

Greater Norwich Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment

Executive Summary of Study Findings
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The Survey

- 1.1 Opinion Research Services (ORS) was commissioned by Greater Norwich Housing Partnership to undertake a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment. The area under consideration will henceforth be known as Greater Norwich.
- 1.2 The main objective of this study was to assess the need for additional authorised Gypsy and Traveller pitch provision within Greater Norwich in at least the next 5 years. This required an identification of the broad location of where any additional sites should be located, and to have these apportioned to local authorities. It also required the identification of whether any extra site provision should be on public or private sites, and whether or not any of the local authorities need to plan for the provision of transit sites or emergency stopping places.
- 1.3 A secondary objective was to assess the needs of people living on existing sites in terms of any extra service provision that may be required. The study also seeks to highlight how Government planning guidance for Gypsy and Traveller sites will impact upon the planning and housing strategies employed by the local authorities.
- 1.4 This document is the Executive Summary, which summarises the key findings of the study in particular where they relate to existing policies or have implications for future policy decisions across Greater Norwich. A separate main report has also been produced.

Gypsy and Traveller Sites in Greater Norwich

- 1.5 The study area contains 3 authorised public residential sites managed by Norfolk Property Services (NPS) and Broadland Homes on behalf of the County Council. These have a combined capacity of 44 pitches and 96 caravans. Both Broadland and South Norfolk also contain a number of authorised private sites. In July 2011, Broadland contained 5 caravans and South Norfolk contained 41 caravans on authorised private sites.

Survey of the Gypsy and Traveller Population

- 1.6 One of the major components of this assessment was a detailed survey of the Gypsy and Traveller population in Greater Norwich. This aimed to identify current households with housing needs, and to assess likely future household formation from within the existing households to help judge the need for future site provision. The survey sought to provide a baseline position on the resident Gypsy and Traveller population of Greater Norwich.
- 1.7 Interviews were attempted with every Gypsy and Traveller household in the area who were present between March and April 2011. Therefore, the baseline point for the findings of this study is April 2011. In total 63 interviews were achieved with Gypsies and Traveller households living on authorised and unauthorised sites in Greater Norwich.

Survey of the Showmen Population

- 1.8 There is one large Showmen's site in Greater Norwich, located at Hooper Lane in Norwich. A smaller site at Armes Street in Norwich is currently used by 4 families.

- ^{1.9} The Showmen's site at Hooper Lane in Norwich contains 75 families. In total 31 interviews were achieved with Showmen households living on this sites, with almost all other households being away working at the time of the survey. Many of the respondents to the survey were retired members of families where other members were away working, with 50% of the respondents being aged 75 years or more.
- ^{1.10} Given that the majority of working Showmen were not interviewed during the survey, further consultation was undertaken subsequently.

Gypsy and Traveller Future Site Provision

- ^{1.11} Based upon projection household formation and migration rates, the estimated extra provision that is required for Gypsies and Travellers in the next 5 years in Greater Norwich is 51 pitches. However, since the research for this report was undertaken three additional pitches have been provided in Norwich. Consequently the requirement for permanent pitches is now 48.

Public/Private Site Provision

- ^{1.12} Based upon evidence collected for this survey and for elsewhere in the country, a high provision of private sites is likely to have the triple benefit of higher levels of satisfaction among the Gypsy and Traveller population, better maintained sites and also a lower level of expenditure on public sites. The household survey projects that at least 20 pitches could be provided on private sites in Greater Norwich in the next 5 years, with the majority being for households on existing unauthorised sites.
- ^{1.13} However, not all Gypsy and Traveller households will be able to afford to develop private sites. Data from waiting lists for public sites and the wishes of households who are likely to form in the near future indicate that many wish to reside on public sites. Therefore, there could be a requirement for at least 30 additional pitches on public sites in the next 5 year.

Transit Sites

- ^{1.14} There are currently no transit sites in the Greater Norwich area. The household survey featured 6 interviews with households who either have no permanent base, or who have a base outside of Greater Norwich. This would indicate a need for at least 6 transit site pitches in Greater Norwich with the requirement arising in South Norfolk. However, we would note that the fieldwork period for this survey covered a two month period from March to April. Other groups travelling at different times of the year may require a larger amount of transit site provision.

Location of Site Provision

- ^{1.15} A further issue is where the extra site provision should be. The assumptions used in the model are that;
- Households on waiting lists for existing public sites have their needs meet in the local authority in which this site is located;
 - Households on unauthorised developments have their needs met in the local authority where the current site is located;
 - Newly forming households do so in the local authority where they are currently part of another household.

1.16 Applying these assumptions, and considering the three additional pitches provided in Norwich since the research was undertaken, would identify the following requirement for permanent pitches in Greater Norwich;

- Broadland requires 3 pitches;
- Norwich requires 8 pitches;
- South Norfolk requires 37 pitches.

1.17 However, it should be noted that this requirement is based in part on waiting lists for existing public sites in the authorities, and that authorities such as Broadland with no authorised public sites by definition cannot have a waiting list. Therefore, potentially the waiting lists could reflect a wider requirement for pitch provision in Greater Norwich.

1.18 It should also be noted that the requirement is based on the growth of the existing population of these local authorities and that authorities with little current Gypsy and Traveller population will by definition have minimal growth in this population. Therefore, potentially the requirement for one local authority could potentially be met in a neighbouring area. As noted earlier many Gypsies and Travellers on authorised sites in South Norfolk already consider that they live in Norwich.

Pitch Size

1.19 Greater flexibility could be shown on pitch sizes at any new sites. When developing new public sites some larger pitches could be included which could accommodate larger Gypsy and Traveller families who require more than two caravans for their household.

Beyond 2016

1.20 The key results of the survey refer to the requirements for pitch provision for the next five years from a base of April 2011. However, there is likely to be an on-going need to provide further Gypsy and Travellers sites for the foreseeable future, and that much of this provision will need to be on public sites.

1.21 If the population of Gypsies and Travellers in Greater Norwich continues to grow at current rates then an extra 30 new pitches will be required every 5 years to meet the needs of newly forming households.

Health

1.22 The study indicated that many members of the Gypsy and Traveller community suffer from health problems such as stress, diabetes and depression. They currently report that their support needs are being met, but the health of the Gypsy and Traveller population should be monitored and further work may be required to understand how it could be improved.

Showmen Site Provision

1.23 The Showmen's site at Hooper Lane in Norwich contains a mix of retired and working Showmen households. The site accommodates a significant number of people aged over 75 years who are generally very satisfied with the circumstances they live in. A smaller Showmen's site at Armes Lane in Norwich contains four families who are looking to move to north Norfolk.

1.24 While there are housing needs on the existing Showmen's site in Norwich, many Showmen would ideally like to live more centrally in England for work purposes. Therefore, the existing and future housing needs on the site do not necessarily have to be met in Greater Norwich and are more likely to be met outside the sub-region.