

NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL

# Newport City Council Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment

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2015 - 2020

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## **1. Policy Context**

### **1.1. Legislation and Guidance**

1.1.1. Part 3 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 requires local authorities to make an assessment of the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers residing in or resorting to their area. A report must then be prepared detailing how the assessment was carried out and its findings. This report is submitted to Welsh Ministers for their approval. If the report is not approved local authorities will have to either revise and resubmit the report or carry out another assessment. If the assessment identifies an unmet need for accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers the local authority has a duty to make provision for that need. This could be either by providing sites themselves or enabling sites to be provided privately.

1.1.2. The power for local authorities to provide sites, and meet any need identified as part of the Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessment is contained within the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013. This legislation also gives local authorities the powers to enforce standards on private sites as well as placing obligations on local authorities which own their own sites.

1.1.3. Planning circular 30/2007 – Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites provides guidance on the planning aspects of finding sustainable sites for Gypsies and Travellers and how local authorities and Gypsies and Travellers can work together to achieve this aim. Planning circular 78/91 – Travelling Showpeople gives advice to local authorities about planning considerations relating to Travelling Showpeople.

1.1.4. The Welsh Government has produced detailed guidance on undertaking Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments. We have taken account of that guidance in both carrying out the assessment and preparing this report. Guidance has also been

produced by the Welsh Government on designing and managing Gypsy and Traveller sites. The local authority will pay due regard to this guidance when planning any provision for Gypsies and Travellers in Newport.

## **1.2. Local Development Plan Policies**

1.2.1. In the adopted Local Development Plan for Newport land is allocated at Hartridge Farm Road under policy H16 Gypsy and Traveller Residential Accommodation for the provision of a socially rented Gypsy and Traveller site. Policy H15 Gypsy and Traveller Transit Accommodation contains a commitment to identify and deliver a suitable Gypsy and Traveller transit site by the end of 2019.

1.2.2. Policy H17 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Proposals sets out the criteria against which applications for Gypsy and Traveller sites will be assessed. It states:

Proposals for Gypsy and Traveller caravan sites, including on land outside defined settlement boundaries, will be permitted provided:

- i) The site is well related to suitable community facilities and services for the prospective occupants;
- ii) The site is capable of being served by utilities including sustainable waste disposal and recovery and emergency services;
- iii) The site is not within areas at high risk of flooding, given the particular vulnerability of caravans;
- iv) There is an identified and genuine, local need for accommodation for the occupiers.

## **1.3. Definition of key terms**

1.3.1. Gypsies and Travellers:

- (a) Persons of a nomadic habitat of life, whatever their race or origin, including –
  - (1) Persons who, on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependent's educational or health needs or old age, have ceased to travel permanently, and
  - (2) Members of an organized group of travelling show people or circus people (whether or not travelling together as such); and
- (b) All other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or of living in a mobile home.

Source: Section 108, Housing (Wales) Act 2014

1.3.2. Residential site – a permanent residential site can be privately owned or owned by the local authority. This site will be designated for use as a Gypsy and Traveller site indefinitely. Residents on these sites can expect to occupy their pitches for as long as they abide by the terms of their pitch agreements, under the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013.

1.3.3. Temporary residential site - these sites are residential sites which only have planning permission or a site license for a limited period. Residents on these sites can expect to occupy their pitches for the duration of the planning permission or the site license (or as long as they abide by the terms of their pitch agreements under the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013 – whichever is sooner)

1.3.4. Transit site – Transit sites are permanent facilities designed for temporary use by occupiers. These sites must be designated as such and provide a route for Gypsies and Travellers to maintain a nomadic way of life. Individual occupiers are permitted to reside on the site for a specified period of time. The amount of time people are permitted to remain on sites is an operational issue that will be addressed as part of developing a site management structure. Specific terms under the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013 apply on these sites.

- 1.3.5. Temporary stopping place – These are intended to be short term in nature to assist local authorities where a need for pitches is accepted, however, none are currently available. Pro-actively identified temporary stopping places can be used to relocate inappropriately located encampments whilst alternative sites are progressed. Temporary stopping places must make provision for waste disposal, water supply and sanitation at a minimum.
- 1.3.6. Residential pitch – land on a mobile home site where occupiers are entitled to station their mobile home indefinitely (unless stated in their pitch agreement). Typically includes an amenity block, space for a static caravan and touring caravan and parking.
- 1.3.7. Transit pitch – land on a mobile home site where occupiers are entitled to station their mobile for a specified period of time. The amount of time people are permitted to remain on sites is an operational issue that will be addressed as part of developing a site management structure. Transit pitches can exist on permanent residential sites, however, this is not recommended.
- 1.3.8. Unauthorised encampment – land occupied without the permission of the owner or without the correct land use planning permission. Encampments may be tolerated by the local authority whilst alternative sites are developed.
- 1.3.9. Unauthorised development – land occupied by the owner without the necessary land use planning permission.
- 1.3.10. Current residential supply – the number of residential pitches that are available and occupied within the local authority area. This includes pitches on local authority and private sites.
- 1.3.11. Current residential demand – those with a need for authorised pitches for a range of reasons, including:

- An inability to secure an authorised pitch leading to occupation of unauthorised encampments;
- An inability to secure correct planning permission for an unauthorised development;
- Households living in overcrowded conditions that want a pitch;
- Households in conventional housing demonstrating cultural aversion;
- New households expected to arrive from elsewhere.

1.3.12. Future residential demand – the expected level of new household formation which will generate additional demand within the 5 year period of the accommodation assessment and longer Local Development Plan period.

1.3.13. Overall residential pitch need – the ultimate calculation of unmet accommodation need, which must be identified through the Gypsy and Traveller accommodation assessment process. This figure can be found by adding the immediate residential need to the future residential demand. The overall residential need will capture the needs across the 5 year period within which the accommodation assessment is considered to be robust.

1.3.14. Planned residential pitch supply – the number of authorised pitches which are vacant and available to rent on local authority or private sites. It also includes pitches which will be vacated in the near future. Additional pitches which are due to open on private sites likely to achieve planning permission shortly should be included as planned residential supply.

1.3.15. Household – individuals from the same family who live together on a single pitch/house/encampment.

1.3.16. Concealed or doubled up household – this refers to households which are unable to achieve their own authorised

accommodation and are instead living within authorised accommodation assigned to another household. This may include adult children who have been unable to move home or different households occupying a single pitch.

1.3.17. Household growth – the number of new households arising from households which are already accommodated in the area.

## **2. Background and Analysis of Existing Data**

### **2.1. Previous Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment Findings**

- 2.1.1. In April 2009 Fordham Consultants were commissioned to carry out a Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessment for Newport. It concluded that the local authority had a 10 year need for 29 residential pitches, of which a minimum of 14 should be socially rented, and 7 transit pitches.
- 2.1.2. In June 2012 a Scrutiny Committee Policy Review Group was formed to examine how the identified need for accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers in Newport could be met as part of the Local Development Plan. This was a comprehensive process with 237 potential sites being considered and 40 site visits. Public consultation on potential sites resulted in more than 7,000 individual responses. This led to identification of several sites that would accommodate identified need for both transit and residential accommodation being included in Newport's Revised Deposit Local Development Plan.
- 2.1.3. The Revised Deposit Local Development Plan was subject to public examination during the spring of 2014 and included a hearing session on the allocation of Gypsy and Traveller sites. This led to the site at Hartridge Farm Road being included in what would eventually become Newport's adopted Local Development Plan along with a commitment to identify and deliver a suitable transit site by the end of 2019.
- 2.1.4. Work was undertaken to update the existing the accommodation assessments to inform the development of the Local Development Plan. This led to an immediate identified need of 23 pitches being included in the Plan, which was projected to rise to 43 by 2026. The need for transit pitches remained at 7.

## 2.2. Population Data

- 2.2.1. The 2011 census recorded 28 households living in Newport headed by someone who was a Gypsy or Irish Traveller. 26 were living in bricks and mortar and 2 in a caravan.
- 2.2.2. This is a significant underrepresentation of the true figure. It is likely that many households would not have completed the census – both because they were living on unauthorised sites or encampments and as such did not appear on official records or because of a mistrust of the purpose of the census. Where people did receive forms lower than average literacy levels mean that some households would not have completed them, and where they were completed some households would have chosen not to identify as Gypsies or Irish Travellers.
- 2.2.3. Between April 2012 and July 2015 20 applications for rehousing have been received from Gypsy or Irish Traveller households. 17 were resident in Newport, with 3 living outside the local authority in Cardiff and Torfaen. Of the 17 households in Newport 11 were living in caravans. Of the remaining 6 households 3 were Czech Roma living in bricks and mortar. Whilst carrying out the GTAA attempts were made to contact everyone with an active housing application that identified as a Gypsy or Irish Traveller.
- 2.2.4. The numbers of private Gypsy and Traveller sites in Newport vary as new sites appear and enforcement action is taken against unauthorised sites. As of July 2015 there were 4 private sites with permanent planning permission and 1 site that was immune from enforcement action. There were also 7 unauthorised developments and 2 long term unauthorised encampments. As many permissions and applications for planning permission focus heavily on the personal circumstances of occupants it is difficult to include more details without making them identifiable.

2.2.5. In 2014/2015 GEMS reported that there were 405 Gypsy, Traveller and Roma school age children in Newport. At least three quarters of these would be Eastern European Roma but it is difficult to ascribe an exact figure due to the highly transient nature of the population.

2.2.6. There were also representatives from health services on the steering group for the GTAA. Whilst they were unable to provide specific contact details of families their intelligence was used to ensure the survey was promoted by services accessed by Gypsies and Travellers.

2.2.7. When we combine records from all these sources we are able to conclude that the census figure for the number of Gypsy and Traveller households in Newport is indeed a significant undercount. It would be inappropriate to estimate what the true figure is as these records will also not encompass all of Newport's Gypsy and Traveller population.

### 2.3. Caravan Count

2.3.1. The local authority participates in the bi-annual Gypsy and Traveller caravan count. Since 2013 the number of sites in Newport has remained fairly static, but the number of caravans on sites has increased.

Table 1 - Newport Caravan Count, 2013 - 2015

	Authorised Sites	Unauthorised Sites	Caravans on Authorised Sites	Caravans on Unauthorised Sites
Jan 13	6	4	24	24
Jul 13	5	5	20	39
Jan 14	6	4	31	33
Jul 14	6	4	30	27

Jan 15	5	5	31	36
Jul 15	5	6	28	27

2.3.2. This may be due to the continuing lack of social rented with provision in Newport and household growth being accommodated on existing sites. There are 2 long term unauthorised encampments in Newport that are tolerated in the absence of a socially rented site in the city. These are long term residents of Newport and their families will have continued to grow whilst they wait for a socially rented site to be developed.

#### **2.4. Current Accommodation Provision**

2.4.1. There are currently no local authority sites, either residential or transit, in Newport.

2.4.2. There are four private sites with permanent planning permission in Newport and 1 private site that is immune from enforcement activity due to the length of time it has been in existence. These are single family residential sites so will not make a contribution to meeting existing need for pitches in Newport. They are likely to offset some of the future pitch need as they allow for families to continue living together. This means that children are less likely to come onto the local authority waiting list for pitches as they will be able to continue living with their extended family when they form households of their own.

2.4.3. As of July 2015 there were no sites in Newport with temporary planning permission. There were, however, two sites with expired temporary permissions that are seeking to apply for permanent planning permission. These households did not wish to participate in the GTAA but details of their household make up provided with their planning applications allowed for them to be included in the calculation of need in section five.

2.4.4. There are generally several unauthorised developments in Newport, most commonly in the west of the city, at any one time. As of July 2015 there were 5 unauthorised developments that the local authority was actively involved in. This does not include the sites with expired permission mentioned above. The local authority's involvement with these sites ranges from seeking planning applications to taking enforcement action depending on the specific site.

2.4.5. The number of unauthorised encampments in Newport varies throughout the year. There are, however, 2 unauthorised encampments permanently in the city. One is on local authority owned land and the other on Welsh Government owned land. Both are tolerated as the local authority accepts that the occupants are in need of pitches on a socially rented site in the city.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1. Project Steering Group Composition**

3.1.1. A steering group was formed to oversee the production of the assessment. The key responsibilities of the steering group were to agree the study aims and outcomes; publicise the study to stakeholders; provide local knowledge to inform the research, scrutinise the results of the assessment; and provide feedback to consultation participants and stakeholders.

3.1.2. The steering group was comprised of a mixture of organisations who had established knowledge of and relationships with the Gypsy and Traveller community in Newport. Membership was made up of representatives of the following organisations:

- Anuerin Bevan Health Board (Midwifery and Public Health);
- Grwp Gwalia;
- Gwent Police;
- Gypsies and Travellers Wales;
- Newport City Council (Community Cohesion, Education, Environmental Health, Housing, Planning and Supporting People) ; and
- South East Wales Regional Equality Council (SEWREC) – including the Gypsy Liaison Officer who is a member of the Gypsy Traveller community in Newport.

#### **3.2 Study Methodology**

3.2.1 The study was undertaken by officers of Newport City Council. The interviews were conducted in partnership between the Housing department and a researcher from Grwp Gwalia who was conducting a piece of research on the support needs of Gypsies and Travellers behalf of Supporting People. This was partly to avoid two separate pieces of research with the same community

being conducted at the same time. It was also because the two pieces of research fitted together quite naturally.

- 3.2.2 The research being conducted by Grwp Gwalia covered several local authorities in the former Gwent area. We worked closely with these authorities, as well as our neighbouring local authorities who were not participating in the Supporting People research throughout the development of this Assessment. Requests for accommodation in other local authority areas were passed on, as were details of when interviews were held with people in other local authority areas who wished to relocate to Newport.
- 3.2.3 Interviews were undertaken over a 6 month period between April and September 2015. There is no minimum time period specified for interviews in the guidance issued by the Welsh Government but it does state that consideration should be given to the appropriate timing of the survey. The steering group felt that it was important to begin interviews before the summer as this is when many Gypsy and Traveller families that were permanently resident in Newport would be away travelling. It was also important to conduct interviews throughout the summer as this allowed us to speak to families that traditionally pass through the city.
- 3.2.4 Interviews for the accommodation assessment were conducted using the standard questionnaire included in the Welsh Government guidance on Undertaking Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments.
- 3.2.5 In addition to the steering group members we sought to engage with as many organisations that had contact with Gypsies and Travellers in Newport as possible. These included national organisations such as The Showmen's Guild; The Travellers School Charity; Planning Aid Wales; The Traveller Movement and Friends,

Families and Travellers. Details of responses from these groups can be found in Appendix 1.

3.2.6 The steering group also recommended Newport specific contacts that would be able to promote the study with the aim of maximising participation. These included the Newport Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Forum, GP Surgeries, Catholic churches and Gypsy Church South Wales. Full details of consultation and promotional activity can also be found at Appendix 1.

3.2.7 In order to maximise participation in the assessment the Welsh Government produced an engagement checklist.

Table 2 - Engagement Checklist

<p><b>Visit every Gypsy and Traveller household identified through the data analysis process up to 3 times, if necessary.</b></p>	<p>All identified households visited or contacted up to 3 times unless they have stated they do not wish to participate in the assessment. See interview log at Appendix 2 for further details.</p>
<p><b>Publish details of the GTAA process, including contact details to allow community members to request an interview, on the Local Authority website, Travellers' Times and World's Fair publication.</b></p>	<p>Adverts were placed in Travellers' Times and World's Fair by the Welsh Government. The assessment was included in communication materials produced by the local authority such as the One Newport bulletin.</p>
<p><b>Consult relevant community support organisations.</b></p>	<p>Contact was made with several national organisations that provide support to Gypsies and Travellers. See details of promotional and consultation activity at Appendix 1.</p>
<p><b>Develop a Local Authority waiting list for both pitches and housing, which is accessible and communicated to community members.</b></p>	<p>The current local authority waiting list for pitches and houses has been in operation since April 2012. The standard application form for affordable housing in Newport allows people to indicate if they</p>

	<p>require a place on a Gypsy or Traveller site. The survey was also used to communicate the importance of completing a housing application if households were seeking a place on a Gypsy Traveller site. Any applications received as a result of the GTAA were added to the waiting list.</p>
<p><b>Endeavour to include Gypsies and Travellers on the GTAA project steering group.</b></p>	<p>The Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Worker from SEWREC, who is also a member of the Gypsy Traveller community, was a member of the steering group.</p>
<p><b>Ensure contact details provided to the Local Authority by community members through the survey process are followed up and needs assessed.</b></p>	<p>All referrals for interviews were followed up, as were requests for housing applications and other information. If requests for interviews are received after the GTAA has been completed these will be followed up and used to inform future work on Gypsy and Traveller accommodation need.</p>
<p><b>Consider holding on-site (or nearby) GTAA information events to explain why community members should participate and encourage site residents to bring others who may not be known to the Local Authority.</b></p>	<p>As Newport does not have a local authority site this was considered impractical. Unauthorised developments in Newport tend to occur in the countryside and are diverse and dispersed with no particular hub or focal point in which to conduct an information event of this nature.</p>

## 4. Survey Findings

### 4.1. Household Interviews

4.1.1. In total 45 interviews were attempted and 23 conducted. A full interview log can be found at Appendix 2.

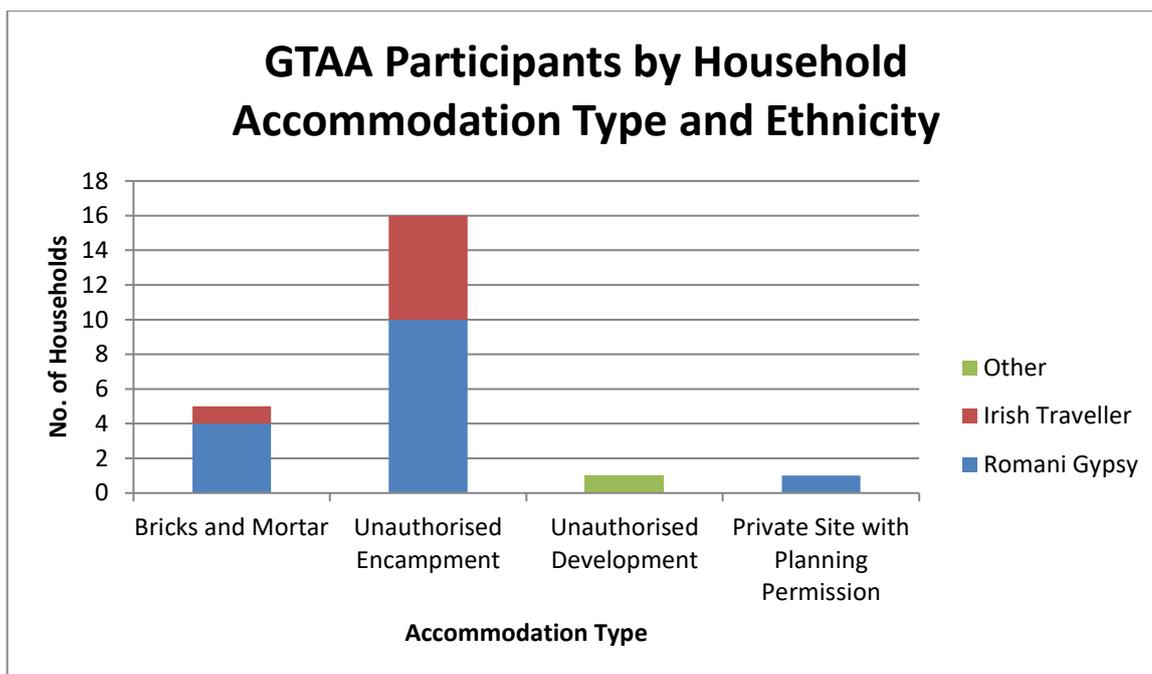


Figure 1- GTAA Participants by Household Accommodation Type and Ethnicity

4.1.2. Most refusals or non-responses, 63%, came from people living on unauthorised developments and private sites with planning permission. This may be because the Assessment was perceived as having little benefit to them.

4.1.3. Most of the residents of unauthorised developments that we spoke to were clear that they wished to address their own housing need by obtaining planning permission to live on their own land. Many of the unauthorised developments were also subject to active planning enforcement activity, so may have been reluctant to engage with the local authority on other issues such as this. Households that had obtained planning permission were, generally,

satisfied that they were adequately accommodated and that the site was capable of accommodating future pitch need.

4.1.4. It is unclear how realistic it would be for these households to meet their accommodation need in this way. For many Gypsies and Travellers the process of obtaining planning permission can – for various reasons – be costly and time consuming. Of the 4 private sites with planning permission in Newport the average length of time taken to achieve a permanent planning consent was 5 and a half years.

4.1.5. Discussions were held with agencies that support Gypsies and Travellers in Newport in an attempt to interview more people who were resident on private sites. A meeting was also held with Planning Aid Wales who shared the concerns outlined above about the difficulties many Gypsies and Travellers faced in obtaining planning permission. The local authority is endeavouring to work closely with Planning Aid Wales to engage people at pre application stage in order to try and pre-empt problems further along in the process.

4.1.6. We also did not interview any New Travellers or Travelling Showpeople. Attempts were made to contact organisations that represented these groups but no responses were received.

4.1.7. Despite the census identifying 26 Gypsy or Traveller households living in bricks and mortar accommodation in Newport only 5 interviews were conducted. Households in bricks and mortar were identified in 2 main ways – through the housing waiting list and education records. This means the initial sample size is automatically limited to people who consider themselves to be in housing need or who have children. It also relies on people identifying as Gypsies or Travellers and on them keeping their contact details up to date. In an attempt to overcome this

interviewees who indicated that they had family members in bricks and mortar were asked to pass information about the assessment on to them. This was made up of the flyer issued by the Welsh Government promoting the GTAA as well as more specific information about the study in Newport with contact details for named officers.

#### 4.2. Demographic Profile of Population

4.2.1. The assessment found that the Gypsy and Irish Traveller population of Newport was relatively youthful, with no interviews being conducted with anyone over the age of 65.

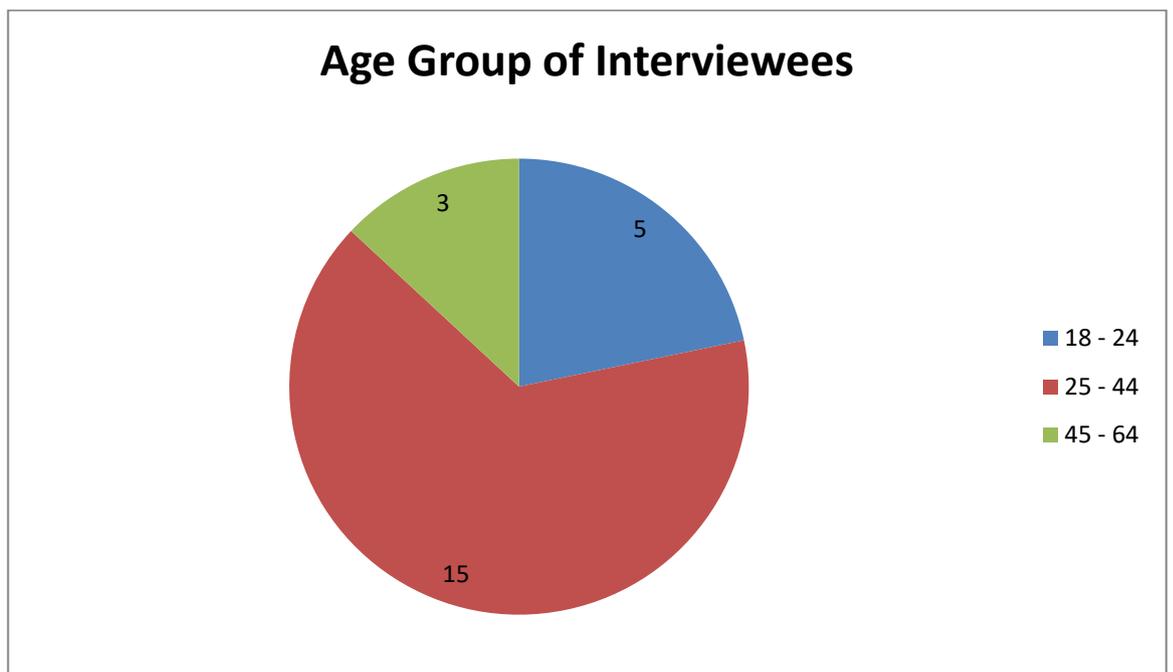


Figure 2 - Age Group of Interviewees

4.2.2. This youthfulness is even more apparent when we look at the total household members recorded as part of the survey, with more than half being aged under 18.

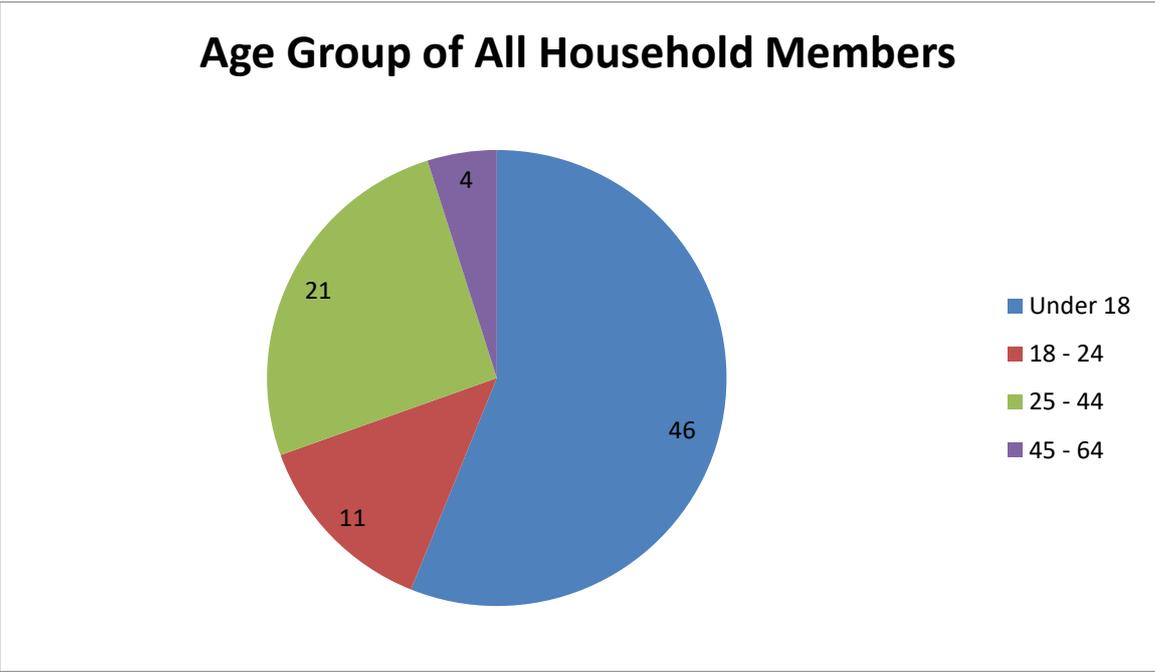


Figure 3 - Age Group of All Household Members

4.2.3. The most common household type was families with dependent children, making up 17 out of the 23 households that participated in the assessment.

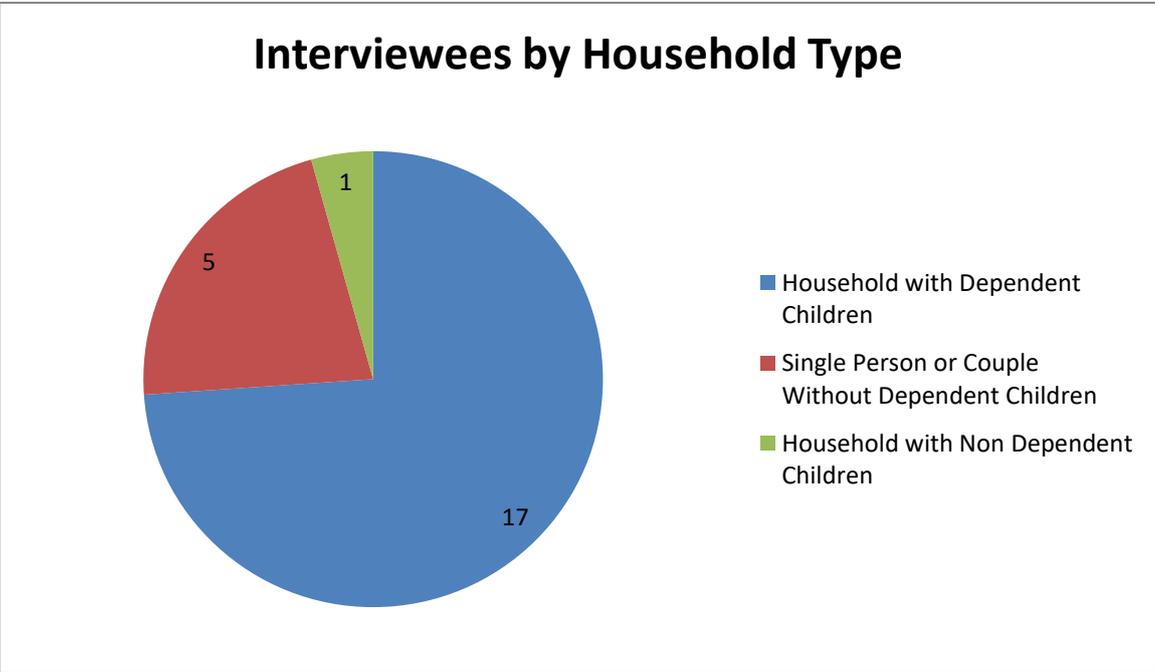


Figure 4 - Interviewees by Household Type

4.2.4. Households that were living as part of extended families were common, especially on sites. As well as the 46 children who lived in households that participated in the study through planning records the local authority is aware of a further 25 children resident in families that did not participate in the survey.

### **4.3. Suitability of current accommodation**

4.3.1. Satisfaction rates were generally low, with 17 out of 23 interviewees stating that they were unhappy with their current accommodation. Of the 6 respondents that stated they were satisfied with their current accommodation 3 still identified improvements that needed to be made. The only respondent entirely satisfied with their accommodation, with no plans to move, was the interviewee living on a private site without planning permission.

4.3.2. There were common reasons why people were dissatisfied with their accommodation. On unauthorised sites they related to a lack of facilities, in particular an adequate water supply and sewerage. Concerns were also raised about a lack of security on unauthorised sites – including poor lighting and tipping rubbish in the vicinity of unauthorised sites. Many respondents felt that some members of the settled community used the presence of Gypsy and Traveller sites as an opportunity to illegally dump waste hoping that site residents would be blamed. This is borne out by our own experience with investigations by the local authority's waste management service have found this to be the case in the past. A recurring complaint was also the lack of personal space, as unauthorised encampments - even long standing ones - do not have individual pitches.

4.3.3. 4 out of the 5 households interviewed that were living in bricks and mortar stated that they were satisfied with their accommodation but 3 households went on to express a desire for a

place on a site. Commonly the households acknowledged that they had moved into bricks of mortar because of the absence of authorised pitches in Newport and the difficulties in accessing services that led to.

4.3.4. Overcrowding was difficult to assess as no interviews were conducted on sites with defined pitches. All 18 interviewees that were living in caravans indicated that they had enough sleeping spaces for all residents. Of the 15 interviewees living on long term unauthorised encampments or private sites all felt there was adequate room for additional trailers should they be needed. As these are unauthorised encampments the requirements of the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2014 are unenforceable so it is not possible to assess if this could be achieved in the way proscribed in the legislation.

#### **4.4. Accommodation aspirations**

4.4.1. When people were asked why they lived where they did the most common reason was the lack of an alternative authorised pitch. The figures in this chart come to more than the total interviews as some people gave more than one reason for living where they did.

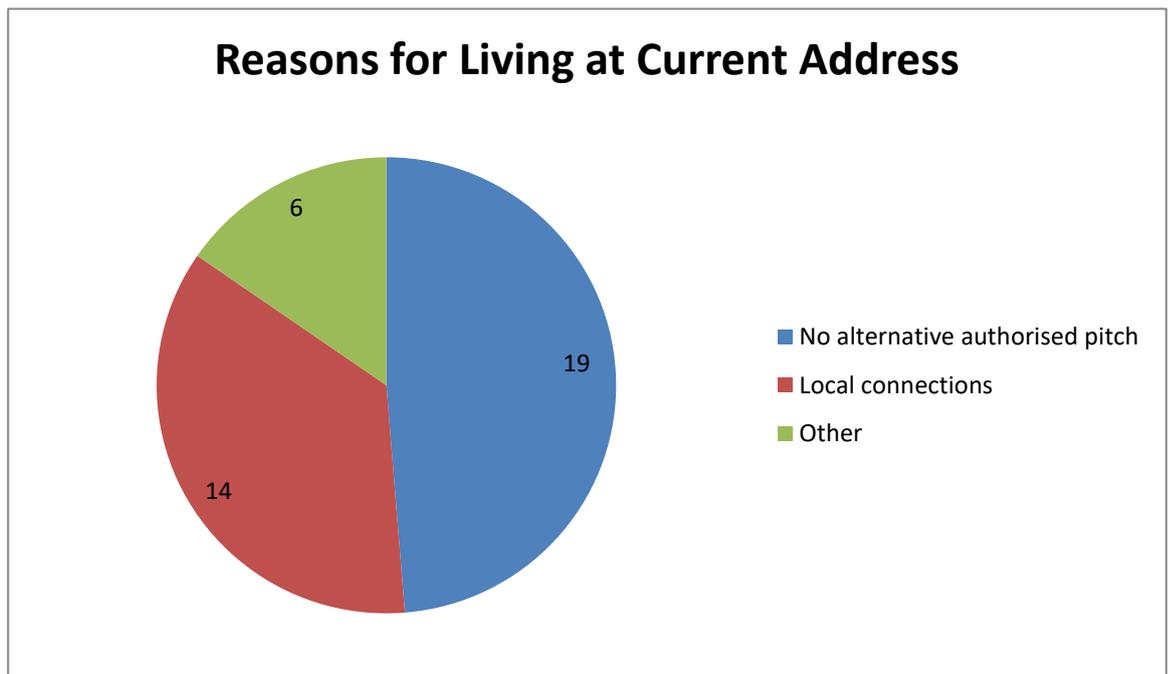


Figure 5 - Reasons for Living at Current Address

4.4.2. The reasons included within “other” were most commonly to do with accessing services, but 3 respondents were travelling and just passing through Newport. It is difficult to provide more details without identifying individual respondents.

4.4.3. Despite 19 interviewees stating that they were living at their current address because they were not able to access an authorised pitch only 7 said they were planning to move to different accommodation. Of these 3 were just passing through Newport en route to Ireland and 2 were seeking bricks and mortar accommodation – 1 in Newport and 1 in another local authority. Only 3 interviewees said they were hoping to move onto a socially rented site in Newport. One household planned to move onto a site in the short term but had a long term goal of owning their own accommodation so indicated they were seeking both a place on a site and bricks and mortar.

4.4.4. The reason people gave for not planning to move was not believing that there would ever be a local authority provided

residential site in Newport. There are 2 long term tolerated unauthorised encampments in Newport. These encampments are tolerated in the absence of any local authority provided sites. The views of the residents of these long term tolerated unauthorised encampments was, generally, that the best way forward, would be to formalise them. This would involve recognising them as official sites, obtaining planning permission and providing all necessary facilities.

4.4.5. This is not a viable option. Both sites were considered as part of the work of the Scrutiny Committee Policy Review Group and neither was found to comply with Welsh Government guidance on where permanent residential sites should be located. Occupation of these sites would only be tolerated until a local authority site becomes available. As such it would be sensible to count the occupiers of these sites as in need of a pitch on a socially rented site in Newport.

#### **4.5. Household growth**

4.5.1. None of the interviewees stated that they expected any new households to form over the next 5 years. This is despite several households containing single adult children who may realistically form families of their own in the near future.

4.5.2. This difficulty has been encountered in previous assessments. The approach that the local authority took then was to look at the number of adult children still living with their parents and the number of children that would become adults during the time period covered by the assessment. This would then provide an indication of the number of new households that could potentially form.

4.5.3. If we apply this approach to the results of this assessment it shows a potential 19 new households forming within the next 5 years and

additional 15 forming up to 2026, which is the time period covered by the local development plan.

4.5.4. An alternative method of calculating potential household growth is to apply an anticipated growth rate. The guidance produced by the Welsh Government suggests using a growth rate of between 1.5% and 3% per annum. After detailed discussion the steering group came to the conclusion that an anticipated growth rate of 3% would be most appropriate. This reflects the high number of children recorded as part of the GTAA, many of whom will turn 18 during the life of the assessment. It is lower than the figure used in the Niner report, Accommodation Needs of Gypsy Travellers in Wales of 4% as this was based on figures from the Republic of Ireland. As the majority of households interviewed were Gypsies as opposed to Irish Travellers, a situation the steering group felt was representative of the situation in Newport as a whole, it was felt a growth rate of 3% was more appropriate as this was standard figured used for GTAAs in England where the Gypsy and Traveller population is more similar to that found in Newport.

4.5.5. Assessing housing need and estimating household growth can never be an exact science. Household need is dynamic with households growing and changing in size and make up. We are confident the figures contained in this assessment are correct at the set point it was carried out but it must be acknowledged that new households will form and existing households will change which will have an impact on the outcome on any subsequent assessments.

## **5. Assessing Accommodation Needs**

### **5.1. Residential Unmet Need**

- 5.1.1. There is currently no socially rented supply of residential pitches in Newport. The entire residential supply comes from private sites with planning permission. As of July 2015 there were 4 such sites providing accommodation for approximately 19 households. This is an approximate number as it is based on information contained in planning applications and family formations are likely to have changed over time.
- 5.1.2. There was also an additional private site that whilst not having permanent planning permission is immune from enforcement activity due to the length of time it has been in existence. The local authority accepts that this site has been in existence for many years and is an established part of the local community. As such it would not be expedient to carry out enforcement action in respect of this site for the foreseeable future. This provides accommodation for 2 households.
- 5.1.3. As there is not a council owned site in Newport the only pitches likely to become available in the near future are on private Gypsy and Traveller sites. None of the private Gypsy and Traveller sites have planning permission to operate on a commercial basis, with planning permission generally being conditioned to occupants of a single named family. As such any vacant spaces on these sites would not contribute to meeting need for pitches in Newport more generally.
- 5.1.4. There are currently no new local authority pitches with planning permission. As of July 2015 the local authority was in receipt of 1 planning application for a private site and had been notified of an appeal against a refusal of a grant of planning permission that could lead to the creation of 10 additional pitches. It is important to note,

however, that we cannot prejudge the planning process. It is possible that none of these applications will achieve planning permission.

5.1.5. Over a third of the demand for residential pitches in Newport comes from long standing unauthorised encampments. Between these encampments there is current need for 13 residential pitches. This has been calculated using the responses given to the GTAA survey, where interviews were held with all 13 individual households on these sites.

5.1.6. As of July 2015 the local authority was aware of 5 unauthorised developments of Gypsy and Traveller sites in Newport. It is difficult to assess what the pitch need arising from these sites would be as none took part in the assessment. Records held by the planning department indicate that it is likely to be around 9 pitches. This figure has been arrived at by using data supplied as part of personal statements and it is not possible to provide more detail in this document without potentially identifying families.

5.1.7. As we have no local authority sites in Newport we have no records of overcrowded or doubled up pitches. There was also no need for pitches from people currently outside Newport identified as part of the assessment. 3 households in bricks and mortar indicated that they were seeking a place on a residential site. Gypsies and Travellers move into bricks and mortar for various reasons, and some households we spoke to had no desire to leave in the immediate future. As such no attempt was made to extrapolate the potential need for pitches to housed Gypsies and Travellers that did not participate in the study.

5.1.8. An anticipated growth rate of 3% has been used. The rationale for this is explained in detail in section 4.

Table 3- Unmet Residential Pitch Need to 2026

Current Residential Supply	Number of Pitches
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A. Occupied Local Authority pitches	0		
B. Occupied authorised private pitches	21		
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>		
<b>Planned Residential Supply</b>			
<b>Number of Pitches</b>			
C. Vacant Local Authority pitches and available vacant private pitches	0		
D. Pitches expected to become vacant in near future	0		
E. New local authority and private pitches with planning permission	0		
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>		
<b>Current Residential Demand</b>			
<b>Number of Pitches</b>			
F. Unauthorised encampments	13		
G. Unauthorised developments	9		
H. Overcrowded pitches	0		
I. Conventional housing	3		
J. New households to arrive	0		
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>		
<b>Current Households</b>			
	<b>Future Households (at year 5)</b>	<b>Future Households (at 2026)</b>	
K. 46	53	62	
L. Additional household pitch need	7	14	
<b>Unmet Need</b>		<b>Need Arising</b>	<b>Need Accommodated</b>
M. Current residential demand	25		
N. Future residential demand (5 year)	7		
O. Future residential demand (to 2026)	14		
P. Planned residential supply			0

Q. Unmet need (5 year)	32 pitches
R. Unmet need (to 2026)	39 pitches

## 5.2. Transit Unmet Need

5.2.1. Caravan count data generally shows a significant number of caravans on unauthorised encampments in Newport. The majority of these relate to 2 long standing unauthorised encampments which are tolerated due to the absence of any permanent residential pitches for Gypsies and Travellers in Newport.

5.2.2. Unauthorised encampments by Gypsies and Travellers that are in transit do occur in Newport, particularly during the summer months.

5.2.3. Over the last 3 years Newport Norse, the joint venture responsible for managing the council's property services has recorded 24 unauthorised encampments on local authority land. These are often in the same locations and involve the same families. There were 5 encampments on Newport International Sports Village during this time and 8 of the encampments related to 1 family.

5.2.4. Over the same time period the council's Environmental Health department received 28 enquiries relating to Gypsy or Traveller encampments. 18 of these related to short term unauthorised encampments. The same locations, such as the former Megabowl site, appear several times.

Date	Location	No. of Caravans	No. of Families
June 2012	Megabowl		
	Megabowl		
July 2012	Lliswerry Recreation Ground	9	
February	NISV		

<b>2013</b>			
<b>May 2013</b>	NISV	13	1
	NISV		
<b>June 2013</b>	Morgans Pond	9	
	Glebelands Park	16	3
	Morgans Pond	8	2
	Morgans Pond	3	
<b>July 2013</b>	Stephenson Street	1	1
	Ringland Allotments	8	
	Kimberley Park	3	
	Megabowl	6	
<b>August 2013</b>	Crindau Park		
	Kimberley Park	5	2
	Kimberley Park		
	Coronation Park	3	1
	Stephenson Street	1	
<b>October 2013</b>	NISV	4	1
	NISV	13	1
<b>April 2014</b>	Road Safety Centre	12	2
	Stephenson Street	3	1
<b>May 2014</b>	Tredegar Park	8	1
	Stephenson Street		
<b>July 2014</b>	NISV	2	1
	Aragon Street		
<b>August 2014</b>	Church Lane		
<b>October 2014</b>	Aragon Street		
<b>February 2015</b>	Coronation Park		
<b>April 2015</b>	Essex Street	1	
	Stephenson Street		
<b>May 2015</b>	Road Safety Centre	5	1
	Triangle Site	1	1
<b>June 2015</b>	Wern Industrial Estate		
	Christchurch Viewing Point	20	
	Coverack Road	2	
	Christchurch Viewing Point	7	4

	St. Julians Park		
<b>July 2015</b>	Cromwell Road	2	
	Dewstow Street	1	
	Peterstone Common	12	

5.2.5. The number of caravans on these encampments ranged from 1 to 20 and could be made up of several families. The average number of caravans on each encampment was 6, and the median was 5.

5.2.6. Welsh Government guidance on designing Gypsy and Traveller sites states that transit sites should be up to 10 pitches in size, with each pitch being capable of accommodating 2 touring caravans. Therefore a 10 pitch site would have the capacity to accommodate up to 20 caravans.

5.2.7. In order to deliver a transit site the Local Authority will need to bid for Sites Capital Grant funding. Part of the assessment process for this funding stream involves looking at whether the bid represents value for money. Providing a transit site which is too small is likely to lead to continued unauthorised encampments, whereas a site that is too larger is likely to stand empty for a lot of the time.

5.2.8. Previous Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessments have identified a need for a transit site of 7 pitches, which would have a capacity of up to 14 caravans.

5.2.9. Detailed discussions have taken place amongst the steering group about whether this figure is still accurate. Analysis of the data above shows that the range of caravans recorded on each encampment runs from 1 to 20. The average number of caravans was 6 and the median was 5. There were concerns expressed that providing a site of 7 pitches, with the potential to accommodate up to 14 caravans would be insufficient, given the number of larger encampments that had occurred.

- 5.2.10. When the data was examined more closely we were able to identify that several of the larger encampments related to 1 family. Members of this family had been interviewed as part of the GTAA and they had indicated that they were seeking places on a residential site in Newport, not transit provision. This significantly reduced the number of large encampments that could potentially have to be accommodated on a transit site.
- 5.2.11. The other factor to take into consideration is encampments made up of multiple families. It is not unusual for encampments to be made up of 2 or even 3 different family groups. It is also common for there to be more than 1 unauthorised encampment in the city at a time, particularly in the summer months.
- 5.2.12. Allowance has to be made for this. There may be 2 families, with an average of between 5 and 6 caravans seeking to access a transit site at the same time. Families cannot be forced to share pitches so it is not possible to say that 10 caravans will automatically equate to a need for 5 pitches.
- 5.2.13. Taking all these things into consideration the group felt that the previously identified need for a transit site of 7 pitches still stood. Even though it would potentially provide space for more caravans than we generally see on unauthorised encampments it would allow for more than 1 family to be accommodated at once. It would also be sufficient for the more infrequent large single family encampments.
- 5.2.14. Interviewees were asked about the need for transit sites as part of the accommodation assessment. Where people felt they were needed the view was, generally, that they were needed across Wales although 2 specific sites in Newport were suggested. These have previously been examined as part of our search for suitable transit sites to include in the Local Development Plan and were found to be unsuitable.

5.2.15. We will also be holding discussions with our neighbouring local authorities to ensure that any sites provided make the maximum possible contribution to meeting transit need.

## 6. Conclusions and Recommendations

### 6.1. Next Steps

- 6.1.1. There is a clear need in Newport for the provision of accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers in Newport. This assessment has identified a five year unmet need of 32 pitches and an unmet need of 39. Much of the pitch need is from residents of unauthorised encampments seeking a place on a socially rented site. It is proposed that this site will be provided on land at Hartridge Farm Road allocated for this purpose in the adopted Local Development Plan. The next steps will be for the local authority to seek planning permission for this development, and, if this is successful to apply for funding to the Welsh Government.
- 6.1.2. This assessment gives an indication of the likely demand for pitches on that site. When planning any new accommodation provision it is important to distinguish between demand and need. “Need” refers to households who are unable to access suitable accommodation without some financial assistance and “demand” to the quantity of housing that households are willing and able to buy or rent.
- 6.1.3. In Newport we will do this by using the established common housing register as the mechanism for allocating pitches on any socially rented site that is provided. Prospective residents are required to complete the standard housing application form which then allows the local authority to make an assessment of both their need and eligibility for a pitch.
- 6.1.4. The Newport Local Development Plan contains a target to identify a transit site capable of accommodating up to 7 pitches by the start of 2018. The new site should have received planning permission by the start of 2019 and should be delivered by the end of 2019.

- 6.1.5. In due course, an exercise will need to take place to identify possible locations for this site. It is likely that stakeholders, including members of the Gypsy and Traveller community, will be invited to submit possible sites, along with the general public, landowners, councillors and other interested parties. Sites suggested as part of this assessment will also be included. A consultation exercise will then follow to allow any preferred sites to be fully considered prior to making any conclusions.
- 6.1.6. It may also be the case that a regional outlook is taken with regard to providing a site or sites for transit need. This approach would require regional collaboration between authorities in South East Wales and is something that needs to be considered in more detail.
- 6.1.7. The South East Wales Strategic Planning Group (SEWSPG), of which the local authority is a member, has already started to address this issue. SEWSPG consists of 10 local planning authorities, plus the Brecon Beacons national park authority. The Group meets every 2 months in order to discuss planning issues that impact on the region. With the introduction of the Planning (Wales) Act in July 2015, changes to regional planning and the creation of a strategic planning area are very much on the agenda.
- 6.1.8. SEWSPG officers have agreed to discuss their respective Gypsy/Traveller Accommodation Assessments and consider them in a regional context at future meeting. Although this is simply an agreement to discuss initial findings, there are clear benefits to a regional approach for this type of work as opposed to each authority working in isolation.

## Appendix 1 - Consultation and Promotional Activity

Organisation/Event	Action	Outcome
Caravan Count	Information distributed to every site visited as part of the caravan count.	All sites visited and flyers distributed.
Cardiff University	Contacted to make aware of the study and encourage participation.	
Catholic Church	Contacted the Archbishop of Cardiff and a local parish priest in Newport as they had both previously supported Irish Traveller families in the city. Also contacted a parish church in Cardiff known to be used by Irish Travellers.	No response received.
GP Surgeries	Flyers promoting the GTAA displayed in surgeries offering an enhanced service or known to be used by Gypsies or Travellers.	One surgery sent copies of the flyer promoting the GTAA to all patients that had disclosed they were Gypsies or Travellers. Another made Health Visitors that were known to have a good working relationship with the Irish Traveller community aware of the study.
Gwent Multi-Ethnic Education Service (GEMS)	Meeting to discuss sharing information and promotion of survey amongst Gypsy	Survey promoted by GEMS. Several households that were

	and Traveller households known to GEMS.	willing to take part identified and contacted.
Gypsy Church South Wales	Meeting with a representative of the Gypsy Church South Wales to make them aware of the GTAA and encourage participation.	Offers to attend church were made but declined.
Newport Gypsy Roma Traveller Forum	GTAA discussed at Newport Gypsy Traveller forum. Information distributed at meeting and circulated with minutes.	Action point for all attendees to promote the study through their networks.
One Newport	Information on GTAA included in One Newport bulletin	
Romani Cultural & Arts Company	Contacted to make aware of the study and encourage participation.	Schedule of fees received – but there was insufficient budget available to cover these.
Save the Children	Contacted to make aware of the study and encourage participation.	Meetings held with a representative of Save the Children.
Showmen's Guild	Contacted to make aware of the study and encourage participation.	No response received.
Traveller's School Charity	Contacted to make aware of the study and encourage participation.	No response received.

## Appendix 2 – Interview Log

Type of tenure	Interview attempts			Engagement techniques used	Questionnaire completed or refusal?	Reasons for refusal?
Unauthorised encampment	28/04/2015	06/05/2015		1.Site visit, spoke to residents, information left and appointment made; 2. Appointment made - interview complete	Complete	
Unauthorised encampment	28/04/2015	06/05/2015		1.Site visit, spoke to residents, information left and appointment made; 2. Appointment made -	Complete	

				interview complete		
Unauthorised encampment	28/04/2015	06/05/2015	01/07/2015	1.Site visit, spoke to residents, information left and appointment made; 2. Appointment made - not kept by interviewee; 3. Site visit – interview complete	Complete	
Bricks and mortar	07/05/2015			1. Contacted via relative - appointment made	Refusal	Needed urgent housing advice but was aware survey could be completed at a later date.
Unauthorised encampment	28/04/2015	06/05/2015	01/07/2015	1.Site visit, spoke to residents,	Complete	

				information left and appointment made; 2. Appointment made - not kept; 3. Site visit – interview complete		
Bricks and mortar	30/04/2015	20/07/2015		1. Letter and information sent; 2. Telephone - did not wish to participate.	Refusal	Did not wish to participate.
Bricks and mortar	30/04/2015			1. Letter and information sent, no other contact details provided.		No response received
Bricks and mortar	30/04/2015	20/05/2015		1. Letter and information sent. 2. Interview	Complete	

				arranged		
Private authorised site	28/04/2015	16/07/2015		1. Site visit, spoke to residents, information left; 2. Site visited as part of caravan count, information left.	Refusal	Residents spoken to - did not wish to participate.
Private authorised site	28/04/2015	06/05/2015	15/06/2015	1. Site visit, information left. 2. Site visit, spoke to residents information left 3. Agreed to interview in June 4. Unable to arrange interview, away travelling 5.	Refusal	Unable to arrange interview

				Site visited as part of caravan count - still away.6. Appointment made but not kept by interviewee.		
Private authorised site	28/04/2015	06/05/2015	16/07/2015	1. Site visit, information left. 2. Site visit, information left. 3. Site visited as part of caravan count, information left.	Refusal	No response received
Private authorised site	28/04/2015	06/05/2015	16/07/2015	1. Site visit, information left. 2. Site visit, information left. 3. Site visited as part	Refusal	No response received

				of caravan count, information left.		
Private authorised site	28/04/2015	16/07/2015		1. Site visit, spoke to residents, information left. 2. Site visited as part of caravan count, information left.	Refusal	Residents spoken to - did not wish to participate.
Private authorised site	28/04/2015	16/07/2015		1. Site visit, spoke to residents, information left. 2. Site visited as part of caravan count, information left.	Refusal	Residents spoken to - did not wish to participate.

Private authorised site	28/04/2015	16/07/2015		1. Site visit, spoke to residents, information left. 2. Site visited as part of caravan count, information left.	Refusal	Residents spoken to - did not wish to participate.
Unauthorised development	28/04/2015	06/05/2015	16/07/2015	1. Site visit, information left. 2. Site visit, information left. 3. Site visited as part of caravan count, information left.	Refusal	No response received
Unauthorised development	06/05/2025	16/07/2015		1. Site visit, spoke to residents, information left. 2. Site	Refusal	Residents spoken to - did not wish to participate.

				visited as part of caravan count, information left.		
Unauthorised development	28/04/2015	06/05/2015	16/07/2015	1. Site visit, information left. 2. Site visit, information left. 3. Site visited as part of caravan count, information left.	Refusal	No response received
Unauthorised development	28/04/2015	06/05/2015	16/07/2015	1. Site visit, information left. 2. Site visit, information left. 3. Site visited as part of caravan count, information	Refusal	No response received

				left.		
Unauthorised development	28/04/2015	06/05/2015	16/07/2015	1. Site visit, information left. 2. Site visit, information left. 3. Site visited as part of caravan count, information left.	Refusal	No response received
Unauthorised development	28/04/2015	05/05/2015	07/05/2015	1. Site visit, information left; 2. Appointment made - not kept; 3. Appointment made - interview complete	Complete	

Unauthorised development	28/04/2015	06/05/2015		1. Site visit, information left. 2. Site visit, information left 3. Site no longer in use	Refusal	Site no longer in use – no details of where residents have relocated to.
Unauthorised development	06/05/2025			1. Site visit, information left 2. Site no longer in use	Refusal	Site no longer in use – no details of where residents have relocated to.
Unauthorised encampment	28/04/2015	06/05/2015		1. Site visit, spoke to residents, information left. 2. Interview complete	Complete	
Unauthorised encampment	28/04/2015	06/05/2015		1. Site visit, spoke to residents, information left. 2. Interview complete	Complete	

Unauthorised encampment	28/04/2015	06/05/2015		1. Site visit, spoke to residents, information left. 2. Interview complete	Complete	
Unauthorised encampment	28/04/2015	06/05/2015		1. Site visit, spoke to residents, information left. 2. Interview complete	Complete	
Unauthorised encampment	28/04/2015	06/05/2015		1. Site visit, spoke to residents, information left. 2. Interview complete	Complete	
Unauthorised encampment	28/04/2015	06/05/2015		1. Site visit, spoke to residents, information left. 2.	Complete	

				Interview complete		
Unauthorised encampment	28/04/2015	06/05/2015		1. Site visit, spoke to residents, information left. 2. Interview complete	Complete	
Unauthorised encampment	28/04/2015	06/05/2015		1. Site visit, spoke to residents, information left. 2. Interview complete	Complete	
Unauthorised encampment	28/04/2015	06/05/2015		1. Site visit, spoke to residents, information left. 2. Interview complete	Complete	
Bricks and mortar	20/05/2015			1. Interview arranged	Complete	

Bricks and mortar	20/05/2015	26/05/2015	15/06/2015	1. Interview arranged 2. Interview cancelled 3. Interview arranged 4. Interview cancelled 5. Interview arranged	Complete	
Private authorised site	26/05/2015			1. Interview arranged	Complete	
Unauthorised encampment	26/05/2015			1. Telephoned - did not wish to participate	Refusal	No longer wished to participate
Unauthorised encampment	01/07/2015			1.Site visit, spoke to residents.	Complete	
Unauthorised encampment	01/07/2015			1.Site visit, spoke to residents.	Complete	
Unauthorised encampment	01/07/2015			1.Site visit, spoke to residents.	Refusal	Did not wish to participate.
Unauthorised	01/07/2015			1. Site visit,	Refusal	Did not wish to

encampment				spoke to residents.		participate.
Bricks and mortar	15/07/2015			1. Interview arranged	Complete	
Bricks and mortar	29/07/2015			1. Interview arranged	Complete	
Bricks and mortar	29/07/2015			1. Telephoned – left message	Refusal	No response received. Other family members participated.
Unauthorised development	30/07/2015			1. Site visit, spoke to residents.	Refusal	Did not wish to participate.
Unauthorised encampment	30/07/2015			1. Site visit, spoke to residents.	Complete	