysis takes into account the needs arising from existing households, households on unauthorised sites, newly forming households, in-migrant households and also current vacancies on existing public and private sites.

The pitch shortfall over the short term 2022/23 to 2026/27 (and the longer-term period to 2027/28 to 2037/38 for permanent residential pitches is set out in detail in Table ES1.

Table ES1 Gypsy and Traveller pitch need: Plan period 2022/23 to 2037/38

Period	Pitch need (PPTS 2012 definition)
5yr Authorised Pitch Shortfall (2022/23 to 2026/27) (A)	80
Longer-term need	
Over period 2027/8 to 2031/32 (B)	9
Over period 2032/33 to 2036/37(C)	19
Over period 2037/38 (D)	6
Longer-term need TOTAL to 2037/38 (11 years) E=(B+C+D)	34
NET SHORTFALL 2022/23 to 2037/38 (A+E) (16 years)	114
Annual net shortfall	7.1

Meeting the need

The council should consider the following to help meet identified residential pitch need. Firstly, **regularising of sites** that are not permanently authorised (35 pitches accommodating 27 households). Secondly, additional pitch provision through the use of existing sites. Respondents were also asked if their sites could be expanded either through a physical expansion or intensification of use to provide more pitches. A range of between 37 and 43 pitches were identified. The council has been provided with details of potential sites for expansion/intensification.

There is a small level of **turnover on council pitches** which is expected to provide 4 pitches over the next 5 years.

Over the next 5 years, there is a potential for an additional 72 to 78 authorised pitches to become available through regularisation and expansion/intensification plus 4 through turnover resulting in a potential 76 to 82 pitches. This has the potential to meet the overall need in the short-term and results in a longer-term need for 34 pitches over the remaining plan period.

Notwithstanding evidence in this GTAA on need, additional need may arise over the plan period, for instance new households moving into the borough over and above the assumed level of in-migration based on past trends. It is therefore recommended that the Local Plan references the need in the GTAA as a minimum need which is likely to be met but sets out criteria-based policies to inform future planning applications for private sites should they arise.

Temporary stopping places and transit provision

The council in discussion with neighbouring local authorities should consider the options for transit provision, particularly in response to the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act. Given the level of unauthorised encampment activity, it is recommended the council develop a negotiated stopping policy to support Travellers passing through Swale Borough. It is recommended the council identify areas of land to accommodate Travellers passing through the borough for different sizes of

encampment, with land for up to 5 caravans, between 5 and up to 10 caravans and 10 or more caravans should need arise.

Travelling Showperson plot requirements

There is currently one Travelling Showpersons yard in Swale. This accommodates up to four households during the year but the yard is not authorised and on land for which there is no security of tenure. It is recommended that the council work with the Travelling Showperson community living in Swale to identify a new site for a Travelling Showperson yard to accommodate existing need (4 plots), with potential for future expansion (3 plots) and space to accommodate households transiting through the borough which would be managed by the permanent yard residents.

Policy recommendations

The overall needs evidenced in this report indicate a total shortfall of 114 Gypsy and Traveller pitches over the period 2022/23 to 2037/38, with 80 in the five year period 2022/23 to 2026/27 and 34 in the longer-term 2027/28 to 2037/38).

The short-term 5-year need for residential pitches has the potential to be largely met through the regularisation of existing unauthorised sites, the expansion/intensification of existing sites and turnover. This leaves a need for 34 additional pitches over the remainder of the plan period.

A need for 7 Travelling Showperson plots and transit accommodation has also been identified.

To support the wider needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, the council should also set out criteria-based policies to inform future planning applications for private Gypsy and Traveller sites and Showperson's yards should they arise over the plan period.

1. Introduction

Overview

- 1.1 In June 2022 arc⁴ was commissioned by Swale Borough Council to prepare the 2022 Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation Assessment (GTAA). The GTAA is part of the evidence base informing the preparation of the Local Plan.
- 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 2022/23 to 2037/38 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 In December 2023, the government announced that it was reverting to the definition of Gypsies and Travellers as set out within Annex 1 of the 2012 PPTS:
- '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 [sic] or circus people travelling together as such.'*
- 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:*
- whether they previously led a nomadic habit of life*
 - the reasons for ceasing their nomadic habit of life*
 - whether there is an intention of living a nomadic habit of life in the future, and if so, how soon and in what circumstances.'* **(MHCLG Planning policy for traveller sites August 2015 Annex 1, para 2)**
- 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).**
- 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 within sites, whilst Travelling Showpeople live on plots within yards.

Report structure

- 1.8 The GTAA 2023 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 Household survey:** presents relevant data obtained from the household survey research.
- **Chapter 6 Pitch / plot / transit requirements:** focuses on current and future pitch/plot requirements. This chapter includes a detailed assessment of drivers of demand, supply and current shortfalls across the borough.
- **Chapter 7 Conclusion and strategic response:** concludes the report, providing brief summary of key findings and recommendations.

- 1.9 The report is supplemented by the following appendices:

- **Appendix A** Household questionnaires.
- **Appendix B** Glossary of terms.

2. Policy 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 2023 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 fair, realistic and inclusive policies’ and ‘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 arc⁴ 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 DLUHC 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 [planning policy statement](#) and confirmed by Ministerial Statement [Ministerial Statement](#) 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 In December 2023, DULUC announced that the definitions set out in PPTS have now reverted back to those of the 2012 PPTS for plan and decision making. When considering future residential pitch needs, there is no longer a distinction between Gypsies and Travellers who have ceased to travel or continue to live a nomadic habit of life. The government intends to review the approach to this area of policy and case law in 2024.

Responding to challenges

- 2.14 GTAAs are subject to intense scrutiny, particularly at planning inquiries and hearings. The methodological approaches taken by arc⁴ aim to maximise the robustness of evidence and measures include:
 - An up-to-date assessment of the number of pitches on sites and the number of households living on pitches and any vacancies.
 - Maximising response rates from households.
 - Carefully considering the relationship between households and the pitches they occupy.

- Sensitive analysis of the flows of existing households from and to local authority districts.
- Consideration of overcrowding and concealed households.
- Careful consideration of turnover on council / housing association pitches, with clear assumptions over future potential capacity from households moving away from pitches.
- Longer-term modelling of need using detailed demographic information contained from household survey work.
- Reasonable assumptions around the number of households in bricks and mortar accommodation who may want to move to a pitch.

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;
 - the collection of primary data, including household interviews with Gypsies and Travellers; and
 - an assessment of accommodation needs taking into account all available data and information.
- 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 district.
 - Phase 3: Needs assessment and production of the GTAA 2022 report.

Phase 1: Literature/desktop review and steering group discussions

- 3.4 We have reviewed relevant literature, including legislative background and best practice information which is drawn from our extensive experience of undertaking GTAAs, discussions at Planning Inquiries/Hearings and workshops carried out for the Planning Advisory Service in 2021; and analysis of available secondary data relating to Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in Swale Borough. The research has progressed with input from 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 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 in June 2022 to raise awareness of the survey and establish a baseline position on of sites which also updated site information from the previous GTAA. There then followed an extensive timeframe for interviews which started in September to coincide with the end of the travelling season and ran until March 2023. During this time letters were also sent to non-response households encouraging them to get in

touch with the field team. A prolonged fieldwork period was helpful as it covered several seasons and allowed the opportunity for households who had been travelling to participate in the study.

Phase 3: Needs assessment and production of report

- 3.6 A detailed explanation of the pitch requirements is contained in Chapter 6 but briefly comprises analysis of the following:
- current pitch supply, households living in bricks and mortar accommodation; households planning to move in the next five years, and emerging households to give total need for pitches; and
 - supply based on the number of authorised pitches and turnover on sites on public pitches.
- 3.7 The overall need for pitches is then compared with the overall supply.

Pitches and households

- 3.8 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.
- 3.9 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).
- 3.10 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.
- 3.11 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

- 3.12 There are no definitive parameters for site or pitch sizes. Although now withdrawn, the DCLG Designing Gypsy and Traveller sites: good practice guide (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’*.
- 3.13 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’*.

- 3.14 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’.*
- 3.15 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’.*
- 3.16 As a general guide, it is suggested by arc⁴ 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.
- 3.17 In 2010, the Showmen’s Guild of Great Britain prepared a document ‘Travelling Showpeople’s sites: a planning focus – model standard package). This document was intended to provide guidelines to Travelling Showpeople and Local Planning Authorities when considering the needs of Travelling Showpeople.
- 3.18 This document confirmed that:
- A plot is a piece of land occupied by a Showperson with their family and equipment, used to store fairground rides, vehicles and other items as well as for living accommodation. The family unit can be large or small, for instance an extended family with grandparents, parents and children, or a single-family unit of parents and children.
 - A yard is two or more plots owned by the same family who may use this for their own family purposes or may let part out to other Showpeople.
 - A site is a group of plots where the land is owned by individual plot holders. Quite often a Showperson’s site will have a common shared access onto the main road network.
 - Showpeople’s sites do not fit neatly into the definition of a one land use category. The sites combine a residential use with a storage use, and maintenance is also likely to be carried out on site. The residential use can take the form of static homes and caravans.
 - For a Travelling Showperson yard, the minimum size of a plot is 0.5ha and should include space for residential accommodation and equipment storage.

Occupancy

- 3.19 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.

- 3.20 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.
- 3.21 Quality, size of pitch and proximity of caravans on pitches can vary dramatically and there is no particular relationship between geographical location and size of size.

Response

- 3.22 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.
- 3.23 Pitches can become intensified or sub-divided once planning applications have been approved. These sub-divisions tend to be tolerated by councils, for instance because: they help to meet pitch demand the principle of land use is already established; and can provide an opportunity for site improvement and landscaping . 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

Overview

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

2011 Census population and household estimates

- 4.2 The 2011 Census (Tables 4.1 and 4.2) identified a total of 668 people in 208 households in Swale Borough with a Household Reference Person who identified as having a White Gypsy or Irish Traveller ethnicity. 28.4% of households who identified as Gypsy or Traveller lived in caravans and 71.6% live in bricks and mortar accommodation.

Table 4.1 People in 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
Swale	668	437	39	192

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
Swale	208	133	16	59

Source: 2011 Census CT0128

2021 Census population

- 4.3 Population estimates were published in late November 2022 as part of the roll out of census data. The Gypsy and Traveller population is now reported as 920 but data on the number of households and accommodation type are not yet

published. The change in number could simply reflect people more willing to identify as Gypsy and Traveller rather than an increase in population.

- 4.4 It should be noted that, according to the 2021 Census, Swale Borough has the second highest Gypsy and Traveller population by local authority area across England and Wales. The highest population was reported in neighbouring Maidstone at 981. Swale has the highest rate of Gypsy and Traveller population per 1,000 residents, with a rate of 6.07 per 1,000 residents. The national average is 1.06 per 1,000 residents.

Caravan Count information

- 4.5 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.
- 4.6 The figures for the last 15 Traveller caravan counts for Swale Borough are set out in Table 4.3. For the most recent 9 counts (January 2018 to January 2023), data shows an average of 301 caravans across the borough. Of these, 5.1% were on council sites, 84.9% were on private sites and 10% on unauthorised sites.

Table 4.3 Bi-annual Traveller caravan count figures January 2015 to January 2023: Swale Borough

Swale Count	Authorised sites (with planning permission)		Unauthorised sites (without planning permission)	Total
	Social Rented	Total Private (inc. temporary permission)	Total Unauthorised	
Jan-15	23	198	18	239
Jul-15	0	177	9	186
Jan-16	23	204	13	240
Jul-16	3	222	17	242
Jan-17	23	240	16	279
Jul-17	18	224	63	305
Jan-18	20	244	33	297
Jul-18	19	246	30	295
Jan-19	25	292	42	359
Jul-19	1	219	36	256
Jan-20	1	276	24	301
Jul-21	1	251	22	274
Jan-22	23	222	23	268
Jul-22	23	262	22	307
Jan-23	24	286	40	350
latest 9-count average	15	255	30	301
Latest 9-Count % Average	5.1%	84.9%	10%	100.0%

Source: DLUHC Traveller Caravan Count, Live Table
 Counts not taken in July 2020 or Jan 2021 due to the COVID pandemic

- 4.7 Over the period 2016 to 2023 an average of 5.5 Travelling Showperson's' caravans have been recorded, although none were identified in the latest available January 2023 count (Table 4.4).

Table 4.4 Annual Travelling Showpeople caravan count figures January 2016 to January 2023

Count	Authorised sites with planning permission		Unauthorised sites without planning permission	Total
	Social Rented	Total Private	Total Unauthorised	
2016	0	0	8	8
2017	0	0	6	6
2018	0	0	10	10
2019	0	0	4	4
2020	0	0	6	6
2022	0	0	5	5
2023	0	0	0	0
7-Count Average	0	0	5.6	5.5
7-Count % Average	0%	0%	100%	100%

Source: DLUHC Travelling Showpeople Caravan Count, Live Table 3
Counts not taken in Jan 2021 due to the COVID pandemic

Local site and yards

- 4.8 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 (approximately three months or longer) unauthorised encampments and 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).
- 4.9 Table 4.5 sets out the range of sites across Swale Borough. There are a total of 232 pitches across 87 sites and 1 Travelling Showperson's yard with 1 plot. In summary, Gypsy and Traveller provision comprises 2 council sites (15 pitches), 67 private authorised sites (182 pitches), 3 private temporary authorised sites (12 pitches) and 15 unauthorised sites (23 pitches). Brotherhood Woodyard has 40 pitches and is an authorised Gypsy and Traveller site. The site manager stated that the occupants on the site were Gypsies and Travellers but following site observation it is our recommendation that the GTAA proceeds on the basis that the site is at full capacity there is no net need arising from Brotherhood Woodyard.
- 4.10 Table 4.6 sets out the summary position regarding pitches/plots, vacancy and occupancy. This provides a transparent base position from which the modelling of future pitch need in section 6 can proceed. However, it should be acknowledged that the existing private sites are mainly for extended family groups and the ability to live on these sites is therefore restricted.

- 4.11 Please note that on some private sites the number of pitches does not match the number of households because some households occupy more than one pitch which is summarised in Table 4.7. There is a net difference of 73 households occupying more than one pitch.

Table 4.5 List of Gypsy & Traveller pitches on sites (as of June 2022)

Site/Yard Code	Postcode	Address	Location	Ownership	Total Pitches	Total occupied pitches	Total vacant pitches	Total households	Interview achieved	Non-response
Council1	ME12 8SP	Silver Spot, Old Ferry Road	Iwade	Social	1	1	0	1	0	1
Council2	ME10 3NL	Three Lakes Park, Church Road	Murston	Social	14	14	0	14	11	3
PrivAuth1	ME12 3SP	The Barn Yard, Greyhound Road	Minster	Private Authorised	2	2	0	1	0	1
PrivAuth2	ME12 3SP	Ivygate, Greyhound Road	Minster	Private Authorised	1	1	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth3	ME12 3SP	Rambling Rose, Greyhound Road	Minster	Private Authorised	2	2	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth4	ME12 3SP	The Peartree, Greyhound Road	Minster	Private Authorised	1	1	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth5	ME12 3SP	Blackthorn Lodge, Greyhound Road	Minster	Private Authorised	2	2	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth6	ME12 3SP	The Three Palms, Greyhound Road	Minster	Private Authorised	1	1	0	1	0	1
PrivAuth7	ME12 3SP	Woodlands Lodge, Greyhound Road	Minster	Private Authorised	1	1	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth8	ME12 3SP	The Hawthorns, Greyhound Road	Minster	Private Authorised	1	1	0	1	0	1
PrivAuth9	ME12 3SP	The Goldfinch, Greyhound Road	Minster	Private Authorised	1	1	0	1	0	2
PrivAuth10	ME9 7HN	Orchard View, Otterham Quay Lane	Upchurch	Private Authorised	3	3	0	1	0	1
PrivAuth11	ME9 7HN	The Orchard, Holywell Lane	Upchurch	Private Authorised	3	3	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth12	ME12 3SS	The Farmyard, Elmley Road	Minster	Private Authorised	1	1	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth13	ME9 7XE	Windmill Farm, Yaugher Lane	Hartlip	Private Authorised	2	2	0	1	1	0

Site/Yard Code	Postcode	Address	Location	Ownership	Total Pitches	Total occupied pitches	Total vacant pitches	Total households	Interview achieved	Non-response
PrivAuth14	ME12 4HD	Shannon's Place, Warden Road	Eastchurch	Private Authorised	2	2	0	2	1	0
PrivAuth15	ME12 4HF	Thornfield, Thorn Hill Road	Eastchurch	Private Authorised	2	2	0	2	2	0
PrivAuth16	ME12 4JA	Patch of Heaven, Bell Farm Lane	Minster	Private Authorised	1	1	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth17	ME12 4JB	Happy Days, Bell Farm Lane	Minster	Private Authorised	1	1	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth18	ME12 4JB	Seaview, Bell Farm Lane	Minster	Private Authorised	1	1	1	0	0	0
PrivAuth19	ME12 4JB	The Retreat, Bell Farm Lane	Minster	Private Authorised	1	1	1	0	0	0
PrivAuth20	ME12 4JL	The Barn, Garrett's Farm, Plough Road	Eastchurch	Private Authorised	1	1	0	1	0	1
PrivAuth21	ME13 4AG	Tillies, Ocean Drive	Leysdown	Private Authorised	1	1	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth22	ME13 0TN	Stone Crossing, Lower Road	Norton	Private Authorised	2	2	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth23	ME13 9LF	Little Purchase Farm, Scoggers Hill	Dunkirk	Private Authorised	5	5	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth24	ME13 9LF	One Oak, London Road	Dunkirk	Private Authorised	1	1	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth25	ME13 9LN	Brotherhood Wood, Gate Hill	Dunkirk	Private Authorised	40	40	0	40	0	0
PrivAuth26	ME8 8QR	Adjacent to Orchard View, Otterham Quay Lane	Upchurch	Private Authorised	2	2	2	0	0	0
PrivAuth27	ME9 0NA	The Courtyard, 18 Seed Road	Newnham	Private Authorised	1	1	0	1	0	1
PrivAuth28	ME9 5QH	Summer Cottages, School Lane	Iwade	Private Authorised	4	4	0	4	0	4

Site/Yard Code	Postcode	Address	Location	Ownership	Total Pitches	Total occupied pitches	Total vacant pitches	Total households	Interview achieved	Non-response
PrivAuth29	ME9 5QH	Highview, School Lane	Iwade	Private Authorised	2	2	0	1	1	1
PrivAuth30	ME9 7AB	Jack Russell Place, Halstow Lane	Upchurch	Private Authorised	5	5	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth31	ME9 7AT	Orchard Park, Oak Lane	Upchurch	Private Authorised	9	9	0	2	2	0
PrivAuth32	ME9 7BE	Oast Field Stud, Gore Farm track, Holywell Lane	Upchurch	Private Authorised	1	1	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth33	ME9 7BG	Hursell Farm, Chaffes Lane	Upchurch	Private Authorised	4	4	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth34	ME9 7BX	Mattsfield, Boxted Lane	Lower Halstow	Private Authorised	5	5	0	3	1	2
PrivAuth35	ME9 7DD	Westfield Park Dairies, Swanton Street	Bredgar	Private Authorised	1	1	0	2	2	0
PrivAuth36	ME9 7ER	Halstow Cross, Wardwell Lane	Lower Halstow	Private Authorised	1	1	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth37	ME9 7ER	Little Acres, Wardwell Lane	Lower Halstow	Private Authorised	8	8	5	3	2	1
PrivAuth38	ME9 7ER	The Cobbs, Wardwell Lane	Lower Halstow	Private Authorised	1	1	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth39	ME9 7HP	Greenacres, Holywell Lane	Upchurch	Private Authorised	2	2	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth40	ME9 7HP	The Paddock, Holywell Lane	Upchurch	Private Authorised	4	4	0	2	0	2
PrivAuth41	ME9 7HP	Land adjacent The Paddock, Holywell Lane	Upchurch	Private Authorised	2	2	1	0	0	0
PrivAuth42	ME9 7HP	Hedgerows, Holywell Lane	Upchurch	Private Authorised	1	1	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth43	ME9 7HR	Fir View, 111 London Road	Newington	Private Authorised	1	1	0	2	1	0
PrivAuth44	ME9 7PX	Wormdale Farm, Wormdale Hill	Newington	Private Authorised	1	1	0	1	1	0

Site/Yard Code	Postcode	Address	Location	Ownership	Total Pitches	Total occupied pitches	Total vacant pitches	Total households	Interview achieved	Non-response
PrivAuth45	ME9 7QA	Cookham Shaw, Maidstone Road	Borden	Private Authorised	5	5	0	3	0	3
PrivAuth46	ME9 7QB	Land off Woodgate Lane	Borden	Private Authorised	1	1	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth47	ME9 7RH	Stonefield, Oad Street	Borden	Private Authorised	1	1	0	1	0	1
PrivAuth48	ME9 8JU	The Willows, Munsgore Lane	Borden	Private Authorised	3	3	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth49	ME9 8NA	Keycol Farm, Keycol Hill	Newington	Private Authorised	3	3	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth50	ME9 8QE	Tiptree Farm, School Lane	Iwade	Private Authorised	5	5	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth51	ME9 8QE	Land Adjacent to Tiptree Bungalow, School Lane	Iwade	Private Authorised	2	2	0	2	2	0
PrivAuth52	ME9 8QH	Land Far East of Plantation Lodge, School Lane	Iwade	Private Authorised	2	2	0	2	0	2
PrivAuth53	ME9 8QP	Land at Eden Top, Sheppey Way	Bobbing	Private Authorised	1	1	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth54	ME9 8RA	Horsford Orchard, Featherbed Lane	Sittingbourne	Private Authorised	1	1	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth55	ME9 8SP	Cricket Meadow, Old Ferry Road	Iwade	Private Authorised	5	5	0	1	0	1
PrivAuth56	ME9 9BB	Bakers Place, Lomas Road	Tonge	Private Authorised	1	1	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth57	ME9 9LD	Land opposite Mockbeggar Farm, Lower Road	Norton	Private Authorised	1	1	1	0	0	0
PrivAuth58	ME12 4JJ	Brambles, Old Billet Lane	Eastchurch	Private Authorised	2	2	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth59	ME13 8AP	Orchard Place, Ashford Road	Leaveland	Private Authorised	3	3	0	3	0	3
PrivAuth60	ME9 7HR	Land between 109 & 111 London Road	Newington	Private Authorised	2	2	2	0	0	0

Site/Yard Code	Postcode	Address	Location	Ownership	Total Pitches	Total occupied pitches	Total vacant pitches	Total households	Interview achieved	Non-response
PrivAuth61	ME9 7PE	Breach Farm Paddocks, Breach Lane	Upchurch	Private Authorised	1	1	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth62	ME9 7AB	Ridgedale Riding School, Halstow Lane	Upchurch	Private Authorised	3	3	0	1	1	0
PrivAuth63	ME12 4JJ	Thistles - Land at Old Billet Lane	Eastchurch	Private Authorised	1	1	1	0	0	0
PrivAuth64	ME12 3SP	The Brambles, Greyhound Road	Minster	Private	2	2	0	2	0	2
PrivAuth65	ME12 3SP	Rose Tree Place, Greyhound Road	Minster	Private	1	1	1	0	0	0
PrivAuth66	ME12 3SP	Land West of Greyhound Road	Minster	Private	1	1	1	0	0	0
PrivAuth67	ME12 4JA	15 The Laurels, Bell Farm Lane	Minster	NEW	1	1	0	1	1	0
Temp Auth1	ME12 4JB	Salvation Place, Bell Farm Lane	Minster	Private Temp Auth	2	2	0	1	1	0
Temp Auth2	ME9 0HF	Graces Place, Homestall lane	Doddington	Private Temp Auth	2	2	0	1	1	0
Temp Auth3	ME9 7TT	New Acres, Spade Lane	Hartlip	Private Temp Auth	8	8	0	8	6	3
TSPUnauth1	ME9 8SL	Circus Wintering Ground, Raspberry Hill Lane	Iwade	Unauthorised	1	1	0	1	1	0
Unauth1	ME10 0SP	Hill Top Farm, Everland Lane	Ospringe	Unauthorised	1	1	0	1	0	1
Unauth2	ME12 4JS	Dinky Cot, Sunset Avenue	Eastchurch	Unauthorised	1	1	0	1	1	0
Unauth3	ME13 0PJ	The Old Bindery Butchers Field, Almshouses Road	Throwley Forstall	Unauthorised	1	1	0	1	1	0
Unauth4	ME13 0SP	Horseshoe Farm, Everland Lane	Ospringe	Unauthorised	1	1	0	1	1	0
Unauth5	ME9 7HN	St Thomas Yard, Holywell Lane	Upchurch	Unauthorised	3	3	0	2	2	0
Unauth6	ME9 8AR	One Acre, Blind Marys Lane	Bredgar	Unauthorised	1	1	0	1	1	0

Site/Yard Code	Postcode	Address	Location	Ownership	Total Pitches	Total occupied pitches	Total vacant pitches	Total households	Interview achieved	Non-response
Unauth7	ME9 0LH	Romany Rest, Newnham Lane	Eastling	Unauthorised	1	1	0	1	1	0
Unauth8	ME9 7DT	Chapel Orchard, Land off The Street	Lower Halstow	Unauthorised	1	1	0	1	1	0
Unauth9	ME13 0SP	The Retreat, Elverland Lane	Ospringe	Unauthorised	1	1	0	1	1	0
Unauth10	ME9 8SL	Raspberry Hill Park, Raspberry Hill Lane	Iwade	Unauthorised	5	5	3	2	0	2
Unauth11	ME13 0SP	The Meads Farm, Everland Lane	Ospringe	Unauthorised	1	1	0	1	1	0
Unauth12	ME9 7XE	Farm Lodge, Windmill Farm, Yaughar Lane	Hartlip	Unauthorised	1	1	0	1	0	1
Unauth13	ME9 7AB	Halstow Grove, Halstow Lane	Upchurch	Unauthorised	1	1	0	1	0	1
Unauth14	ME12 4EJ	Land At Warden Road / Rear Of Orchard Cottage	Eastchurch	Unauthorised	2	2	0	1	1	0
Unauth15	ME12 2DA	Irwidale, The Broadway	Minster	Unauthorised	2	2	0	1	1	0
Total					233	233	19	160	79	42
Total excluding Brotherhood Woodyard					193	193	19	120	79	42
of which: Gypsy and Traveller (excluding Brotherhood Woodyard)					192	192	19	119	78	42
of which: Travelling Showperson					1	1	1	1	1	0

Table 4.6 Summary of sites, pitches, occupancy and response

Accommodation setting	No. of sites/yards	Total pitches	Total occupied pitches	Total vacant pitches	Total households	Interview achieved	Non-response (not available or refused)
Local Authority site	2	15	15	0	15	11	4
Private Authorised site	67	182	182	16	117	47	30
Private temporary authorised site	3	12	12	0	10	8	3
Unauthorised	15	23	23	3	17	12	5
Gypsy and Traveller Total	87	232	232	19	159	78	42
Gypsy and Traveller All settings (excluding Brotherhood Woodyard)	86	192	192	19	119	78	42
<i>Travelling Showperson</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0</i>

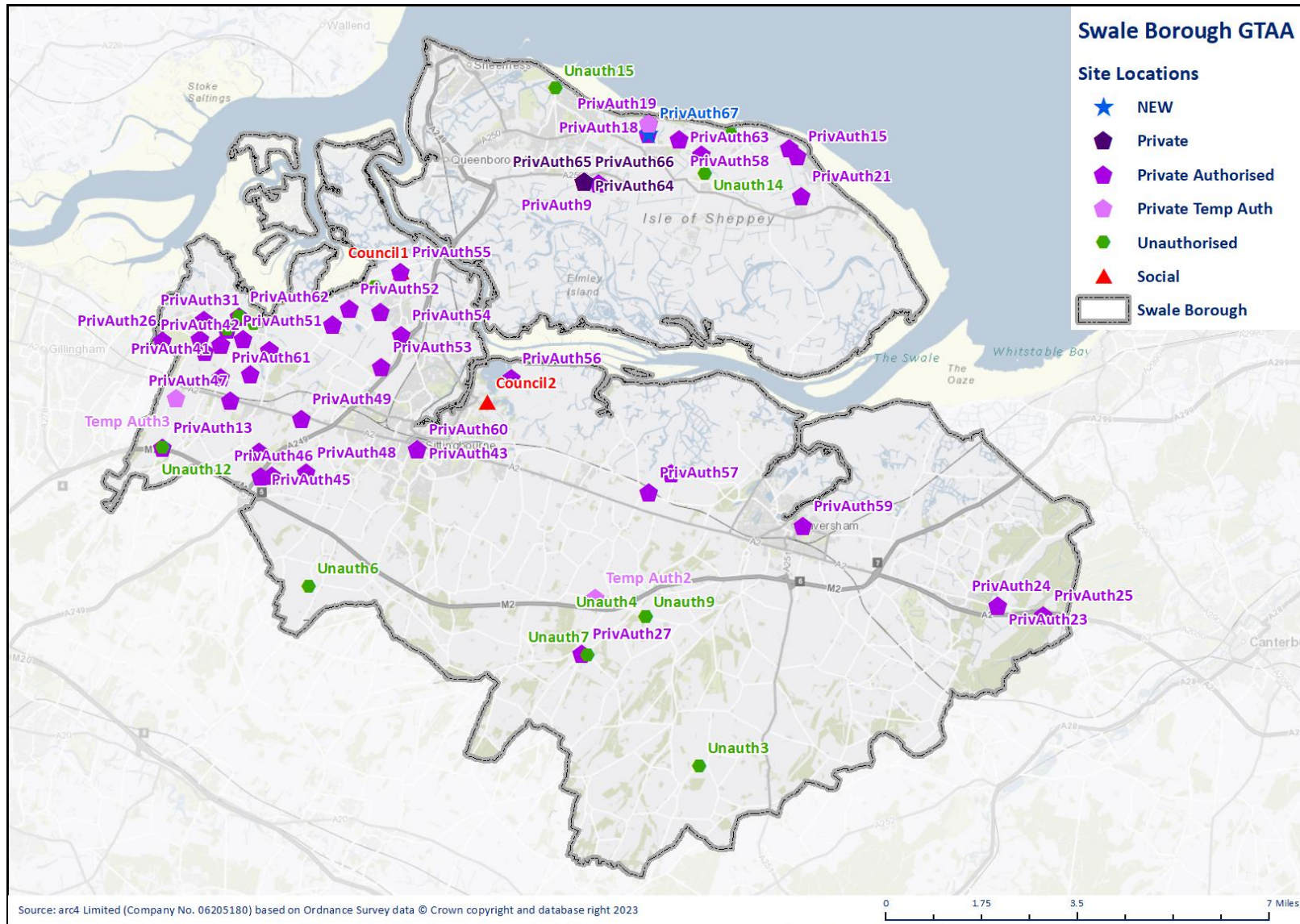
Relationship between pitches and households

- 4.12 Table 4.7 sets out the overall relationship between pitches and households. Brotherhood Woodyard is excluded from analysis. This shows there are a considerable number of sites where households occupy more than one pitch. For need analysis purposes it is assumed that these pitches are not available for occupancy by other households.

Table 4.7 Relationship between pitches and households

	Authorised	Not Permanent Authorised	Total
Total number of pitches	157	35	192
Total vacant pitches	16	3	19
Total occupied pitches	141	32	173
Total households	92	27	119
Difference as households occupying more than 1 pitch (on two pitches there are two households occupying one pitch; on 75 pitches households occupy more than one pitch)	65	8	73

Map 4.1 Location of Gypsy and Traveller sites and Travelling Showperson's yard in Swale Borough



5. Household survey findings

- 5.1 This chapter presents the findings of the household survey, which was carried out to provide primary data to inform this GTAA. The survey aimed to reach as many Gypsy and Traveller and households living in the study area as possible. It was conducted using the questionnaire presented in Appendix A.

Gypsy and Traveller households living in Swale Borough

- 5.2 A review of the characteristics of Gypsy and Traveller households living in Swale Borough has been based on data from a total of 69 households living on sites and interviewed as part of the 2022 GTAA plus 9 interviews achieved in 2018 as the residents were not available for interview for the 2022 study.
- 5.3 The number of responses achieved is summarised for each question. The household data are presented in a manner which maintains respondent confidentiality. If analysis refers to 'small numbers' this means 4 or fewer households responding to a question.
- 5.4 **Ethnicity** (base=78): Of household representatives interviewed 88.5% described themselves as Gypsy (including Romany, Romany Gypsy and English Gypsy), 7.7% as Irish Traveller and 3.8% as other ethnicities.
- 5.5 Data from the household survey provided an insight into household size, type and the age of residents living on pitches.
- 5.6 **Household size** (base=78): 29.5% of households were single person; 21.8% two person; 16.7% three person; 16.7% four person, 7.7% five person and 7.7% six or more people.
- 5.7 **Household type** (base=78): 29.5% were singles, 10.3% were single parents, 17.9% were couples, 19.2% were couples with child(ren) which can include non-dependent children, 23.1% multi-adult families or extended families, such as couples with siblings living with them.
- 5.8 **Age profile**: The household survey identified a total of 137 Gypsies and Travellers living on sites in Swale Borough. The age profile is: 23.4% were aged 13 or under, 5.1% aged 14-17, 21.9% aged 18-34, 23.4% aged 35-49, 16.8% aged 50-64 and 9.5% aged 65 and over.
- 5.9 **Length of residence** (base=72): 19.4% had lived at their current place of residence for less than 5 years, 23.6% between 5 and less than 10 years, 20.8% between 10 and less than 15 years, 15.3% between 15 and less than 20 years and 20.8% for 20 years or more.
- 5.10 **Overcrowding**: When asked if their home was overcrowded (base=67), 97% said no and 3% said yes. When asked whether their pitch was overcrowded (base=67), 97% said no and 3% said yes.
- 5.11 **Regarding the need for more residential pitches** (base=73), respondents were asked if they felt there was a need for more pitches. This was to gauge local views on need and does not influence the needs assessment modelling carried out. 37% said there was a need for more, 60.3% said no more pitches

were needed and 2.7% didn't know. Of those stating a number (base=23), 78.3% said less than 5 pitches, 17.4% said between 5 and 10 pitches and 4.3% said 10 or more pitches.

Help and support needs

- 5.12 Respondents were asked if they had any broader help and support needs. Only a small number of responses were received and included:
- Some households reported their home was cold in winter;
 - Some households contained people with additional needs but no specific support requirements were stated.

Travelling showpeople

- 5.13 One Travelling Showperson was interviewed. For confidentiality reasons, no information gleaned from the household is presented in this report but overall need is discussed in Chapter 7.

Stakeholder summary

- 5.14 As part of our research, arc⁴ contacted a range of stakeholders to obtain feedback on Gypsy and Traveller matters which is now summarised. Please note these are the views of stakeholders and not necessarily the views of the council or arc⁴.

Residential Pitch Need

- 5.15 In terms of potential locations for permanent sites, stakeholders identified the following;
- There is a need for permanent residential pitches due to the council ignoring warnings, making incorrect assumptions and being in denial when the Local Plan was adopted.
 - Over reliance on Brotherhood Woodyard permissions despite being told that these were not likely to be implemented, not proper pitches and did not address the need for pitches in Swale.
 - There is a need for small private family owned / run sites across the borough.
 - Preference to be closer to main transport routes with connections to London to find work as opposed to the Isle of Sheppey which is more remote.
 - Maidstone has permitted sites and Medway has recently accepted sites in the AONB - Swale needs to do the same for a few sites.

- A missed opportunity when Swale dropped plans for new sites as part of large scale housing extensions around Sittingbourne due to incorrect claims there was no need for more pitches.
- 5.16 Points raised by stakeholders with regards to potential barriers to permanent sites;
- The council is the main barrier as they simply refuse to acknowledge this need.
 - The change of personnel has altered the situation with regards to previously granted permissions at the Brotherhood Woodyard to try to meet outstanding needs.
 - Current officers are aware of previous approaches and the lack of progress.

Unauthorised encampments and the need for temporary provision

- 5.17 Stakeholders make specific reference to unauthorised encampments and the need for temporary provision:
- Unauthorised encampments reported in Sittingbourne.
 - Doubling up by families on the Spade Lane site last year.
- 5.18 Regarding transit sites, stakeholders commented;
- There is a need everywhere for transit sites.
 - Majority seem to double up on private sites in breach of planning conditions due to the absence of transit provision.
- 5.19 Stakeholder views on temporary stop-over places in Swale Borough:
- Difficult to comment due to most stopping with others due to the shortage of stop over sites.
- 5.20 Regarding barriers to transit provision, stakeholders commented;
- The council are unwilling to acknowledge and not prepared to address the need due to cost and hassle.
 - The council would rather rely on private owners to provide transit provision.
 - Better to include provision within existing sites as most would rather stop with a family they know rather than share a transit site with families they do not know.

Gypsies and Travellers in bricks and mortar/residential sites accommodation

- 5.21 Comments received from stakeholders regarding Gypsies and Travellers in bricks and mortar / residential sites accommodation:
- No awareness of sites or locations of bricks and mortar accommodation.

- Awareness of well-established settled Gypsy and Traveller community throughout the borough living on one or more residential sites.
- Sites are well known and documented due to being long established.

Movement and cross-boundary considerations

5.22 Stakeholders made specific reference to movement and cross boundary considerations:

- No awareness of regular movements.

5.23 Key points raised by stakeholders regarding cross boundary issues:

- Families displaced from Medway have relocated to Swale with many failing to realise it was a different council.
- Historically families displaced from Maidstone relocate to Swale but the situation in Swale seems to be more stable with less in migration.
- Last year there was much doubling up on Spade Lane from Irish Travellers.
- Suspected need for more Irish families with connections to those in the area.

Key strategic messages for the GTAA raised by stakeholders

5.24 These include:

- To ensure adequate provision is made for all Gypsies and Travellers residing in Swale.
- To ensure the GTAA is understood by officers and councillors.
- To look at previous assessments and question assumptions made.
- To investigate and challenge the issue of Brotherhood Woodyard and its use. There is too much secrecy surrounding this site with no one knowing how it is being used and future plans.
- To review the very high number of planning appeals which is a clear indication that the planning system is failing in the authority.
- To address the needs of the existing (fairly stable) population much of which is long standing.

6. Gypsy and Traveller pitch and transit site requirements

Introduction

- 6.1 This section reviews the overall pitch and plot requirements of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople across Swale Borough. It takes into account current supply and need, as well as future need, based on modelling of data. This chapter also considers transit pitch requirements for Gypsies and Travellers. Finally, the chapter presents planning policy recommendations.
- 6.2 The calculation of pitch requirements is based on modelling as advocated in *Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment Guidance (DCLG, 2007)*. Although now formally withdrawn, the former DCLG guidance still provides the best-practice approach towards the assessment of pitch and plot needs (see Chapter 2 for further discussion).
- 6.3 This approach requires an assessment of the current needs of Gypsies and Travellers and a projection of future needs. It advocates the use of a survey to supplement secondary source information and derive key supply and demand information.

Gypsy and Traveller pitch requirement model overview

- 6.4 Pitch need is assessed for two time periods. A short-term 5-year model looks at need over the next five years (2022/23 to 2026/27). A longer-term model looks at need over the remainder of the plan period (to 2037/38) arising from children likely to need a pitch.
- 6.5 In terms of **need**, the 5-year model considers:
- the baseline number of households on all types of site (authorised, unauthorised and temporary authorised sites) as of June 2022;
 - existing households planning to move in the next five years (currently on sites and also from bricks and mortar) and where they are planning to move to; and
 - emerging households currently on sites and planning to emerge in the next five years and stay within the study area on a pitch; to derive a figure for total pitch need.
- 6.6 In terms of **supply**, the model considers:
- total supply of current pitches on authorised sites; and
 - vacant pitches on authorised sites.
- 6.7 The model then reconciles total need and existing authorised supply over the next five years by summarising:
- total need for pitches; and
 - total supply of authorised pitches.

- 6.8 The longer-term model then considers the need over the period to 2037/38. This is based on the age profile of children under 13 living in Gypsy and Traveller households on pitches (the longer-term model).
- 6.9 The likely pitch needs from households meeting the PPTS 2015 and PPTS 2015 (plus unable to travel) nomadic habit of life definitions area also calculated.

Relationship between pitches and households

- 6.10 Table 6.1 sets out the overall relationship between pitches and households. Brotherhood Woodyard is excluded from analysis. This shows there are a considerable number of sites where households occupy more than one pitch. For need analysis purposes it is assumed that these pitches are not available for occupancy by other households. It should also be appreciated that when calculating the need for pitches, the reasonable assumption made is that one household unit requires one pitch.

Table 6.1 Relationship between pitches and households

	Authorised	Not Permanent Authorised	Total
Total number of pitches	157	35	192
Total vacant pitches	16	3	19
Total occupied pitches	141	32	173
Total households	92	27	119
Difference as households occupying more than pitch (on two pitches there are two households occupying one pitch; on 75 pitches households occupy more than one pitch)	65	8	73

Swale Borough pitch need analysis: Description of factors in the 5-year need model

- 6.11 Table 6.2 provides a summary of the 5-year pitch need calculation. Each component in the model is now discussed to ensure that the process is transparent and any assumptions clearly stated.

Need

Current households living on pitches (1a to 1g)

- 6.12 These figures are derived from council data and site observation data. In summary there are a total of 119 households living on pitches (See Table 6.1).

Table 6.2 Summary of demand and supply factors: Gypsies and Travellers – 2022/23 to 2026/27

NEED		Swale Borough	
1	Households living on pitches	1a. On council sites	15
		1b. On private site - Authorised	77
		1c. On private site – Temporary Authorised	10
		1d. On unauthorised sites	17
		1e. Total (1a to 1d)	119
2	Estimate of households living in bricks and mortar accommodation	2021 Census estimate	205
		<i>Weighting for non-response</i>	1.54
3	Existing households planning to move in next 5 years or on unauthorised site	Currently on sites	
		3a. To another pitch/same site (no net impact)	4.6
		3b. To another site in district (no net impact)	3.1
		3c. From site to bricks and mortar (-)	1.5
		3d. To site/bricks and mortar outside district	0.0
		3e. From roadside to bricks and mortar (no net impact)	0.0
		Currently in Bricks and Mortar	
		3f. Planning to move to a site in LA (+)	10.9
		3g. Planning to move to another B&M property (no net impact)	0.0
		In-migrant households	
		3h. Allowance for in-migration (+)	18.5
	3i. TOTAL Net impact (-3c-3d+3f+3h)	27.8	
4	Emerging households (5 years)	4a. Currently on site and planning to live on current site	10.7
		4b. Current on site and planning to live on another site in the district	30.8
		4c. Currently on site and planning to live outside the district	0
		4d. Currently in B&M planning to move to a site in LA (+)	0
		4e. Currently in B&M and moving to B&M (no net impact)	0
		4f. Currently on Site and moving to B&M (no net impact)	0
		4g. TOTAL (4a+4b+4d)	41.2
5	Total Need	1e+3i+4g	187.8
SUPPLY			
6	Current supply of authorised pitches	6a Current supply of occupied permanently authorised pitches occupied by Gypsies and Travellers*	92
		6b. Current authorised pitches which are vacant	16
		6c. Total current authorised supply (6a+6b)	108
RECONCILING NEED AND SUPPLY			
7	Total need for pitches	5 years (from 5)	188
8	Total supply of authorised pitches	5 years (from 6c)	108
5-YEAR AUTHORISED PITCH SHORTFALL 2022/23 TO 2026/27			80

Current households in bricks and mortar accommodation (2)

- 6.13 An estimate of households in bricks and mortar is provisional based on the 2021 Census. The 2011 Census indicated 668 people and 208 households identifying as Gypsy/Traveller of whom 71.6% lived in bricks and mortar. The comparable 2021 population count is higher at 920 but household data is not yet released. Applying the ratio of people to households from 2011 (3.211) to the 2021 Census population results in an estimated 296 households. Assuming the same proportion (71.6%) live in bricks and mortar accommodation results in a total of 205 households.

Weighting of data

- 6.14 For the purpose of calculating future pitch need, survey data have been weighted to take account of non-response households. Weighting is applied to ensure a robust assessment of need is established for the Travelling communities across Swale.
- 6.15 For Gypsy and Traveller households the weighting is 119 (total households) divided by 78 (total responses) = 1.526.

Existing households planning to move in the next five years (3)

- 6.16 This was derived from information from the 2022/23 household survey for respondents currently on pitches. Of existing households currently on sites, the household survey indicates that 9.2 (weighted) plan to move and in the next 5 years. This is the sum of rows 3a to 3e.
- 6.17 For households currently in bricks and mortar, it is estimated that 5.3% of households living in bricks and mortar would prefer to live on a site which would equate to 10.9 households. This proportion has been established through 354 bricks and mortar interviews carried out in other arc4 GTAA's.
- 6.18 Regarding in-migration, analysis of household survey data indicates that 18.5 households (weighted) have moved into Swale Borough and onto a pitch in the past 5 years and shown at row 3h. The needs model assumes the same level of in-migration over the next 5 years.
- 6.19 The factors presented in section 3 of the model result in an overall net requirement of +27.8 pitches (weighted) from existing households planning to move in the next 5 years which includes an allowance for in-migration.

Emerging households (4)

- 6.20 This is the number of households expected to emerge in the next 5 years based on 2022 household survey information. The total number is +41.2 (weighted). If young people aged 18 and over were living with family and have not specified that they want to form a new household, this is assumed to be through choice and the model does not assume they want to form a new household. The model

however does factor in need from 13- to 17-year-olds who are likely to emerge in the next 5 years but had not indicated this on the household survey.

Total need for pitches (5)

- 6.21 This is a total of current households on authorised pitches, households on pitches planning to move in the next five years and demand from emerging households currently living on pitches. This indicates a total need for 187.8 pitches (119 existing households on pitches plus a net need for 27.8 (weighted) pitches from existing households planning to move including in-migration and a need for 41.2 (weighted) pitches from emerging households).

Supply

Current supply of authorised pitches (6)

- 6.22 This is a summary of the total number of authorised pitches occupied by Gypsies and Travellers and the number of vacant authorised pitches.
- 6.23 There is a total supply of 108 authorised pitches. Of these 92 are occupied and 16 are vacant.
- 6.24 It is also important to note there is a net difference of 73 households to pitches due to some households living on more than one pitch.

Reconciling supply and need

- 6.25 There is a total need over the next five years (2022/23 to 2026/27) for 188 pitches in Swale Borough (Table 6.2) compared with a supply of 108 authorised pitches. The result is an overall need shortfall of 80 pitches.

Longer-term pitch requirement modelling

- 6.26 Longer-term pitch need modelling has been carried out using known household structure information from the household survey of households living on pitches. On the basis of the age of children in households, it is possible to determine the extent of 'likely emergence', which assumes that a child is likely to form a new household at the age of 18.
- 6.27 The year when a child reaches 18 has been calculated and it is possible to assess how many newly forming households may emerge over the period 2027/28 to 2037/38. A reasonable assumption is that half of these children will form new households, bearing in mind culturally women tend to move away on marriage and men tend to stay in close proximity to their families on marriage. The model therefore assumes that 50% of children will form households when they reach 18 and that these households remain in Swale Borough. This approach has been tested at inquiry and the assumption has been corroborated by several Travelling interviewees. Analysis would suggest a total need for 34 additional pitches over the period 2026/27-2037/38 (Table 6.3).

Table 6.3 Future pitch requirements based on the assumption that 50% of children will require a pitch in Swale Borough

Time period	No. children	No. pitches (rounded)
2027/28 to 2031/32 (5 years)	17	9
2032/33 to 2036/37 (5 years)	38	19
2037/38 (1 year)	12	6
Total (2027/28 to 2037/38) (11 years)	67	34

Overall plan period pitch need

- 6.28 Table 6.4 summarises the overall need for pitches across Swale Borough over the plan period 2022/23 to 2037/38. It presents the overall need based on households identifying as Gypsy and Traveller. The overall need is 114 pitches.

Table 6.4 Gypsy and Traveller pitch need 2022/23 to 2037/38

Period	Need
5yr Authorised Pitch Shortfall (2022/23 to 2026/27) (A)	80
Longer-term need	
Over period 2027/8 to 2031/32 (B)	9
Over period 2032/33 to 2036/37(C)	19
Over period 2037/38 (D)	6
Longer-term need TOTAL to 2037/38 (11 years) E=(B+C+D)	34
NET SHORTFALL 2022/23 to 2037/38 (A+E) (16 years)	114
Annual net shortfall Short-term (2022/23 to 2026/27)	16.0
Annual net shortfall Longer-term (2027/28 to 2037/38)	3.1
Annual net shortfall overall	7.1

Potential capacity for Gypsy and Traveller pitches on existing sites

Turnover on sites

- 6.29 Turnover relates to the number of pitches that are expected to become available for occupancy. Analysis only includes expected turnover on public sites as this is referenced in (former) MHCLG guidance and more accurate data on changes in pitch occupancy is likely to be available. Although there is likely to be turnover on private sites, the ability of households to move onto private

sites may be more restrictive (for instance the site may be restricted to a particular family) and less likely to be recorded.

- 6.30 3 households living on council pitches had moved to their pitch in the past 5 years based on 11 interviews. This equates to a turnover of 27.3%. Applied to 15 pitches would result in a turnover of 4 pitches over a 5-year period. This is factored pitch need analysis.

Regularisation of existing sites and new sites

- 6.31 There are currently 35 pitches on sites that are not permanently authorised which accommodate 27 households (with some households occupying more than one pitch). It is recommended that the council reappraise these pitches against policy guidance to consider if they can be regularised, that is become permanently authorised.

Potential for additional pitches on existing sites

- 6.32 Survey respondents suggested potential for additional pitches on existing sites. Through discussions with residents on council sites and private site owners, the GTAA identified a total of between 37 and 43 potential pitches. It is recommended that the council investigate the potential for additional pitches on sites as a way of helping to meet need. To be clear, these are recommendations based on site observations and discussions with local residents and not an indication that these pitches can be developed.

Vacant pitches on private and public sites

- 6.33 There were a total of 16 vacant pitches observed during the fieldwork on authorised sites. In addition, there were 3 vacant pitches on sites that were not authorised.

Table 6.5 Potential additional pitches on existing sites and caravan parks to meet Gypsy and Traveller need

Site Code	Site Location	Number of additional pitches	
		Minimum	Maximum
PrivAuth56	Bakers Place, Lomas road, ME9 8BB	2	2
Temp Auth 3	New Acres, Spade Lane, ME9 7TT	6	8
PrivAuth61	Breach Farm Paddocks, Breach Lane	1	2
PrivAuth49	Keycol Farm, Keycol Hill, ME9 8NA	2	2
PrivAuth34	Mattsfield, Boxted Lane, ME9 7BX	4	4
PrivAuth36	Halstow Cross, ME9 7ER	3	3
PrivAuth13	Windmill Farm, ME9 7XF	6	6
Unauth 14	Land At Warden Road / Rear Of Orchard Cottage (Mary's Place) ME12 4GJ	4	4
PrivAuth4	The Peartree, Greyhound Road, ME 12	1	1
PrivAuth30	Jack Russell Place, ME9 7AB	3	3
PrivAuth12	Emley Road, ME12 3SS	1	2
LA2	Three Lakes Park, Church Road, ME10 3NL	2	4
PrivAuth67	15 The Laurels, Bell Farm Lane, ME12 4JA	2	2
TOTAL		37	43

Impact of turnover, regularisation and additional pitches on overall need.

6.34 The overall plan period need is 114 pitches (80 over the short term 2022/23 to 2026/27 and 34 over the longer-term 2027/28 to 2037/38).

6.35 There is a potential supply of additional pitches through:

- Turnover on council sites of 4 pitches every 5 years
- Regularisation (27 households across 35 pitches)
- Potential expansion/intensification (37 to 43 pitches)

- 6.36 This potential supply could provide between 76 and 82 additional pitches and could meet the short-term five year need. The residual need over the longer-term would be 32 pitches, leaving a longer-term need to 2036/37 of between 32 and 38 pitches.
- 6.37 Further work is recommended to review the potential for additional pitch development on existing sites and the occupancy of permanent pitches. There are also 3 vacant pitches on sites that are not authorised.
- 6.38 Notwithstanding evidence in this GTAA on need, additional need may arise over the plan period, for instance households moving into the borough. It is therefore recommended that the Local Plan references the need in the GTAA as a minimum need which is likely to be met but sets out criteria-based policies to inform future planning applications for private sites should they arise.
- 6.39 It is implicit in this study that the needs arising from the private family sites will be met either through the use of vacant pitches on those sites or through new site provision. No turnover is assumed on private sites but over the plan period this may help provide pitches for occupation by Gypsies and Travellers in housing need.

Tenure preferences

- 6.40 Existing households planning to move and new households expecting to form were asked about tenure preferences. Both types of households most frequently mentioned private sites.

Transit requirements

- 6.41 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.

An indicator of transit need is unauthorised encampment activity. Over the period 2020 to August 2023, there were 106 recorded incidences of unauthorised encampment activity (Table 6.6), with an annual average of around 27.

Table 6.6 Unauthorised encampment activity 2020 to August 2023

Year	Number of encampments
2020	17
2021	24
2022	44
2023 (to end August)	21
Total (2020 to August 2023)	106
Annual average (based on 8 month-data for 2023)	27

- 6.42 Households interviewed were asked their views on transit provision (base=71) and a limited need for transit provision was reflected in their responses:
- 23.9% said there was a need for transit provision and 74.6% said there was no need and 1.4% did not know.
 - Of those who said there was a need (base = 12), most said provision of up to 5 pitches was needed (50% said less than 5, 16.7% said between 5 and 8 pitches and 33.3% didn't know. Only a small number mentioned a specific need in Swale borough and most said 'anywhere' or 'don't know'. Most said transit provision should be provided by the council.
 - When asked about stopping places (base=63), 12.7% said they were needed, 85.7% said they were not needed and 1.6% didn't know. Those stating a need (base=8) mostly said they should be provided by the council and located generally in Kent and 'anywhere' and none specifically said Swale.
- 6.43 When considering transit need, the council needs to be mindful of new legislation through the Police, Crime, Courts and Sentencing Act (Part 4). This will make using land for stopping without permission a criminal offence rather than a civil offence. The Act gives police increased powers to act and introduces significant penalties (fines up to £2,500, impounding vehicles and prison sentences).
- 6.44 Although only a minority of household survey respondents indicated there was a need for transit provision, evidence of unauthorised encampment activity would suggest there is need for transit provision within Swale Borough.
- 6.45 There are several ways to deliver temporary places where Travellers can stop whilst passing through a local authority area. These include transit pitches, stop over places and negotiated stopping arrangements.

- 6.46 Transit sites are permanent sites intended for temporary use by Gypsies and Travellers. The length of stay is usually limited to a maximum of three months. In terms of pitches, 'Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites: Good Practice Guide' (CLG, 2008) states:
- Size of pitch – sufficient to accommodate two touring caravans, two parking spaces and private amenities;
 - Amenities should include electricity supply, toilet, wash basin and shower with hot and cold-water supply for each pitch;
 - Depending on the level of use, portable facilities may be more appropriate, particularly if the sites are empty for lengthy periods of time and therefore at risk of vandalism.
- 6.47 A temporary stop over area is land which can be used on a temporary basis if unauthorised encampments occur or are 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.
- 6.48 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. Negotiated stopping arrangements can be particularly helpful when supporting larger encampments. (see <https://www.negotiatedstopping.co.uk> for more information).
- 6.49 Councils are increasingly adopting flexible options such as temporary stopping areas and negotiated stopping to help meet transit needs. Based on the evidence of unauthorised encampment activity, it is recommended the council introduces negotiated stopping arrangements to support any future transit need. The council should identify areas of land that can be used for smaller encampments (up to 5 caravans), areas for between 5 and up to 10 caravans and areas for larger encampments (more than 10 caravans).

Showperson plot requirements

- 6.50 There is currently one Travelling Showperson's yard in Swale Borough and an interview was carried out with the household currently living there. This yard is unauthorised and on land which is not owned by the Showperson. The yard accommodates up to four households during the year, with one family plus an older relative living on the yard permanently when not travelling.
- 6.51 The two other households are part of the same family group but are living elsewhere at present as there is insufficient capacity on the current yard.
- 6.52 There is a specific and immediate need for alternative Travelling Showperson's provision in Swale. This arises from the four households wanting to live together needing 4 plots (Table 6.7). In addition, over the plan period to 2038

there is expected to be a need for 3 additional plots through household formation (Table 6.8).

Table 6.7 Summary of demand and supply factors: Travelling Showpeople – 2022/23 to 2026/27

TRAVELLING SHOWPERSON NEED			Swale Borough
1	Households living on plots	1a. On council yards	0
		1b. On private yard - Authorised	0
		1c. On private yard – Temporary Authorised	0
		1d. On unauthorised yard	2
		1e. Total (1a to 1d)	2
2	Estimate of households living in bricks and mortar accommodation	2021 Census estimate	N/A
		<i>Weighting for non-response</i>	N/A
3	Existing households planning to move in next 5 years or on unauthorised yard	Currently on yards	
		3a. To another plot/same yard (no net impact)	0
		3b. To another yard in district	2
		3c. From yard to bricks and mortar (-)	0
		3d. To yard/bricks and mortar outside district	0
		3e. From roadside to bricks and mortar (no net impact)	0
		Currently in Bricks and Mortar	
		3f. Planning to move to a yard in LA (+)	0
		3g. Planning to move to another B&M property (no net impact)	0
		In-migrant households	
3h. Allowance for in-migration (+)	2		
	3i. TOTAL Net impact (-3c-3d+3f+3h)	2	
4	Emerging households (5 years)	4a. Currently on yard and planning to live on current yard	0
		4b. Current on yard and planning to live on another yard in the district	0
		4c. Currently on yard and planning to live outside the district	0
		4d. Currently in B&M planning to move to a yard in LA (+)	0
		4e. Currently in B&M and moving to B&M (no net impact)	0
		4f. Currently on Yard and moving to B&M (no net impact)	0
		4g. TOTAL (4a+4b+4d)	0
5	Total Need	1e+3i+4g	4
SUPPLY			
6	Current supply of authorised plots	6a Current supply of occupied permanently authorised plots	0
		6b. Current authorised plots which are vacant	0
		6c. Total current authorised supply (6a+6b)	0
RECONCILING NEED AND SUPPLY			
7	Total need for pitches	5 years (from 5)	4
8	Total supply of authorised pitches	5 years (from 6c)	0
5-YEAR AUTHORISED PLOT SHORTFALL 2022/23 TO 2026/27			4

Table 6.8 Future pitch requirements based on the assumption that 50% of children will require a plot in Swale Borough

Time period	No. children	No. plots(rounded)
2027/28 to 2031/32 (5 years)	2	1
2032/33 to 2036/37 (5 years)	2	1
2037/38 (1 year)	2	1
Total (2027/28 to 2037/38) (11 years)	6	3

- 6.53 There is an urgent need for an alternative yard as the current yard is on private land and the tenants are unable to improve the site (for instance put down hardstanding or improve drainage and sewerage). The owner has no interest in selling the site and there is no security of tenure afforded to the Travelling Showpeople and the yard remains unauthorised.
- 6.54 A need to provide land for transit need was also identified.
- 6.55 It is recommended that the council work with the Travelling Showperson community living in Swale to identify a new site for a Travelling Showperson yard to accommodate existing need (4 plots), with potential for future expansion (3 plots) and space to accommodate households transiting through the borough which would be managed by the permanent yard residents.

7. Conclusion and response

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

Current accommodation

- 7.2 There are well-established Gypsy and Traveller communities living across Swale Borough and the borough has second highest Gypsy and Traveller population by local authority area in England and Wales.
- 7.3 There are a total of 232 pitches across 87 sites and 1 Travelling Showperson's yard with 1 plot. In summary, Gypsy and Traveller provision comprises 2 council sites (15 pitches), 67 private authorised sites (182 pitches), 3 private temporary authorised sites (12 pitches) and 15 unauthorised sites (23 pitches). Brotherhood Woodyard has 40 pitches and is an authorised Gypsy and Traveller site. Following site observation, it is assumed that occupancy is predominantly non-Gypsy and Traveller under the PPTS definition and the GTAA proceeds on the basis that there is no net need arising from Brotherhood Woodyard.

Future Gypsy and Traveller residential need

- 7.4 The overall needs evidenced in this report indicate a total shortfall of 114 pitches over the plan period 2022/23 to 2037/38.
- 7.5 Over the next 5 years, there is a potential for an additional 72 to 78 authorised pitches to become available through regularisation and expansion/intensification plus 4 through turnover resulting in a potential 76 to 82 pitches. This has the potential to meet the overall need in the short-term and results in a longer-term need for 34 pitches over the remaining plan period.
- 7.6 Notwithstanding evidence in this GTAA on need, additional need may arise over the plan period, for instance from higher number of households moving into the borough than anticipated based on past trends. It is therefore recommended that the Local Plan references the need in the GTAA as a minimum need which is likely to be met but sets out policies to inform future planning applications for private sites. The following suggestions, based on a range of policies from other local authorities could be taken into account when drafting the council's policies on new residential pitch provision:
- The site is in a sustainable location in terms of accessibility to services and facilities, including health and schools.
 - The site is suitable in terms of vehicular access to the highway, parking, turning, road safety and servicing arrangements and has access to essential services such as water supply, sewerage, drainage and waste disposal.

- Appropriate screening and landscaping is included within the proposal to protect local amenity and the environment.
- The site is not affected by environmental hazards that may affect the residents' health or welfare or be located in an area of high risk of flooding, including functional floodplains.
- They promote peaceful and integrated co-existence between the site and the local community.
- They enable mixed business and residential accommodation (providing for the live-work lifestyle of Travellers).
- They avoid undue pressure on local infrastructure and services.
- The proposal is well related to the size and location of the site and respects the scale of the nearest settled community.
- Proposals make adequate provision for on-site facilities that meet best practice for modern Traveller site requirements, including play areas, storage, provision for recycling and waste management.

Transit site/stop over need

- 7.7 The council in discussion with neighbouring local authorities should consider the options for transit provision, particularly in response to the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act. Given the level of unauthorised encampment activity, it is recommended the council develop a negotiated stopping policy to support Travellers passing through Swale Borough. It is recommended the council identify areas of land to accommodate Travellers passing through the borough for different sizes of encampment, with land for up to 5 caravans, between 5 and up to 10 caravans and 10 or more caravans, should the need arise.

Future Travelling Showperson residential need

- 7.8 It is recommended that the Council work with the Travelling Showperson community living in Swale to identify a new site for a Travelling Showperson yard to accommodate existing need (4 plots), with potential for future expansion (3 plots) and space to accommodate households transiting through the borough which would be managed by the permanent yard residents

Future updating

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

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 Swale Borough 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	Does 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			

Travelling questions					
	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 (nomadic habit of life). 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)				
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 pitch			
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/	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)				
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?	
Transit and temporary stopover need		
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?	
Residential history		
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?)	
Support needs		
58	Do you or a member of your household have any health-related needs? Could you please explain what they are?	
Final questions		
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.

DLUHC: Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. Formerly Department for Communities and Local Government; created in May 2006 and responsible for the remit on Gypsies and Travellers during the period the PPTS was written. It was renamed in 2018 as MHCLG (Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government) and in 2021 it was renamed again as DLUHC.

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 landowner 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.