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Denbighshire County Council Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) Update

Final Report
October 2023



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Note: This GTAA Report updates the one that was published in November 2021 due to changes to the circumstances on a number of sites and additional interviews that have now been completed with households living in bricks and mortar and households living on unauthorised encampments.

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1. Executive Summary

Introduction and Methodology

- 1.1 The primary objective of this (2023) Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) Update is to provide a robust assessment of current and future need for Gypsy and Traveller¹ accommodation in Denbighshire.
- 1.2 The reasons for the update are that it has been brought to the attention of the Council that there have been changes to the occupation status on some of the sites that were included in the previous GTAA, and an extended family who declined to take part in an interview previously have now agreed to be interviewed. The update is only to the fieldwork and overall assessment of need.
- 1.3 The GTAA provides a robust and credible evidence base which can be used to aid in the understanding of, and the provision of, Gypsy and Traveller pitches and plots, and potential transit provision, for the Denbighshire Local Development Plan (LDP) period to 2033. The outcomes of this GTAA will replace the outcomes of the previous GTAA that was published in November 2021 and submitted to Welsh Government for approval in December 2021 as it now included a more up-to-date assessment of need.
- 1.4 The GTAA has sought to understand the accommodation needs of the Gypsy and Traveller population in Denbighshire through a combination of desk-based research, stakeholder engagement and engagement with members of the Travelling Community. In addition, during the preparation of the GTAA that was published in November 2021 a range of local stakeholders were invited to sit on a Project Steering Group; a wider GTAA Project Group was established; and a Task and Finish Group was established. An online survey was also distributed to all Elected Members, and City, Town, and Community Councils.
- 1.5 Following preliminary engagement with the Council, a total of 15 interviews were completed with Gypsies and Travellers living on unauthorised sites, unauthorised encampments, and living in bricks and mortar in Denbighshire. This represents a response rate of 100% of identified households. No Travelling Showpeople yards were identified in Denbighshire. Engagement was completed with neighbouring local authorities and other stakeholders during the preparation of the 2021 GTAA to discuss potential need for transit provision. In addition, the Gypsy, Roma, Traveller Liaison Officer sought to engage with households living on encampments.
- 1.6 The baseline date for the revised GTAA is **August 2023**.

Pitch Needs – Gypsies and Travellers

- 1.7 The Welsh Government Guidance requires 2 assessments of need – for the first 5 years of the GTAA period (2023/24 - 2027/28), and for the full LDP period to 2033.
- 1.8 Based upon the evidence presented in this study the estimated additional pitch provision needed for Gypsies and Travellers in Denbighshire for the first 5 years of the GTAA Study period to 2027/28 is for **16 pitches** and need for the remainder of the LDP period to 2033 is for a further **2 pitches**. This gives a total need to the end of the LDP period to 2033 for **18 pitches**. These figures should be seen as the projected amount of provision

¹ See Chapter 2 for the planning definition of a Traveller in Wales.

which is necessary to meet the statutory obligations towards identifiable needs of the population arising in the area. These figures are made up from a combination of unauthorised pitches; unauthorised encampments; concealed/doubled-up households; movement from bricks and mortar; and new household formation.

- 1.9 A detailed breakdown which sets out the components that make up this identified need, together with any other issues that have been taken into consideration can be found in **Chapter 6** of this report.

Plot Needs - Travelling Showpeople

- 1.10 There were no Travelling Showpeople identified living in Denbighshire so there is no current or future need for plots over the LDP period to 2033. The Council should however monitor any future approaches for planning permission from Travelling Showpeople and have in place appropriate Criteria-Based LDP policies to deal with any future applications.

Transit Recommendations

- 1.11 Discussions with local stakeholders, neighbouring local authorities, and analysis of records of unauthorised encampments, confirmed that there are instances of unauthorised encampments in Denbighshire, but that these are normally Travellers passing through for work purposes given that the area is on the main A55 travelling corridor across North Wales for Travellers coming to and from Ireland on the ferry from Holyhead. This is also evidenced by anecdotal information of repeat visits from the same households at similar times of the year.
- 1.12 There have been other localised instances of Travellers temporarily visiting Denbighshire to attend weddings or other events, but no further evidence of any long-term or permanent accommodation needs were identified.
- 1.13 The outcomes from the household interviews and discussions with stakeholders did not identify that there was a need for permanent transit provision locally, although there were discussions about a need for more transit provision across Wales.
- 1.14 It is understood that the Council have recently invested in employing a Gypsy, Roma, Traveller Liaison Officer post as well as formalising a more co-ordinated process for the management of unauthorised encampments. This is understood to be to ensure early engagement with families travelling through Denbighshire, and to provide a coordinated approach to ensure that welfare checks and facilities such as bins and toilets are provided. This resulted in engagement with a total of 5 households living on encampments during the GTAA fieldwork period and none expressed a specific need for formal transit provision. This role is also intended to build better relations between the Council and the Travelling Community. Discussions with the Council have concluded that this approach could be developed further to form the basis of a more comprehensive managed approach to include considerations of options such as negotiated stopping.
- 1.15 Despite the 2016 GTAA identifying a need for transit pitches in Denbighshire, more recent evidence suggests that this is no longer the case and that alternative approaches should be considered. As such it is recommended that **there is not a need at this time for the Council to provide a transit site** in Denbighshire due to the low numbers of unauthorised encampments, and the short-term transient nature of these encampments.

^{1.16} It is also recommended that the Council should continue to monitor the number of unauthorised encampments and consider the use of short-term toleration (including negotiated stopping arrangements) to deal with short-term transient stops. This management-based approach should also include consideration about whether to provide toilets, water and refuse facilities. There are a number of examples across Wales and England where management-based approaches to dealing with unauthorised encampments have been successful. A good example can be found at www.negotiatedstopping.co.uk. There are also many examples where local authorities are taking a more strategic and regional approach towards addressing transit issues including in Essex, Leicestershire, the former Northamptonshire, and Hampshire.

2. Background and Policy Context

The Study

- ^{2.1} Opinion Research Services (ORS) were appointed by Denbighshire County Council (the Council) as independent consultants to update the 2021 GTAA in June 2023 for the new LDP period to 2033.
- ^{2.2} The study provides an evidence base to enable the Council to comply with their requirements towards Gypsies and Travellers under Part 3 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014, and to support the Denbighshire Replacement Local Development Plan (2018-33). The Act requires Local Authorities to undertake a GTAA at least every 5 years, although Local Authorities have flexibility to undertake GTAAs more frequently if a material change in the level of need in the area has been identified. The Council published a GTAA in November 2021 (covering the period up to 2033) and submitted it to Welsh Government in December 2021. Welsh Government wrote to all Local Planning Authorities in September 2019 to confirm those undertaking an LDP Review must ensure the GTAA establishes an evidence base for Gypsy and Traveller needs across the entire plan period. Welsh Government also confirmed that this may necessitate undertaking of a new GTAA (and providing appropriate site allocations, where relevant) prior to the statutory Deposit consultation to ensure plans can be found sound through the examination process and are able to be adopted. Denbighshire commenced a review of their adopted LDP (2006-2021) in 2018.
- ^{2.3} This GTAA provides an assessment of need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in Denbighshire to fulfil these requirements, updating the previous GTAA published in 2021. It is a robust and credible evidence base which can be used to aid in the understanding of, and the provision of Gypsy and Traveller pitches and plots, and also to support the Denbighshire Replacement LDP (2018-2033).
- ^{2.4} We would note at the outset that the study covers the needs of Gypsies (including English, Scottish, Welsh and Romany Gypsies), Irish Travellers, New (Age) Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople, but for ease of reference we have referred to the study as a GTAA.
- ^{2.5} The baseline date for the revised GTAA is **August 2023**.

Legislation and Guidance

Welsh Government Circular 005/2018

- ^{2.6} Welsh Government Circular 005/2018 provides updated guidance on the planning aspects of identifying sustainable sites for Gypsies and Travellers. It also outlines how planning authorities and Gypsies and Travellers can work together to achieve this aim. It supersedes advice contained in Circular 30/2007 “Planning for gypsy and traveller caravan sites”, Circular 78/91 “Travelling Showpeople” and Circular 76/94 “Gypsy Sites Policy and Unauthorised Camping”.
- ^{2.7} The Circular include guidance on a range of issues relating to Gypsies and Travellers including:
- » Definition of Travellers
 - » Gypsies and Travellers – A Context
 - » Duty to Provide Sites
 - » Providing the Evidence Base

- » Regional Working
- » Development Plans
- » Major Development Projects
- » Designated Areas
- » Planning Applications
- » Enforcement
- » Appeals
- » Human Rights and Equality of Opportunity
- » Monitoring Planning Applications

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

^{2.8} In relation to Gypsies and Travellers, Welsh Government Circular 005/2018 sets out that:

7. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 sets a framework for local authorities across Wales to ensure the ‘sustainable development principle’ (meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs) is met. Section 4 of the Act puts in place a number of well-being goals which authorities are to seek to achieve in order to meet this principle. These goals include achieving ‘a Wales of cohesive communities’, containing attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities, and ‘a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language’, containing a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language.

8. Housing is a fundamental issue that affects the lives of people across Wales, including our Gypsy and Traveller communities. The Welsh Government seeks to ensure a wide choice of accommodation is available to meet the needs of all members of the community. It is reflective of the Government’s commitment to ensure equality of opportunity for all sections of the community and in this instance, Gypsies and Travellers should have equal access to culturally appropriate accommodation as all other members of the community.

Housing (Wales) Act 2014

^{2.9} Part 3 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 (the Act) sets out that a *local housing authority must, in each review period, carry out an assessment of the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers residing in or resorting to its area.*

^{2.10} Section 102 of the Act requires that local authorities must prepare a report which they must submit to Welsh Ministers for approval that:

- » details how the assessment was carried out.
- » contains a summary of:
 - the consultation it carried out in connection with the assessment, and
 - the responses (if any) it received to that consultation.
- » details the accommodation needs identified by the assessment.

^{2.11} Once approved the local housing authority must publish the assessment.

- 2.12 If need is identified in the GTAA report, Section 103 of the Act requires that a local authority must exercise its powers in Section 56 of the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013 so far as may be necessary to meet those needs.
- 2.13 Section 106 of the Act sets out that local authorities should have regard to any guidance given by Welsh Ministers. Guidance on Undertaking GTAAs was published by Welsh Government in May 2015 and this Guidance remains in place in 2020.
- 2.14 The GTAA Guidance covers the following issues:
- » Why a specific GTAA is required?
 - » What should be produced?
 - » Who needs to be consulted?
 - » What data sources need to be reviewed?
 - » Understanding the culture of Gypsy and Traveller communities.
 - » How to identify and communicate with Gypsies and Travellers?
 - » How to design, manage and undertake a GTAA?
 - » Support with partnership working and working regionally.
 - » Exploring specialist surveys, techniques, and questions to be used.
 - » How accommodation 'need' is assessed?
 - » Submitting reports to Welsh Ministers.
 - » How to make provision for identified need?
- 2.15 Section 108 of the Act sets out that:
- » **Accommodation needs** - includes, but is not limited to, needs with respect to the provision of sites on which mobile homes may be stationed.
 - » **Gypsies and Travellers** – means persons of a nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin, including 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 temporarily or permanently, and members of an organised group of travelling show people or circus people (whether or not travelling together as such), and all other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or of living in a mobile home.
 - » **Mobile home** - has the meaning given by section 60 of the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013.

Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013

- 2.16 The GTAA Guidance sets out the requirement that local authorities have to meet a legal duty to exercise their functions to provide mobile home pitches to meet any identified needs. These are set out in Section 60 of the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013.
- 2.17 In this Act "*mobile home*" means:
- » *Any structure designed or adapted for human habitation which is capable of being moved from one place to another (whether by being towed, or by being transported on a motor vehicle or trailer) and any motor vehicle designed or adapted for human habitation but does*

not include any railway rolling stock which is for the time being on rails forming part of a railway system, or any tent.

- » *A structure designed or adapted for human habitation which is composed of not more than 2 sections separately constructed and designed to be assembled on a site by means of bolts, clamps, or other devices, and is, when assembled, physically capable of being moved by road from one place to another (whether by being towed, or by being transported on a motor vehicle or trailer).*

Welsh Government Designing and Managing Gypsy and Traveller Sites Guidance

- ^{2.18} As well as publishing guidance on undertaking GTAA's in May 2015 the Welsh Government also published additional guidance on designing and managing Gypsy and Traveller sites in order to assist local authorities in meeting need for Gypsies and Travellers. These two documents are intended as a guide to assist Local Authorities in providing appropriate services at reasonable cost to the public purse for Gypsies and Travellers living on residential sites in Wales. They contain practical guidance to assist local authorities to ensure sites are fit-for-purpose, and how best to manage public Traveller sites. The guidance is not statutory. However, it is anticipated by Welsh Government that the guidance will help local authorities and others in the development, improvement and management of Gypsy and Traveller sites, and will form part of the consideration of the Welsh Government in assessing applications for Sites Capital Grant funding in relation to Gypsy and Traveller sites.

Denbighshire Local Development Plan (2006-2021), Adopted 2013

- ^{2.19} The Denbighshire LDP (2006-2021) was adopted by Denbighshire County Council on the 4th of June 2013 and became operative immediately. The adopted LDP superseded and replaced the earlier Denbighshire Unitary Development Plan.
- ^{2.20} The LDP includes one policy relating to Gypsies and Travellers – Policy BSC 10 Gypsy & Traveller Sites.

Policy BSC 10 – Gypsy & Traveller Sites

Proposals for gypsy and traveller caravan sites (including mixed residential and business sites) will be permitted provided the following criteria are met:

- i) the site is situated outside the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Green Barriers and the Pontcysyllte Canal and Aqueduct World Heritage site (including the buffer zone); and
- ii) the site is located within or on the outskirts of an established settlement boundary with access to a range of facilities/services (including schools), public transport and main transport routes; and,
- iii) the proposal makes suitable provision for on-site play space, storage, and parking; and,
- iv) the proposal would not be detrimental to the amenity of occupiers of adjacent properties.

Sites in other locations will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that sites within or on the outskirts of an established settlement boundaries are not available and all the above criteria are met.

The Council will identify permanent and transit caravan sites for gypsies and travellers should an unmet need be identified for Denbighshire in the emerging North West Wales Local Housing Market Assessment.

Definition of Key Terms

- ^{2.21} The 2015 GTAA Guidance contains common definitions that have been used in the Guidance and that will also be used in the GTAA Report. These can be found in **Appendix A**.

3. Analysis of Existing Data

- 3.1 The purpose of this section of the GTAA is to set out current information relating to the Gypsy and Traveller population in Denbighshire including previous assessments of need, socio-demographic data, caravan count data and the current provision of accommodation.

Current and Previous GTAAs

Denbighshire GTAA 2021

- 3.2 The most recent GTAA for Denbighshire was completed by ORS and the Final GTAA report was published in November 2021. Based upon the evidence presented in the study the estimated additional pitch provision needed for Gypsies and Travellers in Denbighshire for the first 5 years of the GTAA plan period was for 8 pitches, and for the remainder of the GTAA plan period for a further 4 pitches. This gave a total need for the whole GTAA plan period of 12 pitches.
- 3.3 It was also recommended that there was no need for the Council to provide any transit pitches in Denbighshire.
- 3.4 Given that there were no Travelling Showpeople identified as living in Denbighshire, no assessment of need was undertaken.

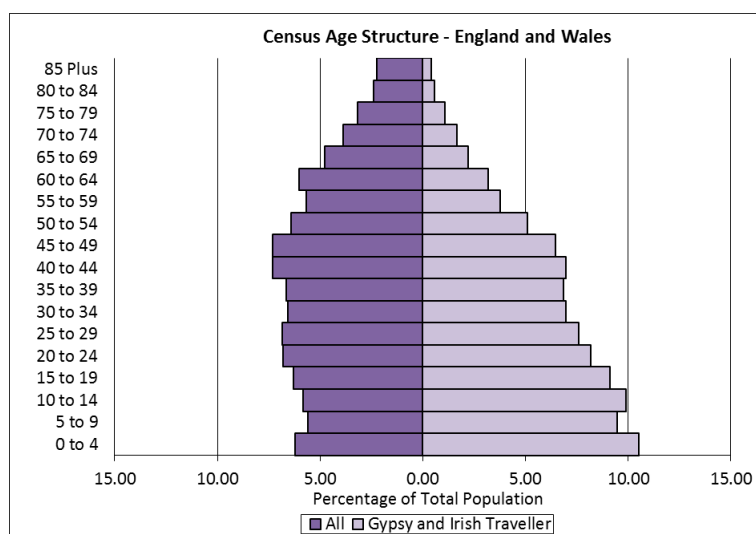
Population Data – 2011 and 2021 Census

- 3.5 Analysis of 2021 Census data relating to the Gypsy and Traveller population identified a total of 23 households who identified as Gypsies or Irish Travellers living in Denbighshire, and a further 14 households who identified as Roma (a new ethnicity category that was included in the 2021 Census) – representing less than 0.08% of households as a whole. It is likely that this could be an under-estimate given the accepted lower than average levels of response to the Census from the members of the Gypsy and Traveller community.
- 3.6 Detailed analysis of the 2021 Census has not yet been completed, but data from the 2011 Census does identify some significant demographic differences when compared to the population as a whole. These are important in terms of explaining the higher rate of new household formation for Gypsy and Traveller households compared with the settled population. In summary the 2011 Census shows that nationally for England and Wales:
- » Just under half of Gypsy or Irish Traveller households had dependent children (45%), compared to 29% for England and Wales as a whole.
 - » The median age of Gypsies or Irish Travellers was 26 years compared to the national median of 39 years.
 - » Just 6% of the Gypsy or Irish Traveller population were aged 65 years and over compared to a national figure of 16%.
 - » Gypsies or Irish Travellers below 20 years of age accounted for 39% of the population compared to a national figure of 24%.
 - » Gypsies or Irish Travellers below 10 years of age accounted for 20% of the population compared to a national figure of 12%.

- » Gypsies or Irish Travellers had the lowest proportion of people rating their health as good or very good at 70% compared to a national figure of 81%.

3.7 The chart below shows the age structure for the whole population (All) and the Gypsy or Irish Traveller population in England and Wales. This shows that there is a higher proportion of Gypsy or Irish Traveller children and younger adults, and significantly lower proportions of those aged 50 and over. This is due to higher birth rates and lower life expectancy for the Gypsy and Traveller population. Unfortunately, due to the low numbers of Gypsies and Irish Travellers identified in the 2011 Census living in Denbighshire it is not possible to make any meaningful comparisons at a local level.

Figure 1 - Comparison of Census Age Structure (2011 Census)



Caravan Count Data

- 3.8 Another source of published information on the Gypsy and Traveller population is the Welsh Government Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Count which uses data provided by Local Authorities and is published twice a year.
- 3.9 This is a physical count of the number of caravans on both authorised and unauthorised sites across Wales. As this count is of caravans and not households, it makes it very difficult to interpret and use for a study such as this because it does not count pitches, resident households, or household demographics. The published count data is merely a snapshot in time conducted by the Local Authority on a specific day in January and July, and therefore any unauthorised sites or encampments which occur on other dates are not recorded. Likewise, any caravans that are away from sites on the day of the count will not be included. The count also does not seek to determine the ethnic status of the occupiers of caravans.
- 3.10 However, the data captured in the Caravan Count does give an indication of the number of sites, and authorised and unauthorised caravans in each local authority, and can be useful in supporting the determination of any transit needs and identifying year on year trends to support an assessment of need.
- 3.11 More recently in Wales a live system has been put in place which allows local authorities to upload details of encampments when they occur throughout the year.
- 3.12 The latest Gypsy and Traveller Caravan County data for Wales is from January 2023 and was published in April 2023.

- 3.13 The latest time series statistical data available published on StatsWales is from April 2020. Analysis of the Caravan Count Data for Denbighshire between January 2010 and July 2021 shows that there have been 2 unauthorised sites recorded in recent years, with 3 tolerated caravans on 1 site and 3 non-tolerated caravans on the other site. It is understood from the Council that these are the 2 unauthorised sites that were identified in the November 2021 GTAA.
- 3.14 Data from the January 2023 Caravan Count identified a total of 3 caravans on unauthorised sites that are tolerated, and 3 caravans on unauthorised sites that are not tolerated, on 2 unauthorised sites.
- 3.15 In addition, details of all recorded encampments from 2014 were provided by the Council and were analysed to help to determine whether there was any need for transit provision. See Chapter 6 for further details.

Current Accommodation Provision

- 3.16 One of the main considerations of this study is provide evidence to support the provision of pitches and plots to meet the current and future accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Denbighshire. In general, a pitch is an area which is large enough for one household to occupy and typically contains enough space for one or two caravans but can vary in size. A site is a collection of pitches which form a development exclusively for Gypsies and Travellers. For Travelling Showpeople, the most common descriptions used are a plot for the space occupied by one household and a yard for a collection of plots which are typically exclusively occupied by Travelling Showpeople.
- 3.17 The public and private provision of mainstream housing is also largely mirrored when considering Gypsy and Traveller accommodation. One common form of a Gypsy and Traveller site is a publicly provided residential site, which is provided by a Local Authority or by a Housing Association. Pitches on public sites can usually be obtained through signing up to a waiting list, and the costs of running the sites are met from the rent paid by the tenants (similar to social housing).
- 3.18 The alternatives to public residential sites are private residential sites and yards for Gypsies and Travellers. These result from individuals or families buying areas of land and then obtaining planning permission to live on them. Households can also rent pitches on some private sites that are run on a commercial basis. Therefore, these two forms of accommodation are the equivalent to private ownership and renting for those who live in bricks and mortar housing. Generally, the majority of Travelling Showpeople yards are privately owned and managed.
- 3.19 The Gypsy and Traveller population also has other forms of sites due to its mobile nature. Transit sites tend to contain many of the same facilities as a residential site, except that there is a restricted period of residence which can vary from a period of weeks to a period of months. An alternative to a transit site is an emergency stopping place. This type of site also has restrictions on the length of time someone can stay on it but has much more limited facilities. Another alternative is a Negotiated Stopping Agreement that allows Gypsy and Traveller families to set up short-term camps as long as they agree to certain conditions. These are designed to accommodate, for a temporary period, Gypsies and Travellers whilst they travel. A number of authorities also operate an accepted encampments policy where short-term stopovers are tolerated without enforcement action.
- 3.20 Further considerations for the Gypsy and Traveller population are unauthorised developments and encampments. Unauthorised developments occur on land which is owned by the Gypsies and Travellers or with the approval of the landowner, but for which they do not have planning permission to use for residential

purposes. Unauthorised encampments are usually short-term and occur on land which is not owned by the Gypsies and Travellers – for example laybys or car parks.

Sites and Yards in Denbighshire

- ^{3.21} In Denbighshire, at the baseline date for the GTAA, there were no sites with planning permission, and 2 unauthorised sites (7 pitches). There was also no transit provision.
- ^{3.22} Despite efforts to identify them, no Travelling Showpeople yards were found in Denbighshire. This is consistent with findings from previous GTAA's for Denbighshire.
- ^{3.23} Further details can be found in Chapter 5 and **Appendix B**.

Figure 2 - Total amount of provision in Denbighshire (August 2023)

Category	Sites/Yards	Pitches/Plots
Private with permanent planning permission	0	0
Private sites with temporary planning permission	0	0
Public sites	0	0
Public transit provision (seasonal)	0	0
Private transit provision	0	0
Tolerated sites	0	0
Unauthorised sites	2	7
Travelling Showpeople yards	0	0
TOTAL	2	7

Figure 3 - Sites and Yards in Denbighshire (August 2023)

Site Name	Pitches/Plots	Status
Unauthorised 1	1	Unauthorised
Unauthorised 2	6	Unauthorised
Total	7	

4. Methodology

4.1 This section sets out the methodology that has been followed to deliver the outputs for this study. The Welsh Government GTAA Guidance issued under Section 106 of the Housing (Wales) Act sets out the requirements for the GTAA and the methodology and calculation of need that has been followed has sought to address these and allow for a full and robust GTAA to be completed. The study has been undertaken by ORS, in conjunction with Denbighshire County Council, and the approach taken covers the following core areas of work:

- » GTAA Project Steering Group.
- » GTAA Project Board.
- » Task and Finish Group.
- » Identifying and analysing existing data sources.
- » Publicising the accommodation assessment.
- » Conducting the accommodation assessment surveys.
- » Calculating the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers.

4.2 The stages below provide a summary of the methodology that was used to complete this study.

GTAA Project Steering Group

4.3 The Welsh Government GTAA Guidance requires that a Project Steering Group be established to ensure that the study is informed by all available local knowledge and expertise. The Council set up and managed a Joint Steering Group for Denbighshire and Conwy as part of the 2021 GTAA as it was a joint commission. The individuals who attended the meetings of the GTAA Steering Group were:

Figure 4 – GTAA Project Steering Group Membership

Organisation	Role
Denbighshire CC	Lead Member for Planning, Public Protection and Safer Communities
Denbighshire CC	Strategic Planning and Housing Manager
Denbighshire CC	Lead Project Manager
Denbighshire CC	Senior Officer, Strategic Planning and Housing
Denbighshire CC	Senior Officer, Strategic Planning and Housing
Conwy BC	Cabinet Member for Housing and Regulatory Services
Conwy BC	Strategic Planning Policy Manager
Opinion Research Services	Consultant
Opinion Research Services	Consultant
Travelling Ahead	North Wales Engagement Lead
Travelling Ahead	Team Manager

4.4 As set out in the GTAA Guidance the key responsibilities of the Steering Group were to agree on the aims and objectives of the study; to promote the benefits of the study to members of the Travelling Community; to help identify households living in bricks and mortar and on unauthorised sites and encampments; to provide expert stakeholder input into the identification of local need; to provide feedback on the emerging outputs from the study; and to share and promote the final outcomes to members of the Travelling Community. The

first Steering Group meeting was held in June 2021, the second Steering Group Meeting was held in November 2021, and a final Steering Group Meeting was held in January 2022. All meetings were held online due to COVID-19.

- 4.5 The first Steering Group meeting discussed the background to the GTAA and clarified the purpose and the role of the Group. Means of communicating the GTAA were also discussed, together with opportunities to engage with households living in bricks and mortar. The second Steering Group meeting provided an opportunity for an update on the emerging outcomes of the assessment of need and an opportunity to discuss the content of the Draft GTAA Report. The final Steering Group meeting discussed sharing the GTAA Report, discussing how the study outcomes could be communicated to members of the Travelling Community and how to address the identified need in LDP Policies.

GTAA Project Board

- 4.6 In addition to establishing a GTAA Steering Group as required by the Welsh Government GTAA Guidance, the Council also established a GTAA Project Board to support the 2021 GTAA. The key purpose of the Project Board was to provide oversight, direction, and governance for the GTAA project and its workstreams in Denbighshire. It also provided a forum for managing communications and stakeholder engagement. It operated in a similar manner to other Project Boards within the local authority, managing the detail of the project including progress, issues, and risks. The Project Board met monthly since June 2020 until the publication of the 2021 GTAA Report. The Project Board was reconvened in December 2022 to support the 2023 GTAA Update and has met monthly since February 2023.
- 4.7 Membership of the GTAA Project Board comprised the following members with full voting rights:

Figure 5 – GTAA Reconvened Project Board Membership

Role
Lead Member for Local Development and Planning
Head of Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services
Head of Legal, HR & Democratic Services
Corporate Director – Economy and Environment
Head of Housing and Community Services

Task & Finish Group

- 4.8 A Task & Finish Group was also established by the Council to support the 2021 GTAA. This Group was also reconvened to support the 2023 GTAA Update. The key purposes of the Group were to:
- » Ensure that the approach taken to deliver the new Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment complied with the Welsh Government methodology and that previous feedback was considered within the new document in line with Scrutiny requirements.
 - » To monitor progress and advise as necessary on the delivery of the Assessment, and to help develop a suitable Stakeholder Engagement Plan to satisfy Scrutiny concerns and requirements.

- 4.9 A total of 5 meetings of the Group were held between May and September 2021, and a final meeting was held in November 2021 to discuss the Draft GTAA Report. Since it was reconvened the Group has met 3 times since March 2023
- 4.10 Membership of the Task & Finish Group comprised Elected Members appointed by each of the Councils 6 Member Area Groups, together with support from Officers. In addition, other individuals were invited to attend certain meetings of the group to discuss specific issues:

Figure 6 – GTAA Reconvened Task & Finish Group

Role
Member Area Group Representative for Elwy (Chair)
Member Area Group Representative for Dee Valley
Member Area Group Representative for Denbigh
Member Area Group Representative for Prestatyn
Member Area Group Representative for Rhyl
Member Area Group Representative for Ruthin
Lead Member for Local Development
Strategic Planning and Housing Manager
Corporate Project Manager

- 4.11 It is anticipated that further meetings of the reconvened Project Board and Task & Finish Group will be held to discuss the outcomes of this GTAA Update.

Stakeholder Engagement

- 4.12 In addition to the Steering Group contact was made with a number of stakeholders listed in Annex 1 in the GTAA Guidance to identify whether they had any particular issues they would like to raise in relation to Gypsies and Travellers in Denbighshire. The organisations that were contacted were:
- » Friends, Families and Travellers
 - » Gypsies & Travellers Wales
 - » Roma Support Group
 - » The Bridges Project
 - » The Gypsy Council
 - » The National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups
 - » The Showmen’s Guild of Great Britain - South Wales
 - » The Traveller Movement
 - » The Unity Project
 - » Travelling Ahead
- 4.13 The only response that was received was from Travelling Ahead and a summary of the interview that was completed in 2021 can be found in **Appendix E**.

Identify and Analyse Existing Data

4.14 A desk-based review was undertaken to collate and analyse a range of secondary data and other local intelligence that has been used to identify and support the assessment of current and future accommodation need including:

- » Planning records.
- » Census data.
- » Site records and waiting lists.
- » Caravan Counts data.
- » Records of unauthorised sites/encampments.
- » Information on planning applications/appeals.
- » Information on enforcement actions.
- » Existing GTAA's and other relevant local studies.
- » Existing national and local policy, guidance, and best practice.

Publicise the Accommodation Assessment

4.15 In order to get buy-in from members of the Travelling Community during the preparation of the 2021 GTAA to ensure that they were able and willing to participate in the site and household interviews and provide accurate information, it was important that effective publicity and pre-notification was put in place. This was also very important in terms of identifying households living in bricks and mortar accommodation to interview as part of the study.

4.16 The approach to publicity was discussed with members of the Steering Group prior to the fieldwork commencing. This publicity that was put in place included the actions below and examples can be found in **Appendix F:**

- » Press Releases.
- » Information on the Council's website.
- » Information in the Council's online residents' publication 'County Voice'.
- » Social media adverts.
- » Posters in a range of community venues and libraries.
- » Promotion through front-line services including the Local Health Board and North Wales Police.
- » Online engagement with Elected Members, and City, Town, and Community Councillors.
- » Information circulation by Gypsy and Traveller advocacy organisations.
- » Word-of-mouth information sharing by Gypsy Liaison officers.
- » Contact with organisations set out in the Welsh Government GTAA Guidance.

- 4.17 This approach was not repeated for the 2023 GTAA Update as the Council were aware of all the existing Gypsy and Traveller sites in Denbighshire.

Conducting the Accommodation Assessment Surveys

Household Interviews

- 4.18 Through the desk-based research and previous information from the Steering Group, ORS worked closely with the Council to identify all authorised and unauthorised sites, yards, and encampments in Denbighshire, and sought to undertake a full demographic study of the residents on all pitches and plots – as required by the Welsh Government GTAA Guidance.
- 4.19 Contact details for site residents were obtained from the Council and permission was obtained from residents prior to any contact information for telephone numbers being shared with Researchers from ORS via secure email.
- 4.20 Residents on sites were contacted by telephone by Researchers from ORS to arrange an appointment to complete a face-to-face interview. However, all households who were contacted requested to complete their interviews over the telephone. Interviews were completed with all households using the Welsh Government GTAA Household Interview questions.

Bricks and Mortar Interviews

- 4.21 During the completion of the 2021 GTAA ORS worked closely with the Council to identify and encourage households living in bricks and mortar to participate in the assessment. Contacts were sought through members of the Steering Group, speaking with people on existing sites and adverts on social media, and through posters displayed on community noticeboards and within local communities. Permission was obtained for telephone numbers to be shared with Researchers from ORS.
- 4.22 For the 2023 GTAA Update ORS liaised with the Council to identify any further contacts for households living in bricks and mortar and a total of 4 households were identified.
- 4.23 Residents living in bricks and mortar were contacted by telephone by Researchers from ORS to arrange an appointment to complete a face-to-face interview. However, all 4 households who were contacted requested to complete their interviews over the telephone, or via Teams. Interviews were completed with all households using the Welsh Government GTAA Household Interview questions.

Calculate the Accommodation Needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

- 4.24 The Welsh Government GTAA Guidance sets out a detailed methodology to assess current and future pitch needs. This approach has been followed for the purpose of this GTAA.
- 4.25 As with any housing assessment, the underlying calculation is comprised of a relatively small number of factors. In this case, the key issue for residential pitches is to compare the supply of pitches available for occupation with the current and future population need. This information has been obtained from a

combination of the desk-based research and the outcomes of the site and household interviews. The key factors in each of these elements are set out below.

Current Residential Supply

- » Occupied local authority pitches.
- » Occupied authorised private pitches.
- » Vacant local authority pitches and available private pitches.
- » Pitches expected to be vacated in the near future.
- » New local authority pitches private pitches with planning permission.

Current Residential Demand

^{4.26} Total current residential demand is made up of the following components. It was important to make full use of the desk-based research and intelligence from members of the Steering Group to address issues of double counting (for example bricks and mortar households who are also on the waiting list for pitches):

- » Households on unauthorised developments.
- » Households on unauthorised encampments.
- » Concealed /over-crowded/doubled-up households².
- » Conventional housing – movement from bricks and mortar³.
- » New households to arrive from waiting lists/in-migration.

Future Demand

^{4.27} Total future demand is a result of the formation of new households during the study period. ORS has undertaken extensive research into the population and household growth of the Gypsy and Traveller community in England and Wales (**Appendix G**). This was used to inform this element of the Welsh Government GTAA Guidance (see Paragraphs 203-209). Paragraph 203 sets out that the research completed by ORS suggests that an acceptable growth rate is usually within the range of 1.50% – 3.00% per annum and Paragraph 204 sets out that Local Authorities should analyse the demographic data provided by community members to consider their own local anticipated future household growth.

^{4.28} Information from the site interviews provides details of the gross number of new households expected to form within the first 5 years of the study.

^{4.29} The estimate of new household formation for remaining years of the study has been completed based on demographic evidence from the site interviews. Further evidence to support the approach taken to calculate new household formation is set out in Chapter 6.

² Following the guidance set out in Paragraphs 195-201 of the GTAA Guidance.

³ Following the guidance set out in Paragraphs 172-183 of the GTAA Guidance.

Final Outcomes

4.30 All of the components of supply and demand are presented in an easy-to-understand table as set out in the GTAA Guidance in Table 3.

Transit Provision

4.31 The GTAA also includes an assessment of the need for any transit sites or temporary stopping places to meet the needs of members of the Travelling Community who either travel permanently or for part of the year. In order to investigate the potential need for transit provision when undertaking the GTAA, ORS have undertaken analysis of records of unauthorised sites and encampments that were identified during the desk-based research. Data from the Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Count has also been considered as supporting evidence.

Compliance with Engagement Checklist

4.32 The table below shows that the 2021 GTAA has been compliant with all of points set out in the Engagement Checklist in the Welsh Government GTAA Guidance. Given that the 2023 GTAA Update only included a new round of household interviews and subsequent needs analysis, the checklist has been updated where appropriate.

Figure 7 – Engagement Checklist

	Task	Completed
1	<p>Visit every Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson household identified through the data analysis process up to 3 times, if necessary.</p> <p><i>It was possible for ORS Researchers to contact households living on every site in Denbighshire, and it was possible to interview all resident households that were identified over the phone. [Updated]</i></p>	✓
2	<p>Publish details of the GTAA process, including contact details to allow community members to request an interview, on the local authority website, Travellers Times website and the World's Fair publication. In addition, adverts were placed by Welsh Government.</p> <p><i>Extensive publicity was undertaken to promote the GTAA, and details can be found in Appendix F. However, Worlds Fair ceased being published as a weekly newspaper in 2019 (although there are plans to relaunch it in 2021) and Travellers Times no longer publish details of GTAAs on their Facebook pages.</i></p>	✓
3	<p>Consult relevant community support organisations, such as those in Annex 1.</p> <p><i>Engagement was sought with all organisations listed in Annex 1 of the GTAA Guidance. The only organisation that responded was Travelling Ahead and a telephone interview was completed with their Team Manager. A summary of the outcomes of the interview can be found in Appendix E.</i></p>	✓
4	<p>Develop a Local Authority waiting list for both pitches and housing, which is accessible and communicated to community members.</p>	✓

	<i>There are no public sites in Denbighshire County Council.</i>	
5	<p>Endeavour to include Gypsies and Travellers on the GTAA Project Steering Group.</p> <p><i>Due to the small numbers of Gypsy and Traveller households within the county, it was not possible to encourage a member of the Gypsy and Traveller community to sit on the Steering Group.</i></p>	✓
6	<p>Ensure contact details provided to the local authority by community members through the survey process are followed up and needs assessed.</p> <p><i>All contacts provided by the local authority were followed up and interviews were completed with all households. [Updated].</i></p>	✓
7	<p>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.</p> <p><i>Due to the very small number of Travellers in Denbighshire and COVID-19 restrictions, it was not possible to hold any on-site information events.</i></p>	✓

5. Survey Findings

Background

- 5.1 The desk-based research, and additional information from the Council, identified a total of 2 unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller sites and no Travelling Showpeople yards in Denbighshire. A total of 4 households living on unauthorised encampments and 4 households living in bricks and mortar were also identified.

Figure 8 - Sites in Denbighshire (August 2023)

Site Name	Pitches	Status
Unauthorised 1	1	Unauthorised
Unauthorised 2	6	Unauthorised
Various (x4)	4	Encampments
Various (x4)	n/a	Bricks and Mortar
TOTAL	11	

- 5.2 Interviews were attempted with households on the sites and encampments between June 2023 and August 2023 and a total of 7 successful interviews were completed across all the 2 sites and encampments. In addition, a total of 4 interviews were completed with households that were identified living in bricks and mortar. This represented an overall response rate of 100% of occupied pitches and households

Figure 9 – Interviews completed in Denbighshire (August 2023)

Site/Yard Name	Pitches	Interviews	Refusals
Unauthorised 1	1	1	0
Unauthorised 2	6	6	0
Unauthorised 3	1	1	0
Unauthorised 4	1	1	0
Unauthorised 5	1	1	0
Unauthorised 6	1	1	0
Bricks and Mortar 1	1	1	0
Bricks and Mortar 2	1	1	0
Bricks and Mortar 3	1	1	0
Bricks and Mortar 4 ⁴	1	1	0
TOTAL	15	15	0

- 5.3 In addition the 2021 GTAA identified a further household who were living in bricks and mortar which they felt was unsuitable for their needs. The Council have confirmed that this household have now been rehoused in suitable accommodation and as such their needs have not been included in the GTAA Update.

Interview Log

- 5.4 A copy of the Interview Log can be found in **Appendix C**.

⁴ This household was living on an unauthorised site in Denbighshire at the time of the 2021 GTAA but have now moved to a bricks and mortar property in Wrexham. Their needs have not been included in the GTAA Update.

Overview and Demographics of Residents

- 5.5 Information collected on the type of accommodation lived in by those who were interviewed shows that the Gypsies and Travellers who were interviewed in Denbighshire live on unauthorised sites, unauthorised encampments, or in bricks and mortar.
- 5.6 Ethnicity data was captured from all the households that were interviewed on the unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller sites and for those living in bricks and mortar. All those who were interviewed identified as Welsh Gypsies.
- 5.7 In total the interviews identified 39 residents living on the 2 unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller sites, the 4 encampments, and living in bricks and mortar. This was made up of 24 adults and 15 children aged under 18. This equates to 62% adults and 38% children and teenagers. Although not a direct comparison, data from the 2011 Census for Denbighshire as a whole (the settled community and the Gypsy or Irish Traveller community) and for Gypsies or Irish Travellers has been compared to the site population. This shows a higher proportion of those aged under 18 in the Gypsy and Traveller population when compared to that of the Denbighshire population as a whole. This is important when considering the new household growth rate that could be applied to the population when longer-term need is determined.

Figure 10 – Age and Gender of Household Members as % of Total Residents Interviewed (August 2023)

Age and Gender - Sites	Number	%
Male	21	54
Female	18	46
Under 18	15	39
18 and over	24	61

Interview Summary

- 5.8 Summaries of the interviews that were completed with Gypsies and Travellers living on unauthorised sites, unauthorised encampments, and living in bricks and mortar can be found in **Appendix D**.

6. Assessing Accommodation Needs

- 6.1 This section focuses on the pitch provision which is needed by Denbighshire County Council for a short-term period of 5 years and the full LDP period to 2033. This includes both current unmet need and need which is likely to arise in the future. This period allows for robust forecasts for future provision, based upon the evidence contained within this study and from secondary data sources.
- 6.2 This section is based upon a combination of information from the household interviews, planning records, and from the Council. In many cases, the survey data is not used in isolation, but instead is used to validate information from planning records or other sources.
- 6.3 This section concentrates not only upon the total provision, which is needed in the area, but also whether there is a need for any transit sites and/or emergency stopping place provision.
- 6.4 Welsh Government Guidance requires an assessment of current and future pitch needs and provides a prescribed framework for undertaking this calculation. This framework has been followed for the purpose of this GTAA.
- 6.5 As with any assessment of housing need the underlying calculation can be broken down into a relatively small number of factors. In this case, the key issue for residential pitches is to compare the supply that is available for occupation with the current and future needs of the households. The key factors in each of these elements are set out in the sections below.

Current Residential Supply

- » Occupied local authority pitches.
- » Occupied authorised private pitches.
- » Vacant local authority pitches and available private pitches.
- » Pitches expected to be vacated in the near future.
- » New local authority pitches private pitches with planning permission.

Current Residential Demand

- » Households on unauthorised encampments.
- » Households on unauthorised developments.
- » Concealed /over-crowded/doubled-up households⁵.
- » Conventional housing – movement from bricks and mortar⁶.
- » New households to arrive from waiting lists/in-migration.

⁵ Following the guidance set out in Paragraphs 195-201 of the GTAA Guidance.

⁶ Following the guidance set out in Paragraphs 172-183 of the GTAA Guidance.

Future Demand

- 6.6 Total future demand is a result of the formation of new households during the study period. Information from the site interviews provides details of the gross number of new households expected to form within the first 5 years of the study (although it is important to *net* this off against supply that has been identified during the first 5 years of the study). New household formation for the remainder of the study period have been based on demographic evidence from the site interviews.

Current Authorised Residential Supply

- 6.7 To assess the current Gypsy and Traveller provision it is important to understand the total number of existing pitches and their planning status. At the baseline for the GTAA there were no authorised sites in Denbighshire.

Figure 11 – Total number of authorised sites in Denbighshire (August 2023)

Category	Sites	Pitches	Occupied
Private sites with permanent planning permission	0	0	0
Private sites with temporary planning permission	0	0	0
Public sites (Council and Registered Providers)	0	0	0
Public transit provision	0	0	0
Private transit provision	0	0	0
Tolerated sites	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0

- 6.8 The next stage of the process is to assess how much space is, or will become, available on existing sites in order to determine the supply of available pitches. The main ways of finding this is through:
- » **Current vacant pitches** – There are no authorised sites in Denbighshire.
 - » **Pitches expected to become vacant** – There are no authorised sites in Denbighshire.
 - » **Pitches currently with planning permission** – There are no pitches on sites that have planning permission that have not been implemented.
- 6.9 This gives a figure for **overall supply of no pitches**.

Figure 12 - Summary of Pitch Supply in Denbighshire - August 2023

Category	Pitches
Current vacant pitches	0
Pitches expected to become vacant	0
Movement to bricks and mortar	0
Out-migration	0
Unimplemented pitches with planning consent	0
TOTAL SUPPLY	0

Current Residential Demand

- 6.10 The next stage of the process is to assess current need and determine how many households are currently seeking pitches in the area.

Current Unauthorised Sites and Encampments

- 6.11 The study has identified 2 unauthorised sites in Denbighshire. A site with 1 pitch (Unauthorised 1) and a site with 6 pitches (Unauthorised 2). The study also identified 4 households living on unauthorised encampments in Denbighshire.

Figure 13 - Summary of Unauthorised and Tolerated Pitches in Denbighshire (August 2023)

Site	Pitches
Unauthorised Sites (x2)	7
Unauthorised Encampments (x4)	4
TOTAL	11

Concealed Households and Over-Crowded Pitches

- 6.12 The site interviews sought to identify concealed or doubled-up households on sites that require a pitch immediately. Welsh Government Guidance defines concealed households as those which are unable to achieve their own authorised accommodation and are instead living within authorised accommodation (houses or pitches) assigned to another household. This may include adult children who have been unable to move home or different households occupying a single pitch. The site interviews identified **1 concealed or doubled-up household, and no over-crowded pitches.**

Conventional Housing

- 6.13 Identifying households in bricks and mortar has been frequently highlighted as an issue with GTAA's. The 2021 Census identified a total of just 36 Gypsy or Irish Traveller and Roma households in Denbighshire living in bricks and mortar.
- 6.14 As noted earlier, ORS went to all possible lengths to identify Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar and worked with Council Officers, and households that were interviewed to identify households to interview. This process resulted in 4 households that were interviewed, 2 who stated that they had a need to move to a site in Denbighshire; 1 who was happy living in bricks and mortar; and 1 who are now living in bricks and mortar in Wrexham.

Figure 14 - Summary of Bricks and Mortar Need in Denbighshire - August 2023

Site	Pitches
Existing households	2
TOTAL	2

New Households to Arrive

- 6.15 At the time of the GTAA there were no public sites in Denbighshire and no waiting list. Therefore, there are **no additional households** in need of a pitch in Denbighshire from the waiting list.
- 6.16 Assessments also need to consider in-migration (households requiring accommodation who intend to move into the study area from outside) and out-migration (households intending to move away from the study area). Site surveys typically identify only small numbers of in-migrant and out-migrant households and the data is not normally robust enough to extrapolate long-term trends. At the national level, there is zero net migration of Gypsies and Travellers across the UK, but this assessment has considered local migration effects on the basis of the best local evidence available.
- 6.17 Evidence drawn from household interviews in Denbighshire, and discussions with the Council has been carefully considered **and has identified no evidence of any in-migration**.

Additional Pitch Provision: Future Need

- 6.18 The next stage of the process is to assess future need and determine how many households are likely to be seeking pitches in the area in the future during the first 5 years of the assessment, and for the longer LDP period to 2033.

Population and Household Growth

- 6.19 Nationally, a household formation and growth rate of 3.00% net per annum has been commonly assumed and widely used in local GTAAs, even though there is no statistical evidence of households growing so quickly. The result has been to inflate both national and local requirements for additional pitches unrealistically. In this context, ORS has prepared a *Technical Note on Household Formation and Growth Rates* that was updated in June 2020. The main conclusions are set out here and the full Technical Note can be found in **Appendix G**.
- 6.20 Those seeking to provide evidence of high annual net household growth rates for Gypsies and Travellers have sometimes sought to rely on increases in the number of caravans, as reflected in the Caravan Counts. However, Caravan Count data is unreliable and erratic – so the only proper way to project future population and household growth is through detailed demographic analysis.
- 6.21 The research undertaken by ORS has identified that the growth in the national Gypsy and Traveller population may be as low as 1.50% per annum – much less than the 3.00% per annum often assumed, but still greater than in the settled community. Even using extreme and unrealistic assumptions, it is hard to find evidence that net Gypsy and Traveller population and household growth rates are above 2.00% per annum nationally.
- 6.22 The often assumed 3.00% per annum net household growth rate is unrealistic and would require clear statistical evidence before being used for planning purposes. In practice, the best available evidence supports the ORS national net household growth rate of 1.50% per annum for Gypsies and Travellers.
- 6.23 There are 2 measures of household growth that are used for the assessment of need in this study. Evidence of gross household formation (family growth) from Section D of the Household Survey, netted off against evidence of 1 year pitch turnover and pitches expected to become vacant, has been used for the first 5 year period. New household formation for the remaining years of the GTAA has been based on demographic evidence from the household interviews.

- 6.24 The site and bricks and mortar interviews identified **2 new households** as a result of family growth from teenagers over the first 5 years of the assessment, and a no annual pitch turnover as there are no public sites.
- 6.25 Household formation for the remainder of the GTAA period to 2033 has been based on the overall demographics of the population. The GTAA Guidance recommends that applying a net compound growth rate should be considered.
- 6.26 However, in certain circumstances where the numbers of households and children are low, or the population age structure is skewed by certain age groups, it is not appropriate to apply a percentage rate for new household formation. In these cases, a judgement is made on likely new household formation based on the age and gender of the children. This is based on the assumption that 50% of households likely to form will stay in the area. This is based on evidence from other GTAAs that ORS have completed across England and Wales. This approach has been taken to determine levels of new household formation for Gypsies and Travellers in Denbighshire for the wider period to 2033 given the low numbers of younger children identified in the household interviews. The outcome is that a total future need for 2 pitches was identified for the period 2028/29–2033. However, it should be noted that this figure may change over time.

Overall Need for Gypsies and Travellers in Denbighshire

- 6.27 The Welsh Government Guidance requires 2 assessments of need – for the first 5 years of the study period, and for the full Local Development Plan period.
- 6.28 Following this approach, the overall estimated provision that is needed in Denbighshire for the first 5 years is for **16 pitches**.
- 6.29 The overall estimated provision that is needed up to 2033 is for **18 pitches**.

Figure 15 – Pitches Needed in Denbighshire from 2023-2033

Current Residential Supply	Number of Pitches	Notes
A. Occupied Local Authority Pitches	0	No public sites
B. Occupied authorised private pitches/tolerated pitches	0	No authorised sites
Total	0	
Planned Residential Supply	Number of Pitches	
C. Vacant Local Authority pitches and available vacant pitches	0	No public sites
D. Pitches expected to become vacant in near future	0	No public sites
E. New Local Authority and private pitches with planning permission	0	No unimplemented pitches
Total	0	
Current Residential Demand	Pitch Demand	
F. Unauthorised encampments	4	4 encampments
G. Unauthorised developments	7	7 unauthorised pitches
H. Overcrowded pitches/Unsuitable accommodation	1	1 doubled-up household
I. Conventional housing	2	2 households from bricks and mortar
J. New households to arrive	0	No in-migration
Total	14	
Current Households	Future Households (at year 5)	Future Households (years 6 to 12)
K. 14 households	16	18
L. Additional household pitch need	2	2
Unmet Need	Need Arising	Need Accommodated
M. Current residential demand	14	
N. Future residential demand (year 5)	2	
O. Future residential demand (years 6 to 10)	2	
P. Planned residential supply		0
Q. Unmet need (5 year)	16	
R. Unmet need (to end of the Denbighshire LDP period to 2033)	18	

Transit/Emergency Stopping Site Provision

- 6.30 Transit sites serve a specific function of meeting the needs of Gypsy and Traveller households who are visiting an area or who are passing through. A transit site typically has a restriction on the length of stay of around 13 weeks and has a range of facilities such as water supply, electricity, and amenity blocks. An alternative to a transit site is a temporary stopping place. This type of site also has restrictions on the length of time a Traveller can stay on it but has much more limited facilities with typically only a source of water and chemical toilets provided.
- 6.31 The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 is particularly important with regard to the issue of Gypsy and Traveller transit site provision. Section 62A of the Act allows the Police to direct trespassers to remove themselves, their vehicles, and their property from any land where a suitable pitch on a relevant caravan site is available within the same Local Authority area. A suitable pitch on a relevant caravan site is one which is situated in the same Local Authority area as the land on which the trespass has occurred, and which is managed by a Local Authority, a Registered Provider or other person or body as specified by order by the Secretary of State. Case law has confirmed that a suitable pitch must be somewhere where the household can occupy their caravan. Bricks and mortar housing is not a suitable alternative to a pitch⁷. Therefore, a transit site both provides a place for households in transit to an area and also a mechanism for greater enforcement action against inappropriate unauthorised encampments.
- 6.32 Consideration will also have to be given to the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act which came into force in June 2022. Part 4 of the Act gives the Police additional powers to deal with unauthorised encampments through new offences relating to residing on land without consent in or with a vehicle and new powers in relation to the seizure of property.
- 6.33 In order to identify whether there is a need for the Council to provide transit accommodation analysis has been undertaken of the Caravan Count data, recorded encampment data provided by the Council, and the outcomes from the household interviews.
- 6.34 Discussions with local stakeholders at the time of the 2021 GTAA, and analysis of records of unauthorised encampments, confirmed that there are limited instances of unauthorised encampments in Denbighshire, and that these are normally Travellers passing through for work purposes given that the area is on the main A55 travelling corridor across North Wales for Travellers coming to and from Ireland on the ferry from Holyhead. There have also been records of encampments in the middle and south of the county. There is also evidence of records of repeat annual visits from the same households at similar times of the year.
- 6.35 There have been other localised instances of Travellers temporarily visiting Denbighshire to attend weddings or other events, but no further evidence of any long-term or permanent accommodation needs were identified.
- 6.36 Detailed analysis of records of unauthorised encampments in Denbighshire from 2014 to 2023 are shown in the table below. These include localised instances of Travellers temporarily visiting Denbighshire to attend

⁷ <https://www.travellerstimes.org.uk/features/lawyers-opinion-police-powers-and-unauthorised-camps-travellers-motor-vehicles-and>

weddings or other events, but no further evidence of any long-term or permanent accommodation needs were identified.

- 6.37 The outcomes from the household interviews and discussions with stakeholders did not identify that there was a need for permanent transit provision locally, although there were discussions about a need for more transit provision across Wales.

Figure 16 – Recorded Encampments in Denbighshire 2014-2023 (to October)

Year	Recorded Encampments	No. of Locations
2014	9	8
2015	6	6
2016	15	13
2017	17	17
2018	15	15
2019	7	7
2020	4	4
2021	12	11
2022	13	12
2023 (to October)	5	5

Transit Recommendations

- 6.38 The outcomes from the household interviews and discussions with stakeholders did not identify that there was a need for permanent transit provision locally, although there were discussions about a need for more transit provision across Wales.
- 6.39 The Council employ a Gypsy, Roma, Traveller Liaison Officer post as well as having formalised a more co-ordinated process for the management of unauthorised encampments. This is understood to be to ensure early engagement with families travelling through Denbighshire, and to provide a coordinated approach to ensure that welfare checks and facilities such as bins and toilets are provided. This resulted in engagement with a total of 5 households living on encampments during the GTAA fieldwork period and none expressed a specific need for formal transit provision. This role is also intended to build better relations between the Council and the Travelling Community. Discussions with the Council have concluded that this approach could be developed further to form the basis of a more comprehensive managed approach to include considerations of options such as negotiated stopping.
- 6.40 Despite the previous GTAA identifying a need for transit pitches in Denbighshire, more recent evidence suggests that this is no longer the case and that alternative approaches should be considered. As such it is recommended that **there is not a need at this time for the Council to provide a transit site** in Denbighshire due to the low numbers of unauthorised encampments, and the short-term transient nature of these encampments.
- 6.41 It is also recommended that the Council should continue to monitor the number of unauthorised encampments and consider the use of short-term toleration (including negotiated stopping arrangements) to deal with short-term transient stops. This management-based approach should also include consideration about whether to provide toilets, water and refuse facilities. There are a number of examples across Wales

and England where management-based approaches to dealing with unauthorised encampments have been successful. A good example can be found at www.negotiatedstopping.co.uk. There are also many examples where local authorities are taking a more strategic and regional approach towards addressing transit issues including in Essex, Leicestershire, the former Northamptonshire, and Hampshire.

Need for Travelling Showpeople Plots

- ^{6.42} Given that there were no Travelling Showpeople identified as living in Denbighshire, no assessment of need has been undertaken. The Council should however monitor any future approaches for planning permission from Travelling Showpeople and have in place appropriate criteria based LDP policies to deal with any future applications.

7. Conclusions

Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Need

- 7.1 Based upon the evidence presented in this study the estimated additional pitch provision needed for Gypsies and Travellers in Denbighshire for the first 5 years of the study period (2023/24-2028/29) is for **16 pitches** and need by 2033, the end of the Denbighshire replacement LDP period, is for a further **2 pitches**. This gives a total need for the whole period across Denbighshire for **18 pitches**.

Travelling Showpeople Plot Need

- 7.2 Given that there have been no Travelling Showpeople identified as living in Denbighshire, no assessment of need has been undertaken. The Council should however monitor any future approaches for planning permission from Travelling Showpeople and have in place appropriate criteria based LDP policies to deal with any future applications.

Transit Sites

- 7.3 Despite the previous GTAA identifying a need for transit pitches in Denbighshire, more recent evidence suggests that this is no longer the case and that alternative approaches should be considered. As such it is recommended that **there is not a need at this time for the Council to provide a transit site** in Denbighshire due to the low numbers of unauthorised encampments, and the short-term transient nature of these encampments.

Addressing Identified Need

- 7.4 In general terms need identified in a GTAA should be seen as need for pitches. Welsh Government Guidance on Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites (2015) recommends that as a minimum a pitch should be capable of accommodating an amenity block, a mobile home, a touring caravan, and parking for two vehicles. However, this guidance relates only to public sites provided by Local Authorities and there are currently no public sites in Denbighshire.
- 7.5 Given that the need identified in Denbighshire is from households living on unauthorised sites, from unauthorised encampments, or from households living in bricks and mortar who have expressed a desire to either meet their own needs, or for new public site provision, it is recommended that the Council should seek to support these households to meet their need.
- 7.6 It is recognised that the Council are in the process of reviewing their adopted LDP that sets out how overall housing need will be addressed. The replacement Denbighshire LDP covers the period 2018-2033. The findings of this report should be considered as part of future housing mix and type within the context of the assessment of overall housing need in relation to Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

Appendix A: Definition of Key Terms

<p>Concealed or ‘doubled-up’ household</p>	<p>This refers to households which are unable to achieve their own authorised accommodation and are instead living within authorised accommodation (houses or pitches) assigned to another household.</p> <p>This may include adult children who have been unable to move home or different households occupying a single pitch.</p>
<p>Current residential demand</p>	<p>Those with a need for authorised pitches for a range of reasons, including:</p> <p>An inability to secure an authorised pitch leading to occupation of unauthorised encampments.</p> <p>An inability to secure correct planning permission for an unauthorised development.</p> <p>Households living in overcrowded conditions and want a pitch.</p> <p>Households in conventional housing demonstrating cultural aversion.</p> <p>New households expected to arrive from elsewhere.</p>
<p>Current residential supply</p>	<p>The number of authorised pitches which are available and occupied within the Local Authority or partnership area. This includes pitches on Local Authority or private sites.</p>
<p>Future residential demand</p>	<p>The expected level of new household formation which will generate additional demand within the 5-year period of the accommodation assessment and longer LDP period.</p>

<p>Gypsies and Travellers</p>	<p>(a) Persons of a nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin, including:</p> <p>(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 temporarily or permanently, and</p> <p>(2) Members of an organized group of travelling show people or circus people (whether or not travelling together as such); and</p> <p>(b) All other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or of living in a mobile home.</p> <p>Source: Section 108, Housing (Wales) Act 2014</p>
<p>Household</p>	<p>In this guidance this refers to individuals from the same family who live together on a single pitch / house / encampment.</p>
<p>Household growth</p>	<p>In this guidance household growth is defined by the number of new households arising from households which are already accommodated in the area.</p>
<p>Overall residential pitch need</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Planned residential pitch supply</p>	<p>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 by households moving to conventional housing or in other circumstances. Additional pitches which are due to open or private sites likely to achieve planning permission shortly should be included as planned residential supply.</p>

<p>Residential pitch</p>	<p>Land on a mobile home site where occupiers are entitled to station their mobile homes indefinitely (unless stated in their pitch agreement). Typically includes an amenity block, space for a static caravan and touring caravan and parking.</p>
<p>Residential site</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>Working space may also be provided on, or nearby, sites for activities carried out by community members.</p>
<p>Temporary residential site</p>	<p>These sites are residential sites which only have planning permission or a site licence for a limited period. Residents on these sites can expect to occupy their pitches for the duration of the planning permission or site licence (or as long as they abide by the terms of their pitch agreements, under the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013 – whichever is sooner).</p>
<p>Temporary Stopping Place</p>	<p>Also known as a ‘stopping place’, ‘Atchin Tan’, or ‘green lane’, amongst other names. 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.</p> <p>Temporary stopping places must make provision for waste disposal, water supply and sanitation at a minimum.</p>
<p>Transit pitch</p>	<p>Land on a mobile home site where occupiers are entitled to station their mobile homes for a maximum of 3 months.</p>

	<p>Transit pitches can exist on permanent residential sites; however, this is not recommended.</p>
<p>Transit site</p>	<p>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 maximum of 3 months at a time.</p> <p>Specific terms under the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013 apply on these sites. Working space may also be provided on, or near, sites for activities carried out by community members</p>
<p>Unauthorised development</p>	<p>Land occupied by the owner without the necessary land use planning permission.</p>
<p>Unauthorised encampment</p>	<p>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.</p>

Appendix B: Sites and Yards in Denbighshire (August 2023)

Site/Yard	Operational Pitches/Plots	Unauthorised Pitches/Plots
Public Sites		
None	-	-
Private Sites with Permanent Permission		
None	-	-
Private Sites with Temporary Permission		
None	-	-
Tolerated Sites		
None	-	-
Unauthorised Sites		
Unauthorised 1	-	1
Unauthorised 2	-	6
TOTAL PITCHES	0	7
Public Transit Sites		
None	-	-
Private Transit Sites		
None	-	-
Private Travelling Showpeople Yards		
None	-	-
Tolerated Travelling Showpeople Yards		
None	-	-
Unauthorised Travelling Showpeople Yards		
None	-	-

Appendix C: Interview Log

Address	Type of tenure	Engagement attempts	Engagement techniques	Completed or refusal?	Reason for refusal?
Unauthorised 1	Unauthorised Site	04/07/2023	Telephone	Complete	n/a
Unauthorised 2	Unauthorised Site	04/07/2023, 16/08/2023	Telephone, SMS Message	Complete	n/a
Unauthorised 3	Unauthorised Encampment	22/06/2023	Telephone	Complete	n/a
Unauthorised 4	Unauthorised Encampment	22/06/2023	Telephone	Complete	n/a
Unauthorised 5	Unauthorised Encampment	22/06/2023	Telephone	Complete	n/a
Unauthorised 6	Unauthorised Encampment	22/06/2023	Telephone	Complete	n/a
Bricks and Mortar 1	Bricks and Mortar	22/06/2023	Telephone	Complete	n/a
Bricks and Mortar 2	Bricks and Mortar	22/06/2023	Telephone	Complete	n/a
Bricks and Mortar 3	Bricks and Mortar	04/07/2023, 16/08/2023	Telephone, SMS Message	Complete	n/a
Bricks and Mortar 4	Bricks and Mortar	07/07/2023	Telephone	Complete	n/a

Appendix E: Interview Summary – Travelling Ahead

ORS interviewed a representative from Travelling Ahead for the 2021 GTAA⁸.

Travelling Ahead are an organisation which provides support, advice and advocacy for Gypsy, Traveller and Roma families across Wales. They have helped to raise awareness of Accommodation Assessments across Wales to ensure that the Travelling community are represented and were able to offer assistance to ORS in engaging with Travelling Community in Denbighshire for the latest Assessment.

The following matters were highlighted during the discussion with ORS and relate to existing matters in Denbighshire, and the wider context of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson accommodation in Wales.

Denbighshire Specific Issues

- » It was felt that, within Denbighshire Council, there should be continued engagement with members of the Travelling Community, including relationship-building engagement with elected members. This engagement should be intended to better understand what the needs of the Travelling community are and to strengthen understanding of the Local Authority duty to actually deliver sites.
- » Underlying all of the Gypsy and Traveller accommodation work in Denbighshire is the recent history concerning the planning committee's refusal of the site put forward by Council Officers last year (2020). The refusal of the site was accompanied by public opposition. The whole process has done untold damage to the faith of the community into how likely it is that the Council are willing or will be able to follow through on delivering any sites in the foreseeable future. This is felt by and impacts not just the local family who were due to be allocated the site, but all the community across North Wales. The council has to work to address these issues systemically and urgently if there is any chance of rebuilding this trust.
- » The new Gypsy and Traveller Liaison post in Denbighshire Council is understood to have helped with the management of encampments in the area. It was felt it has allowed for negotiations on stopping which has made mutually beneficial arrangements and is building relationships/reputation with members of the Travelling community.

Wider Regional/National Issues

- » It was highlighted that there could be unidentified need arising from people living in nomadic accommodation, such as vans, who reside regularly on the North coast of Wales. This includes holiday makers and others that would not be seen as traditional Gypsy Travellers. These people are therefore not subjected to the same sort of scrutiny and the

⁸ <https://www.tgpcymru.org.uk/what-we-do/travelling-ahead-wales-gypsy-roma-and-traveller-advice-and-advocacy-service/>

same sort of response from local people and Councils as those seen as Gypsies and Travellers would be.

- » The lack of any form of transit provision in North Wales is seen as a big concern, especially after a need for transit provision was identified in the last round of GTAA's and no provision has been delivered. The Housing Act duty has not been met and shows no signs of being met. It was suggested that advice on this issue could be sought from organisations outside of Councils and discussed with people with experience of travelling. It was felt that engagement with members of the Travelling community will be the best way to identify what form the transit provision should take. Furthermore, the Council should continually be monitoring the situation and hold itself accountable for any lack of action.
- » Given the lack of progress with transit provision in North Wales, there is concern whether the GTAA process as a whole actually delivers the network of support for nomadic families that is actually needed. While need is being systematically measured, it can be questioned whether what is identified is monitored and/or implemented correctly. Concerns regarding the reviews of encampment being undertaken by the police and councils across North Wales with no involvement of Gypsies and Travellers
- » Travelling Ahead would like to see Welsh Government promote a form of 'pre-application support' for Travellers looking to purchase land. This is in order to limit the frequency with which Travellers purchase land that is ultimately unsuitable for permanent accommodation.
- » Travelling Ahead would also like to see Welsh Government provide grants and encourage leases so that people who don't have their own resources may be able to access land over the long-term.

Appendix F: Publicity Examples (2021 GTAA)

NEW – Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2022

Conwy and Denbighshire County Councils invite you to take part in a survey to make sure we know what your accommodation needs are.

- ? Are you a Gypsy, Travelling Show person or Traveller?
- ? Do you live in, or stop off in Conwy and/or Denbighshire?
- ? Do you find it hard to find the right places to live or stop off in Conwy and/or Denbighshire?

If the answer is **YES** then please contact Opinion Research Services who are doing the work for the councils, to take part in the new survey to help us assess your needs.

Contact: **Michael Bayliss**
☎ **07471 267095** or **01792 535300**
✉ **Michael.Bayliss@ors.org.uk**

Thank you for your help.



NEWYDD – Aseiad o Anghenion Llety Sipsiwn a Theithwyr 2022

Mae Cyngor Sir Conwy a Sir Ddinbych yn eich gwahodd i gymryd rhan mewn arolwg i sicrhau ein bod yn gwybod beth yw eich anghenion o ran llety.

- ? Ydych chi'n Sipsi, aelod o Sioe Deithiol neu'n Deithiwr?
- ? Ydych chi'n byw yng Nghonwy a /neu Sir Ddinbych neu'n aros yma?
- ? Ydych chi'n ei chael yn anodd dod o hyd i'r lleoedd iawn i fyw neu aros yng Nghonwy a /neu Sir Ddinbych?

Os **YDYCH** gallwch gymryd rhan mewn arolwg newydd a fydd yn ein helpu i asesu eich anghenion, drwy gysylltu ag ORS (Opinion Research Services) sy'n cynnal yr arolwg ar ran y Cyngor.

Cysylltwch â: **Michael Bayliss**
☎ **07471 267095** neu **01792 535300**
✉ **Michael.Bayliss@ors.org.uk**

Diolch am eich help.



Copy of DCC Website page – uploaded 5/8/21

New Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2022

- Are you a Gypsy, Travelling Show person or Traveller?
- Do you live in, or stop off in Denbighshire?
- Do you find it hard to find the right places to live or stop off in Denbighshire?

If the answer is **yes** then please contact ORS (who are doing the work for the Council) to take part in the new survey to help us assess your needs.

Contact: Michael Bayliss
Phone: 07471 267095 or 01792 535300
Email: Michael.Bayliss@ors.org.uk

The Council has to carry out a new Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) to assess the current and future accommodation needs of Gypsy, Travelling Show People and Traveller families in Denbighshire. This study once complete and approved by Welsh Government will replace the previous one approved in 2017. You can access a copy of the previous assessment below.

 [2017 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment \(PDF, 2.75MB\)](#)

The Council is keen that anybody who identifies as a member of the Gypsy, Travelling Show People or Traveller community has the opportunity to take part in the study to ensure that their current and future accommodation needs are assessed. This is for both residential need and any need for sites for families travelling through Denbighshire. The invitation to take part in the survey applies equally to all members of the above communities whether currently in traditional caravan or trailer living or currently living in Bricks and Mortar accommodation.

If you would like to take part in the study, or if you know somebody who should be included in the survey then please contact the survey team:

Contact: Michael Bayliss
Phone: 07471 267095 or 01792 535300
Email: Michael.Bayliss@ors.org.uk

Related websites

[Guidance for those supporting Gypsy and Traveller communities: COVID-19 \(external website\)](#)

Document accessibility

[Download Adobe Acrobat Reader from Adobe.com.](#)

[What we're doing to improve accessibility.](#)

Copy of DCC facebook post 09/08/2021

<https://www.facebook.com/denbighshirecountycouncil>

The screenshot shows a Facebook post from the official page of Denbighshire County Council. The post is written in Welsh and is dated 8 August 2021 at 03:59. The text of the post describes a survey launched to assess the current accommodation needs for Gypsy and Traveller communities in Denbighshire. It mentions that the survey will include a review of local data, including unauthorised encampments, and a consultation with families from the community. The process will involve talking to families, key stakeholders, and representative groups, and will run until 7 October 2021. A large logo for 'sir ddinbych denbighshire County Council' is featured below the text. The Facebook interface includes a left-hand navigation menu with options like 'Home', 'About', 'Photos', 'Videos', 'Posts', 'Events', 'Groups', and 'Community'. On the right, there is a section for 'Pages liked by this Page' listing 'Citizens Advice', 'Community Catalysts Denbighsh...', 'Pavillon Theatre Rhyd', 'Journal Rhyd Journal', and 'Home Education Wales'. At the bottom of the post, there is a link to 'DENBIGHSHIRE.COUNCIL.WALES' and a title 'Survey for needs assessment for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation | Denbighshire County Council'. The post has 3 reactions and 1 share.

Rhyl Journal 09/08/2021

<https://www.denbighshirefreepress.co.uk/news/19500585.survey-help-produce-needs-assessment-gypsy-traveller-accommodation/>

News
9th August

Survey to help produce needs assessment for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation

By Arron Evans | [@ArronEvansNews](#)
Reporter



A new gypsy and traveller site is being looked into in Denbighshire.

[f](#) [t](#) [in](#) [m](#) [0 comment](#)

A SURVEY has been launched as part of work to produce an up to date needs assessment for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in Denbighshire.

Denbighshire County Council is assessing current accommodation need for Gypsies, Traveller and Travelling Show people and this does not include looking for locations for sites.

The process will include talking to Gypsy and Traveller families, key stakeholders and representative groups and will run until 7 October 2021.

It will include a review of local data, including the number of unauthorised



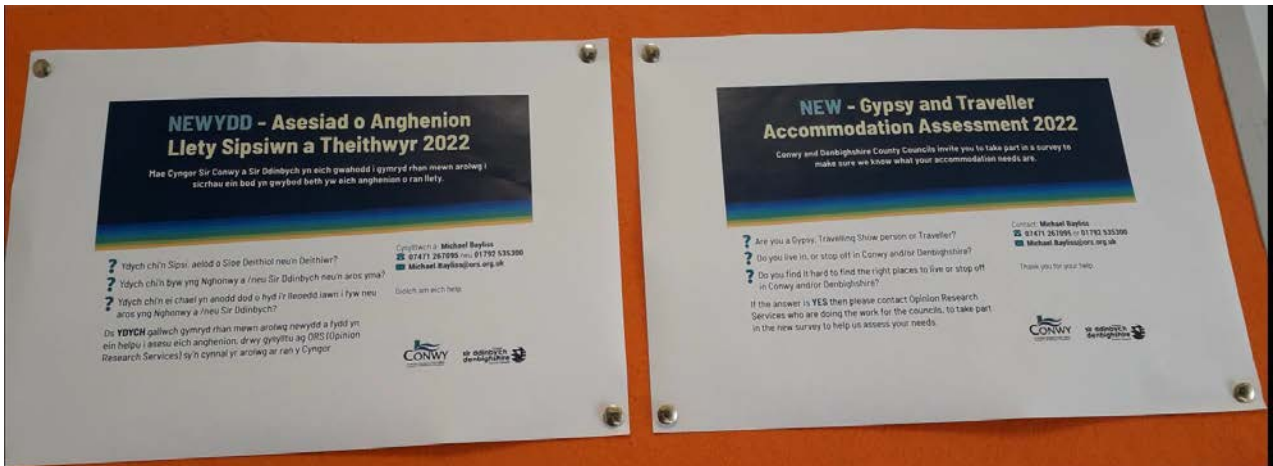
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Appendix G: Technical Note on Household Formation and Growth Rates



Technical Note

Gypsy and Traveller Household Formation and Growth Rates

June 2020

Opinion Research Services



As with all our studies, this research is subject to Opinion Research Services' Standard Terms and Conditions of Contract.

Any press release or publication of this research requires the advance approval of ORS. Such approval will only be refused on the grounds of inaccuracy or misrepresentation.

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Household Growth Rates

Abstract and Conclusions

1. National and local household formation and growth rates are important components of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation assessments, but until 2013 little detailed work had been done to assess their likely scale. ORS undertook work in 2013 to assess the likely rate of demographic growth for the Gypsy and Traveller population and concluded that the figure could be as low 1.25% per annum, but that best available evidence supports a national net household growth rate of 1.50% per annum.
2. This analysis was produced as a separate document in 2013 and then updated in 2015 (www.opinionresearch.co.uk/formation2015) in light of comments from academics, planning agents and local authorities. The 2015 document was complex because there was still serious dispute as to the level of demographic growth for Gypsies and Travellers in 2015. However, ORS now consider these disputes have largely been resolved at Planning Appeals and Local Plan Examinations, so we consider that much of the supporting evidence is now no longer required to be in the document.
3. This current document represents a shortened re-statement to our findings in 2015 to allow for easier comprehension of the issues involved. It contains no new research and if reader wishes to see further details of the supporting information, they should review the more detailed 2015 report.

Introduction

4. Compared with the general population, the relative youthfulness of many Gypsy and Traveller populations means that their birth rates are likely to generate higher-than-average population growth, and proportionately higher *gross* household formation rates. However, while their *gross* rate of household growth might be high, Gypsy and Traveller communities' future accommodation needs are, in practice, affected by any reduction in the number of households due to dissolution and/or by movements in/out of the area and/or by transfers into other forms of housing. Therefore, the *net* rate of household growth is the *gross* rate of formation *minus* any reductions in households due to such factors.

Modelling Population and Household Growth Rates

5. The basic equation for calculating the rate of Gypsy and Traveller population growth seems simple: start with the base population and then calculate the average increase/decrease by allowing for births, deaths, in-/out-migration and household dissolution. Nevertheless, deriving satisfactory estimates is difficult because the evidence is often tenuous – so, in this context in 2013, ORS modelled the growth of the national Gypsy and Traveller population based on the most likely birth and death rates, and by using PopGroup (the leading software for population and household forecasting). To do so, we supplemented the available national statistical sources with data derived from our own surveys.

Migration Effects

6. Population growth is affected by national net migration and local migration (as Gypsies and Travellers move from one area to another). In terms of national migration, the population of Gypsies and Travellers is relatively fixed, with little international migration. It is in principle possible for Irish Travellers (based in Ireland) to move to the UK, but there is no evidence of this happening to a significant extent and the vast majority of Irish Travellers were born in the UK or are long-term residents.

Population Profile

7. The main source for the rate of Gypsy and Traveller population growth is the UK 2011 Census. The ethnicity question in the 2011 Census included for the first time 'Gypsy and Irish Traveller' as a specific category. While non-response bias probably means that the size of the population was underestimated, the age profile the Census provides is not necessarily distorted and matches the profile derived from ORS's extensive household surveys.

Table 1 - Age Profile for the Gypsy and Traveller Community in England (Source: UK Census of Population 2011)

Age Group	Number of People	Cumulative Percentage
Age 0 to 4	5,725	10.4
Age 5 to 7	3,219	16.3
Age 8 to 9	2,006	19.9
Age 10 to 14	5,431	29.8
Age 15	1,089	31.8
Age 16 to 17	2,145	35.7
Age 18 to 19	1,750	38.9
Age 20 to 24	4,464	47.1
Age 25 to 29	4,189	54.7
Age 30 to 34	3,833	61.7
Age 35 to 39	3,779	68.5
Age 40 to 44	3,828	75.5
Age 45 to 49	3,547	82.0
Age 50 to 54	2,811	87.1
Age 55 to 59	2,074	90.9
Age 60 to 64	1,758	94.1
Age 65 to 69	1,215	96.3
Age 70 to 74	905	97.9
Age 75 to 79	594	99.0
Age 80 to 84	303	99.6
Age 85 and over	230	100.0

Birth and Fertility Rates

8. The table above provides a way of understanding the rate of population growth through births. The table shows that surviving children aged 0-4 years comprise 10.4% of the Gypsy and Traveller population – which means that, on average, 2.1% of the total population was born each year (over the last 5 years). The same estimate is confirmed if we consider that those aged 0-14 comprise 29.8% of the Gypsy and Traveller population – which also means that almost exactly 2% of the population was born each year.
9. The total fertility rate (TFR) for the whole UK population is just below 2 – which means that on average each woman can be expected to have just less than two children who reach adulthood. We know of only one estimate of fertility rates of the UK Gypsy and Traveller community, in *'Ethnic identity and inequalities in*

Britain: The dynamics of diversity by Dr Stephen Jivraj and Professor Ludi Simpson (published May 2015). The authors use the 2011 Census data to estimate the TFR for the Gypsy and Traveller community as 2.75.

10. ORS used our own multiple survey data to investigate the fertility rates of Gypsy and Traveller women. The ORS data shows that on average Gypsy and Traveller women aged 32 years have 2.5 children (but, because the children of mothers above this age point tend to leave home progressively, full TFRs were not completed). On this basis it is reasonable to infer an average of 3 children per woman during her lifetime, which is broadly consistent with the estimate of 2.75 children per woman derived from the 2011 Census.

Death Rates

11. Although the above data imply an annual growth rate through births of about 2%, the death rate has also to be taken into account. Whereas the average life expectancy across the whole population of the UK is currently just over 80 years, a Sheffield University study found that Gypsy and Traveller life expectancy is about 10-12 years less than average (Parry et al (2004) *'The Health Status of Gypsies and Travellers: Report of Department of Health Inequalities in Health Research Initiative'*, University of Sheffield).
12. Therefore, in our population growth modelling we used a conservative estimate of average life expectancy as 72 years – which is entirely consistent with the lower-than-average number of Gypsies and Travellers aged over 70 years in the 2011 Census (and also in ORS's own survey data).

Modelling Outputs

13. If we assume a TFR of 3 and an average life expectancy of 72 years for Gypsies and Travellers, then the modelling, undertaken in PopGroup, projects the population to increase by 66% over the next 40 years – implying a population compound growth rate of 1.25% per annum. If we assume that Gypsy and Traveller life expectancy increases to 77 years by 2050, then the projected population growth rate rises to nearly 1.50% per annum. To generate an 'upper range' rate of population growth, we assumed an implausible TFR of 4 and an average life expectancy rising to 77 over the next 40 years – which then yields an 'upper range' growth rate of 1.90% per annum.

Household Growth

14. In addition to population growth influencing the number of households, the size of households also affects the number. Hence, population and household growth rates do not necessarily match directly, mainly due to the current tendency for people to live in smaller childless or single person households.
15. Because the Gypsy and Traveller population is relatively young and has many single parent households, a 1.25%-1.50% annual population growth could yield higher-than-average household growth rates, particularly if average household sizes fall or if younger-than-average households form. However, while there is evidence that Gypsy and Traveller households already form at an earlier age than in the general population, the scope for a more rapid rate of growth, through even earlier household formation, is limited.
16. Based on the 2011 Census, the table below compares the age of household representatives in English households with those in Gypsy and Traveller households – showing that the latter has many more household representatives aged under-25 years. In the general English population 3.60% of household representatives are aged 16-24, compared with 8.70% in the Gypsy and Traveller population. ORS's survey data shows that about 10% of Gypsy and Traveller households have household representatives aged under-25 years.

Table 2 - Age of Head of Household (Source: UK Census of Population 2011)

Age of household representative	All households in England		Gypsy and Traveller households in England	
	Number of households	Percentage of households	Number of households	Percentage households
Age 24 and under	790,974	3.6%	1,698	8.7%
Age 25 to 34	3,158,258	14.3%	4,232	21.7%
Age 35 to 49	6,563,651	29.7%	6,899	35.5%
Age 50 to 64	5,828,761	26.4%	4,310	22.2%
Age 65 to 74	2,764,474	12.5%	1,473	7.6%
Age 75 to 84	2,097,807	9.5%	682	3.5%
Age 85 and over	859,443	3.9%	164	0.8%
Total	22,063,368	100%	19,458	100%

¹⁷ The following table shows that the proportion of single person Gypsy and Traveller households is not dissimilar to the wider population of England; but there are more lone parents, fewer couples without children, and fewer households with non-dependent children amongst Gypsies and Travellers

Table 3 - Household Type (Source: UK Census of Population 2011)

Household Type	All households in England		Gypsy and Traveller households in England	
	Number of households	Percentage of households	Number of households	Percentage households
Single person	6,666,493	30.3%	5,741	29.5%
Couple with no children	5,681,847	25.7%	2345	12.1%
Couple with dependent children	4,266,670	19.3%	3683	18.9%
Couple with non-dependent children	1,342,841	6.1%	822	4.2%
Lone parent: Dependent children	1,573,255	7.1%	3,949	20.3%
Lone parent: All children non-dependent	766,569	3.5%	795	4.1%
Other households	1,765,693	8.0%	2,123	10.9%
Total	22,063,368	100%	19,458	100%

18. The key point, though, is that since 20% of Gypsy and Traveller households are lone parents with dependent children, and up to 30% are single persons, there is limited potential for further reductions in average household size to increase current household formation rates significantly – and there is no reason to think that earlier household formations or increasing divorce rates will in the medium term affect household formation rates. While there are differences with the general population, a 1.25%-1.50% per annum Gypsy and Traveller population growth rate is likely to lead to a household growth rate of 1.25%-1.50% per annum

Summary Conclusions

19. The best available evidence suggests that the net annual Gypsy and Traveller household growth rate is 1.50% per annum. Some local authorities might allow for a household growth rate of up to 2.50% per annum, to provide a 'margin' if their populations are relatively youthful; but in areas where on-site surveys indicate that there are fewer children in the Gypsy and Traveller population, lower estimates should be used.
20. The outcomes of this Technical Note can be used to provide an estimate of local new household formation rates by adjusting the upper national growth rate of 1.50% based on local demographic characteristics.
21. In addition, in certain circumstances where the numbers of households and children are higher or lower than national data has identified, or the population age structure is skewed by certain age groups, it may not be appropriate to apply a percentage rate for new household formation. In these cases, a judgement should be made on likely new household formation based on the age and gender of the children identified in local household interviews. This should be based on the assumption that 50% of households likely to form will stay in any given area and that 50% will pair up and move to another area, while still considering the impact of dissolution. This is based on evidence from over 140 GTAAAs that ORS have completed across England and Wales involving over 4,300 household interviews.

