

Replacement Local Development Plan 2018-2033
Background Paper

BP15: Gypsy and Traveller accommodation assessment



Deposit Plan
February 2022



Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg hefyd.

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**Conwy County Borough Council
Gypsy and Traveller
Accommodation Assessment (GTAA)**

Final Report

February 2022



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1. Executive Summary

Introduction and Methodology

- 1.1 The primary objective of the (2022) Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) is to provide a robust assessment of current and future need for Gypsy and Traveller¹ accommodation in Conwy County Borough.
- 1.2 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 Conwy Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) period to 2033. The outcomes of this GTAA will replace the outcomes of the previous GTAA that was published in 2017.
- 1.3 The GTAA has sought to understand the accommodation needs of the Gypsy and Traveller population in Conwy County Borough through a combination of desk-based research, stakeholder engagement and engagement with members of the Travelling Community. In addition, a range of local stakeholders were invited to sit on a Project Steering Group.
- 1.4 Following the preliminary engagement and publicity that was put in place², a total of 7 interviews were completed with Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople living in Conwy and other areas. In addition, engagement was completed with neighbouring local authorities and other stakeholders to discuss potential need for transit provision. In addition the provided information about households living on unauthorised encampments.
- 1.5 The baseline date for the study is **December 2021**.

Pitch Needs – Gypsies and Travellers

- 1.6 The Welsh Government Guidance requires 2 assessments of need – for the first 5 years of the GTAA period (2022-2026), and for the full Local Development Plan period to 2033.
- 1.7 Based upon the evidence presented in this study the estimated additional pitch provision needed for Gypsies and Travellers in Conwy County Borough for the first 5 years of the GTAA Study period to 2026 is for **1 pitch** and need for the remainder of the Replacement Local Development Plan periods is for a **no further pitches**. This gives a total need to the end of the development plan period to 2033 for **1 pitch**. These figures should be seen as the projected amount of provision which is necessary to meet the statutory obligations towards identifiable needs of the population arising in the area.
- 1.8 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

- 1.9 The Welsh Government Guidance requires 2 assessments of need – for the first 5 years of the GTAA period (2022-2026), and for the full Local Development Plan period to 2033.

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

² See Chapter 4 and Appendix F for further details.

- 1.10 Based upon the evidence presented in this study the estimated additional pitch provision needed for Travelling Showpeople in Conwy County Borough for the first 5 years of the GTAA Study period to 2026 is for **7 plots** and need for the remainder of the Replacement Local Development Plan periods is for a **1 further plot**. This gives a total need to the end of the development plan period to 2033 for **8 plots**. These figures should be seen as the projected amount of provision which is necessary to meet the statutory obligations towards identifiable needs of the population arising in the area.
- 1.11 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.

Transit Recommendations

- 1.12 Discussions with local stakeholders, neighbouring local authorities, and analysis of records of unauthorised encampments, confirmed that there are instances of unauthorised encampments in Conwy County Borough, 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.
- 1.13 There have been other localised instances of Travellers temporarily visiting Conwy to attend weddings or other events, but no further evidence of any long-term or permanent accommodation needs were identified.
- 1.14 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.
- 1.15 Despite the previous GTAA identifying a need for transit pitches in Conwy County Borough, 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 Conwy County Borough 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 Conwy County Borough Council (the Council) as independent consultants in January 2020 to complete a robust and up-to-date assessment of accommodation need for Gypsies and Travellers residing and resorting in Conwy County Borough for the new Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) period to 2033. However, due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 and subsequent lockdown and other restrictions that were put in place, work to complete the new GTAA did not start until 2021.
- 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 Conwy County Brough 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 GTAAAs more frequently if a material change in the level of need in the area has been identified. The Council published a GTAA in 2017. 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.
- 2.3 This GTAA provides an assessment of need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in Conwy County Borough to fulfil these requirements, updating the previous GTAA published in 2017. 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 Conwy Replacement Local Development Plan (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 study is **December 2021**.

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 GTAAAs was published by Welsh Government in May 2015 and this Guidance still 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 dependant'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 GTAs 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.

Conwy Local Development Plan (2007-2022), Adopted 2013

^{2.19} The Conwy Local Development Plan (2007-2022) was adopted by Conwy County Borough Council in October 2013 and became operative immediately. The adopted LDP superseded and replaced the earlier Conwy Unitary Development Plan.

^{2.20} The Plan includes one Policy relating to Gypsies and Travellers – POLICY HOU/9 MEETING THE SITE NEED FOR GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS.

POLICY HOU/9 MEETING THE SITE NEED FOR GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS

1. Where a need is identified for a gypsy and traveller caravan site, proposals will be permitted provided
 - all of the following criteria are met:
 - a) The site must be suitable for this type of use with a realistic likelihood that the site can be developed during the Plan period;
 - b) Previously developed land, or vacant land, on the edge of urban areas will be considered before sites in rural locations. Sites in rural or semi-rural settings may also be acceptable provided they respect the scale of nearby communities and do not place an undue burden on local infrastructure.

- c) A site allocated for other uses will only be released as an exception where a local housing needs assessment has established a need for a gypsy or traveller site, the need cannot be met in any other way and the scale of development does not exceed the level of need identified;
- d) The site is accessible to shops, schools and health facilities by public transport, on foot or by cycle;
- e) There is good access to the main transport network and the proposed development will not cause traffic congestion and highway safety problems;
- f) The site is already appropriately screened or capable of being adequately screened and landscaped;
- g) The site will have adequate on-site services for water supply, power, drainage, sewage disposal and waste disposal facilities;
- h) The proposal would not be detrimental to the amenity of adjacent occupiers.

2. Based on the need identified in the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTANA) the Council will identify and seek to obtain planning permission for suitable sites by September 2014.

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 Conwy County Borough including previous assessments of need, socio-demographic data, caravan count data and the current provision of accommodation.

Current and Previous GTAs

Conwy GTAA 2017

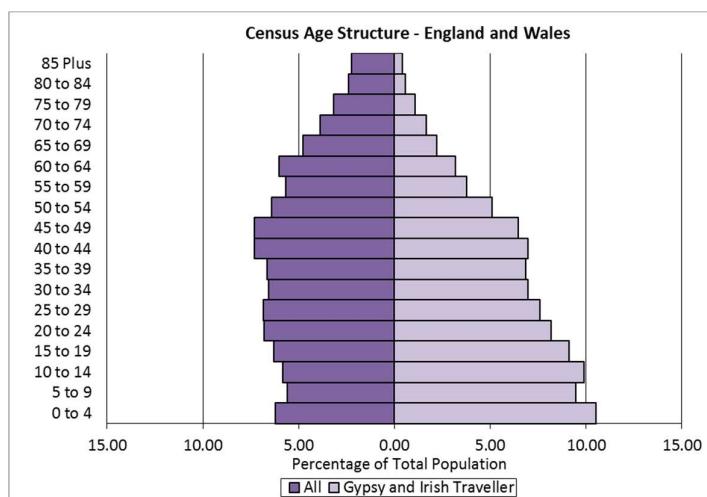
- 3.2 The most recent GTAA for Conwy County Borough was completed by the Council with assistance from ORS to complete the household interviews. The Final GTAA report was published in January 2017. Based upon the evidence presented in the study the estimated additional pitch provision needed for Gypsies and Travellers in Conwy County Borough for the first 5 years of the GTAA plan period was for 5 pitches, and for the remainder of the GTAA plan period no further need was identified. There was also supply of 4 pitches identified from the proposed new site at Bangor Back Lane. This gave a total need for the whole GTAA plan period of 1 pitch. It was also recommended that there was a need for the Council to provide a 7 transit pitches in Conwy County Borough.
- 3.3 Following the completion of the fieldwork for the GTAA the Council received a Planning Enquiry from Travelling Showpeople who were seeking to develop a private yard in Conwy County Borough comprising 10 residential plots.

Population Data – 2011 Census

- 3.4 Analysis of 2011 Census data relating to the Gypsy and Traveller population identified a total of 33 households and 65 individuals who identified as Gypsies or Irish Travellers living in Conwy County Borough – representing less than 0.06% of the population 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. The 2021 Census may provide a better understanding of the Gypsy and Traveller population through the inclusion of Roma in the question about ethnicity.
- 3.5 Despite the likely under-estimate of the population of Gypsies and Irish Travellers, 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 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%.
- 3.6 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 Census living in Conwy County Borough 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

- 3.7 Another source of published information on the Gypsy and Traveller population is the Welsh Government Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Count which is uses data provided by Local Authorities and is published twice a year.
- 3.8 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 count is merely a 'snapshot in time' conducted by the Local Authority on a specific day, 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.
- 3.9 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.
- 3.10 The latest Gypsy and Traveller Caravan County data for Wales is from July 2021 and was published in October 2021. This identified just 4 caravans on authorised sites with planning permission.

- 3.11 Analysis of historic Caravan Count Data for Conwy County Borough between January 2010 and January 2020 shows that the 4 caravans identified in the July 2021 Count have been recorded since January 2017 after the new site opened. In addition small numbers of unauthorised caravans have been recorded in 2011, 2014, 2015, 2016, and 2019.
- 3.12 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

- 3.13 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 Conwy County Borough. 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.
- 3.14 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).
- 3.15 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.
- 3.16 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.
- 3.17 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 occur on land which is not owned by the Gypsies and Travellers – for example laybys or car parks.

Sites and Yards in Conwy County Borough

^{3.18} In Conwy County Borough, at the baseline date for the GTAA (December 2021), there was one public site (4 pitches); no private sites with permanent planning permission; and one Travelling Showmen's yard with permanent permission for 13 park homes. There was also no transit provision.

^{3.19} Further details can be found in Chapter 5 and **Appendix B**.

Figure 2 - Total amount of provision in Conwy County Borough (December 2021)

Category	Sites/Yards	Pitches/Plots
Private with permanent planning permission	0	0
Private sites with temporary planning permission	0	0
Public sites	1	4
Public transit provision (seasonal)	0	0
Private transit provision	0	0
Tolerated sites	0	0
Unauthorised sites	0	0
Travelling Showpeople yards	1	13
TOTAL	2	17

Figure 3 - Sites and Yards in Conwy County Borough (December 2021)

Site Name	Pitches/Plots	Status
Bangor Back Lane	4	Public - Authorised
Gors Farm (Fairview) - Showpeople	13	Authorised
Total	17	

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 Opinion Research Services, in conjunction with Conwy County Borough and the approach taken covers the following core areas of work:

- » GTAA Project Steering Group.
- » Identifying and analyse 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 Conwy County Borough and Denbighshire as the GTAA 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
Conwy County Borough CC	Lead Member for Planning, Public Protection and Safer Communities
Conwy County Borough CC	Strategic Planning and Housing Manager
Conwy County Borough CC	Lead Project Manager
Conwy County Borough CC	Senior Officer, Strategic Planning and Housing
Conwy County Borough 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; promote the benefits of the study to members of the Travelling Community; help identify households living in bricks and mortar and on unauthorised sites and encampments; provide expert stakeholder input into the identification of local need; 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 May 2021, the second Steering Group Meeting was held in June 2021, and a final Steering Group Meeting is planned for early 2022 after the GTAA Report has been signed-off by the Council and approved by Welsh Government. All meetings have been 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 is due to discuss 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.

Stakeholder Engagement

- 4.6 In addition to the Steering Group contact was made with the 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 Conwy County Borough. The organisations that were contacted were:

- » Gypsies & Travellers Wales
- » Travelling Ahead
- » The Unity Project
- » The Bridges Project
- » The Showmen's Guild of Great Britain - South Wales
- » The Traveller Movement
- » Friends, Families and Travellers
- » The National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups
- » The Gypsy Council
- » Roma Support Group

- 4.7 At the time of preparing this report the only response that was received was from Travelling Ahead and a summary of the interview that was completed can be found in **Appendix E**.

Identify and Analyse Existing Data

- 4.8 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

- ^{4.9} In order to get buy-in from members of the Travelling Community 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.
- ^{4.10} 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.
 - » Social media adverts.
 - » Posters in a range of community venues and libraries.
 - » Promotion through front-line services.
 - » Information circulation by Gypsy and Traveller advocacy organisations.
 - » Word-of-mouth information sharing by Council Officers.
 - » Contact with organisations set out in the Welsh Government GTAA Guidance.

Conducting the Accommodation Assessment Surveys

Household Interviews

- ^{4.11} Through the desk-based research and information from the Steering Group, ORS sought to identify all authorised and unauthorised sites, yards, and encampments in Conwy County Borough, and sought to undertake a full demographic study of the residents on all pitches and plots – as required by the Welsh Government GTAA Guidance.
- ^{4.12} Residents on sites and yards were initially contacted by telephone by Researchers from ORS to request an appointment to complete an interview in line with the ORS COVID-19 Risk Assessment Process. All households who were interviewed requested to complete their interviews over the telephone. Interviews were completed with all households using the Welsh Government GTAA Household Interview questions. Following further guidance from Welsh Government that set out that face-to-face interviews should be completed wherever possible, households were recontacted to see if they would like to complete a further face-to-face interview, however, households who has been interviewed stated that they would prefer to complete interviews over the telephone.

Bricks and Mortar Interviews

- ^{4.13} ORS worked closely with the Council to identify and encourage households living in bricks and mortar to participate in the GTAA. 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.

Calculate the Accommodation Needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

^{4.14} The Welsh Government GTAA Guidance sets out a detailed methodology to assess current and future pitch and plot needs. This approach has been followed for the purpose of this GTAA. 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, together with additional information from members of the Steering Group and other local stakeholders. 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

^{4.15} 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 encampments.
- » Households on unauthorised developments.
- » Concealed /over-crowded/doubled-up households³.
- » Conventional housing – movement from bricks and mortar⁴.
- » New households to arrive from waiting lists/in-migration.

Future Demand

^{4.16} 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.

³ Following the guidance set out in Paragraphs 195-201 of the GTAA Guidance.

⁴ Following the guidance set out in Paragraphs 172-183 of the GTAA Guidance.

- 4.17 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.
- 4.18 The estimate of new household formation for remaining years of the study has been completed based on demographic evidence from the site interviews that were completed. Further evidence to support the approach taken to calculate new household formation is set out in Chapter 6.

Final Outcomes

- 4.19 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. A separate table has been prepared for the current and future needs of Gypsies, Travellers and for Travelling Showpeople as their needs should be considered independently as their circumstances are different from that of the wider travelling community.

Transit Provision

- 4.20 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

- 4.21 The table below shows that this GTAA has been compliant with all of points set out in the Engagement Checklist in the Welsh Government GTAA Guidance.

Figure 5 – Engagement Checklist

	Task	Completed
1	Visit every Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson household identified through the data analysis process up to 3 times, if necessary. <i>Whilst it was not possible for ORS Researchers to visit every site in Conwy County Borough in person, it was possible to interview all resident households that were identified over the phone.</i>	✓
2	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. <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 GTAA on their Facebook pages.</i>	✓
3	Consult relevant community support organisations, such as those in Annex 1.	✓

	<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>	
4	Develop a Local Authority waiting list for both pitches and housing, which is accessible and communicated to community members. <i>One of the outcomes of the 2017 was to establish a waiting list for public sites in Conwy. It is understood that this is being managed by Cartrefi Conwy.</i>	✓
5	Endeavour to include Gypsies and Travellers on the GTAA Project Steering Group. <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>	✓
6	Ensure contact details provided to the local authority by community members through the survey process are followed up and needs assessed. <i>All contacts provided by the local authority were followed up and interviews were completed.</i>	✓
7	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. <i>Due to the very small number of Travellers in Conwy County Borough, and ongoing concerns due to COVID-19 it was not possible to hold any on-site information events.</i>	✓

5. Survey Findings

Background

- 5.1 The desk-based research, and additional information from members of the Steering Group, identified a total of 1 authorised public Gypsy and Traveller site and 1 authorised Travelling Showpeople yard in Conwy County Borough.

Figure 6 - Sites and Yards in Conwy County Borough (December 2021)

Site Name	Pitches	Status
Bangor Back Lane	4	Public - Authorised
Gors Farm (Fairview) - Showmen	13	Authorised
TOTAL	17	

- 5.2 Interviews were attempted on the sites and yards between October 2021 and December 2021 and a total of 7 successful interviews were completed. One with an extended household on the public site, 2 with households on the Showmen's yard, and 4 with Showmen living in bricks and mortar.

Figure 7 – Interviews completed in Conwy County Borough (December 2021)

Site/Yard Name	Pitches	Interviews	Refusals
Bangor Back Lane	4	1	3
Gors Farm (Fairview)	13	2	11
Bricks and Mortar 1	n/a	1	0
Bricks and Mortar 2	n/a	1	0
Bricks and Mortar 3	n/a	1	0
Bricks and Mortar 4	n/a	1	0
TOTAL	17	7	14

Interview Log

- 5.3 A copy of the Interview Log can be found in [Appendix C](#).

Overview and Demographics of Residents

- 5.4 Information collected on the type of accommodation lived in by those who were interviewed shows that the Gypsies and Travellers who were interviewed in Conwy County Borough live on the public authorised site. The Travelling Showpeople who were interviewed live on the authorised yard and in in bricks and mortar.
- 5.5 Ethnicity data was captured from all of the households that were interviewed on the authorised Gypsy and Traveller sites. All those who were interviewed identified as Welsh Gypsies.
- 5.6 In total the site interviews covered 5 residents living on the authorised Gypsy and Traveller site; 7 living on the authorised Showmen's yard; and 11 living in bricks and mortar.

6. Assessing Accommodation Needs

- 6.1 This section focuses on the pitch provision which is needed by Conwy County Borough for a short-term period of 5 years and the full Replacement Local Development Plan period to 2033. This includes both current unmet need and need which is likely to arise in the future. This time period allows for robust forecasts for future provision, based upon the evidence contained within this study and also from secondary data sources.
- 6.2 This section is based upon a combination of information from the household interviews, planning records, Steering Group members, and from other stakeholders. 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 was one authorised public site and one authorised Travelling Showmen's yard in Conwy County Borough.

Figure 8 – Total number of authorised sites and yards in Conwy County Borough (December 2021)

Category	Sites/Yards	Pitches/Plots	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)	1	4	4
Public transit provision	0	0	0
Tolerated sites	0	0	0
Travelling Showmen's yards	1	13	13
Total	2	17	17

- 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/plots** – There are no vacant pitches/plots in Conwy County Borough.
- » **Pitches/plots expected to become vacant** – There are no pitches/plots expected to become vacant in Conwy County Borough.
- » **Pitches/plots currently with planning permission** – There are no pitches/plots on sites/yards that have planning permission that have not been implemented.

- 6.9 This gives a figure for **overall supply of no pitches/plots**.

Figure 9 - Summary of Pitch/Plot Supply in Conwy County Borough - December 2021

Category	Pitches/Plots
Current vacant pitches/plots	0
Pitches/plots expected to become vacant	0
Movement to bricks and mortar	0
Out-migration	0
Unimplemented pitches/plots 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/plots in the area.

Current Unauthorised Sites /Yards

6.11 The study has identified no unauthorised sites or yards in Conwy County Borough.

Figure 10 - Summary of Unauthorised and Tolerated Pitches/Plots in Conwy County Borough (December 2021)

Site/Yard	Pitches/Plots
None	0
TOTAL	0

Concealed Households and Over-Crowded Pitches/Plots

6.12 The site interviews sought to identify concealed or doubled-up households on authorised sites/yards that require a pitch/plot in the first 5 years of the GTAA period. 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 **a total of 3 doubled-up households** - 1 doubled-up household on the Gypsy and Traveller site and 2 doubled-up households on the Travelling Showmen's yard.

Conventional Housing

6.13 Identifying households in bricks and mortar has been frequently highlighted as an issue with GTAs. The 2011 UK Census of Population identified a total of 32 Gypsy or Irish Traveller households in Conwy County Borough living in bricks and mortar.

6.14 As noted earlier, ORS went to all possible lengths to identify households living in bricks and mortar and worked with stakeholders, Council officers, and households that were interviewed to identify households to interview. This process resulted in 4 Travelling Showmen's households that were interviewed (2 in Conwy, 1 in Denbighshire, and 1 in Greater Manchester). For those households living in Conwy it was determined that 1 have a demonstrable need to move to a yard in Conwy County Borough.

Figure 11 - Summary of Bricks and Mortar Need in Conwy County Borough - December 2021

Site/Yard	Pitches/Plots
Existing households	1
TOTAL	1

New Households to Arrive

6.15 At the time of the GTAA there was one public site in Conwy County Borough. It is understood that there are no households on the waiting list for the site. Therefore, there are **no additional households** in need of a pitch in Conwy County Borough 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 taken into account local migration effects on the basis of the best local evidence available.

6.17 Evidence drawn from household interviews in Conwy County Borough has been carefully considered **and has identified a need for 1 plot from in-migration for a household currently living in bricks and mortar in Rhyl.**

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 Replacement Local Development Plan 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 GTAAAs, 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 in fact, 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 a 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 **no new Gypsy and Traveller households and 3 new Travelling Showmen households** as a result of family growth over the first 5 years of the assessment, and no annual pitch turnover as there are no public sites or yards.
- 6.25 Household formation for the remainder of the GTAA period to 2033 has been based on the overall demographics of the population.
- 6.26 Whilst the GTAA Guidance recommends that applying a net compound growth rate should be considered, 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 GTAAAs 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 Conwy County Borough for the wider period to 2033. The outcome were that a total future need **for no pitches for Gypsies and Traveller and 1 new plot for Travelling Showmen** was identified for the period 2026–33. However, it should be noted that this figure may change over time.

Need for Gypsies and Travellers in Conwy County Borough

- 6.27 The Welsh Government Guidance requires 2 assessments of need – for the first 5 years of the study period, and for the full Replacement Local Development Plan period to 2033 in the case of Conwy.
- 6.28 Following this approach, the overall estimated provision that is needed in Conwy County Borough for the first 5 years is for **1 pitch**.
- 6.29 The overall estimated provision that is needed up to 2033 is for **1 pitch**.

Figure 12 – Pitches Needed in Conwy County Borough from 2022-2033

Current Residential Supply	Number of Pitches	Notes
A. Occupied Local Authority Pitches	4	4 pitches at Bangor Back Lane
B. Occupied authorised private pitches/tolerated pitches	0	No private sites
Total	4	
Planned Residential Supply	Number of Pitches	
C. Vacant Local Authority pitches and available vacant pitches	0	No vacant pitches on the public site
D. Pitches expected to become vacant in near future	0	No pitches expected to become vacant on the public site
E. New Local Authority and private pitches with planning permission	0	No unimplemented pitches
Total	0	
Current Residential Demand	Pitch Demand	
F. Unauthorised encampments	0	None
G. Unauthorised developments	0	None
H. Overcrowded pitches/Unsuitable accommodation	1	1 doubled-up household at Bangor Back Lane
I. Conventional housing	0	None
J. New households to arrive	0	No in-migration
Total	1	
Current Households	Future Households (at year 5)	Future Households (years 6 to 12)
K. 5	5	5
L. Additional household pitch need	0	0
Unmet Need	Need Arising	Need Accommodated
M. Current residential demand	1	
N. Future residential demand (year 5)	0	
O. Future residential demand (years 6 to 13)	0	
P. Planned residential supply		0
Q. Unmet need (5 year)	1	
R. Unmet need (to end of the Conwy County Borough Replacement Local Development Plan period to 2033)	1	

Need for Travelling Showpeople in Conwy County Borough

- 6.30 The Welsh Government Guidance requires 2 assessments of need – for the first 5 years of the study period, and for the full Replacement Local Development Plan period to 2033 in the case of Conwy.
- 6.31 Following this approach, the overall estimated provision that is needed in Conwy County Borough for the first 5 years is for **7 plots**.
- 6.32 The overall estimated provision that is needed up to 2033 is for **8 plots**.

Figure 13 – Plots Needed in Conwy County Borough from 2022-2033

Current Residential Supply	Number of Plots	Notes
A. Occupied Local Authority Pitches	0	No public yards
B. Occupied authorised private plots/tolerated plots	13	13 plots at Gors Farm (Fairview)
Total	13	
Planned Residential Supply	Number of Plots	
C. Vacant Local Authority plots and available vacant plots	0	No public yards
D. Plots expected to become vacant in near future	0	No public yards
E. New Local Authority and private plots with planning permission	0	No unimplemented plots
Total	0	
Current Residential Demand	Plot Demand	
F. Unauthorised encampments	0	None
G. Unauthorised developments	0	None
H. Overcrowded plots/Unsuitable accommodation	2	2 doubled-up at Gors Farm (Fairview)
I. Conventional housing	1	1 B&M from Kinmel Bay
J. New households to arrive	1	1 B&M from Rhyl
Total	4	
Current Households	Future Households (at year 5)	Future Households (years 6 to 12)
K. 17	20	21
L. Additional household plot need	3	1
Unmet Need	Need Arising	Need Accommodated
M. Current residential demand	4	
N. Future residential demand (year 5)	3	
O. Future residential demand (years 6 to 13)	1	
P. Planned residential supply		0
Q. Unmet need (5 year)	7	
R. Unmet need (to end of the Conwy County Borough Replacement Local Development Plan period to 2033)	8	

Transit/Emergency Stopping Site Provision

- 6.33 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.
- 6.34 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.
- 6.35 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.
- 6.36 Discussions with local stakeholders, and analysis of records of unauthorised encampments, confirmed that there are instances of unauthorised encampments in Conwy County Borough, 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. There have also been records of encampments in the middle and south of the county. There is also evidence of records of repeat visits from the same households at similar times of the year.
- 6.37 Detailed analysis of records of unauthorised encampments in Conwy County Borough from 2014 to 2021 (to date) are shown in the table below. These include localised instances of Travellers temporarily visiting Conwy County Borough to attend weddings or other events, but no further evidence of any long-term or permanent accommodation needs were identified.
- 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.

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

Transit Recommendations

- 6.39 Discussions with local stakeholders, neighbouring local authorities, and analysis of records of unauthorised encampments, confirmed that there are instances of unauthorised encampments in Conwy County Borough, 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.
- 6.40 There have been other localised instances of Travellers temporarily visiting Conwy County Borough to attend weddings or other events, but no further evidence of any long-term or permanent accommodation needs were identified.
- 6.41 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.
- 6.42 Despite the previous GTAA identifying a need for transit pitches in Conwy County Borough, 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 Conwy County Borough due to the low numbers of unauthorised encampments, and the short-term transient nature of these encampments.
- 6.43 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.

7. Conclusions

Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Need

- 7.1 Based upon the evidence presented in this study the estimated pitch provision needed for Gypsies and Travellers in Conwy County Borough for the first 5 years of the study period (2022-26) is for **1 pitch** and need by 2033, the end of the Conwy County Borough RLDP period, is for **no further pitches**. This gives a total need for the whole RLDP period across Conwy County Borough for **1 pitch**.

Travelling Showpeople Plot Need

- 7.2 Based upon the evidence presented in this study the estimated plot provision needed for Travelling Showpeople in Conwy County Borough for the first 5 years of the study period (2022-26) is for **7 plots** and need by 2033, the end of the Conwy County Borough RLDP period, is for **a further 1 plot**. This gives a total need for the whole RLDP period across Conwy County Borough for **8 plots**.

Transit Sites

- 7.3 Despite the previous GTAA identifying a need for transit pitches in Conwy County Borough, 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 Conwy County Borough 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 and plots. 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 not to Travelling Showmen's yards or private sites.
- 7.5 Given that the need identified in Conwy County Borough for Gypsies and Travellers is from households living on public sites, it is recommended that the Council should seek to support these households to meet their need on a public pitch.
- 7.6 Need identified from Travelling Showpeople was identified from the existing authorised yard, and from households living in bricks and mortar who are in need of a plot on a yard. It is recommended that the Council should seek to support these households to meet their need on a private yard.
- 7.7 It is recognised that the Council are in the process of reviewing their adopted Local Development Plan that sets out how overall housing need will be addressed. The Conwy County Borough RLDP 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

Gypsies and Travellers	<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 dependant'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>
Residential site	<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 near, sites for activities carried out by community members.</p>
Temporary residential site	<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>
Transit site	<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</p>

	<p>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>
Temporary Stopping Place	<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>
Residential pitch	<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>
Transit pitch	<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>
Unauthorised encampment	<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>
Unauthorised development	<p>Land occupied by the owner without the necessary land use planning permission.</p>

Current residential supply	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.
Current residential demand	<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>
Future residential demand	The expected level of new household formation which will generate additional demand within the 5-year period of the accommodation assessment and longer LDP period.
Overall residential pitch need	The ultimate calculation of unmet accommodation need which must be identified through the Gypsy and Traveller accommodation assessment process. This figure can be found by adding the immediate residential need to the future residential demand. The overall residential need will capture the needs across the 5-year period within which the accommodation assessment is considered to be robust.
Planned residential pitch supply	The number of authorised pitches which are vacant and available to rent on Local Authority or private sites. It also includes pitches which will be vacated in the near future 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.

Household	In this guidance this refers to individuals from the same family who live together on a single pitch / house / encampment.
Concealed or 'doubled-up' household	<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>
Household growth	In this guidance household growth is defined by the number of new households arising from households which are already accommodated in the area.

Appendix B: Sites and Yards in Conwy County Borough (December 2021)

Site/Yard	Operational Pitches/Plots	Unauthorised Pitches/Plots
Public Sites		
Bangor Back Lane	4	-
Private Sites with Permanent Permission		
None	-	-
Private Sites with Temporary Permission		
None	-	-
Tolerated Sites		
None	-	-
Unauthorised Sites		
None	-	-
Public Transit Sites		
None	-	-
Private Transit Sites		
None	-	-
Private Travelling Showpeople Yards		
Gors Farm (Fairview)	13	-
Tolerated Travelling Showpeople Yards		
None	-	-
Unauthorised Travelling Showpeople Yards		
None	-	-

Appendix C: Interview Log

Address	Type of tenure	Engagement attempts		Engagement techniques used	Completed or refusal?
Bangor Back Lane	Local Authority site	14/12/2021		Telephone	Completed
Gors Farm 1	Private authorised site	01/10/2021		Email/Telephone	Completed
Gors Farm 2	Private authorised site	02/10/2021		Email/Telephone	Completed
Bricks and Mortar 1	Bricks and mortar	02/10/2021		Email/Telephone	Completed
Bricks and Mortar 2	Bricks and mortar	01/10/2021		Email/Telephone	Completed
Bricks and Mortar 3	Bricks and mortar	01/10/2021		Email/Telephone	Completed

Appendix D: Household Interview Summary

Authorised Sites

Bangor Back Lane

Staff from ORS completed an interview with a resident living on this authorised site in December 2021.

The site is occupied by members of the same family and 1 concealed or doubled-up household were identified. There were no teenagers identified who will need a pitch of their own in the next 5 years. The family have lived on the site together for over 5 years and no member intends to move.

The household stated when interviewed that, if developed, they believe there is room on the site to accommodate the identified need. The family do not want to be separated and nobody wanted to be added to any waiting lists for any new public sites.

The resident stated that they would like some financial help from the Council to assist with general maintenance. The resident also stated that more trees on the site would be welcomed in order to help cut out noise pollution from nearby traffic.

The household said that they travel around Wales regularly and stated, when asked, that more transit provision is needed across Wales, including Conwy and Denbighshire.

Gors Fram 1

A representative for the residents living on the authorised yard completed an interview with the household in October 2021.

This plot is occupied by Travelling Showpeople and occupants comprised of 2 adults and 1 child over the age of 18. There were therefore 1 concealed or doubled-up household. The household also identified an immediate family member currently living outside of Conwy who would like to move to the area to be closer to the family.

Gors Fram 2

A representative for the residents living on the authorised yard completed an interview with the household in October 2021.

This plot is occupied by Travelling Showpeople and occupants comprised of 1 adult, 1 child over the age of 18 and 2 children under the age of 18. There were therefore 1 concealed or doubled-up household and 2 teenagers who will need a plot of their own in the next 5 years. All the children will need to remain in the area to help run the family business.

Bricks and Mortar Interviews

Bricks and Mortar 1

A representative for the residents living on the Gors Farm authorised yard completed an interview with the household in Conwy in October 2021.

This property is occupied by Travelling Showpeople and occupants comprised of 2 adults and 3 children under the age of 18. There were therefore 2 teenagers who will need a plot of their own in the next 5 years.

Bricks and Mortar 2

A representative for the residents living on the Gors Farm authorised yard completed an interview with the household in Denbighshire in October 2021.

This property is occupied by Travelling Showpeople and occupants comprised of 1 adult, 1 child over the age of 18 and their partner (over the age of 18). Would like to move to Conwy to live in culturally appropriate accommodation closer to their place of work. There was therefore in-migration from this household into Conwy.

Bricks and Mortar 3

A representative for the residents living on the Gors Farm authorised yard completed an interview with the household in Manchester in October 2021.

This property is occupied by Travelling Showpeople and occupants comprised of 2 adults. Would like to move to the area to be closer to family in Conwy.

Appendix E: Interview Summary – Travelling Ahead

ORS interviewed a representative from Travelling Ahead⁸.

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 Conwy County Borough for the latest Assessment.

The following matters were highlighted during the discussion with ORS and relate to existing matters in Conwy County Borough, and the wider context of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson accommodation in Wales. Discussion took place on 23rd September, 2021.

Conwy Specific Issues

- » Due to a lack of trust in the Council and the GTAA process as a whole the Bangor Back Lane Resident Association had stated that they did not want to participate in the Conwy GTAA⁹. Furthermore, it was noted is that there is no individual working for the Council who has responsibility for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the area. It was felt a dedicated Traveller Liaison Officer would help contribute to the lack of communication which currently exists between the community and the Council.
- » Previous Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson accommodation work in Conwy was criticised for lacking to follow through with the recommendations made in the reporting.
- » The refusal of a site application in Denbighshire, following public opposition, has brought issues into Conwy, with the community across North Wales losing faith in their respective Councils.
- » It was felt that Conwy have regular encampments and that there is a need for transit provision in the area. Given the number of encampments, it was suggested that a mix of transit provision should be provided – such as transit pitches where a fee is paid, and access granted to formal facilities and negotiated stopping sites with basic facilities for a short stay.

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/>

⁹ A resident from the Bangor Back Lane site eventually took part in the study and participation is included in the report.

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 GTAAAs 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 Traveller's 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

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 - Asesiad 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 Sloe 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 lawn 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.



Appendix G: Technical Note on Household Formation and Growth Rates