

## **GYPSY AND TRAVELLER SITES: MONITORING REPORT - AUGUST 2018**

### **Background**

National Planning Policy for Gypsy and Traveller (G&T) sites (Aug 2015) requires Local planning authorities identify a 5 years supply against their locally set pitch targets. This note summarises the current position in terms of the estimates of need for permanent gypsy and traveller pitches.

### **Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA)**

A Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) was commissioned on behalf of all Somerset Councils in 2010. The GTAA provides a starting estimate of the **existing need** for pitches – drawn from survey work and counts on unauthorised sites and encampments - together with an estimate of **future need**. Future need is based on national assumptions on household formation in G&T sites. An update to the GTAA was made in July 2013 which ‘rolled forward’ the future need figures to 2032.

Copies of the GTAA are available on the Mendip website.

<http://www.mendip.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=1029&p=0>

<http://www.mendip.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=5531&p=0>

Based on GTAA, the current need is shown in Table 1. This totals 104 pitches taking account of existing need (44 pitches) and Future need (60 pitches). There are ongoing discussions to commission a new GTAA with neighbouring Somerset Authorities in 2018/2019. This will address the fact that the GTAA does not reflect revisions to the definition of Gypsy and Travellers in national planning guidance. Growth estimates will therefore need to be re-assessed, together with whether the assumptions on national growth rates are realistic in Mendip.

### **Council Policy**

The Council's policy for accommodating need is set out in development policy DP15 of the Local Plan (adopted Dec 2014). The adopted Mendip Local Plan does not actually set specific pitch ‘requirements’ or targets but does refer to the need estimates in the GTAA. Policy DP15 states that a separate G&T site allocations document will be prepared to identify sites

### **Delivery of sites**

The Council have permitted 26 G&T pitches and 1 plot for Travelling Showmen since 2010. Most provision has been on private ‘windfall’ sites on land owned by gypsies and travellers. The largest unauthorised site in the district (Morlands) is subject to ongoing legal action by the Council.

### **Shortfall in Pitches against Estimated Need**

Even if the GTAA is not strictly a plan requirement, it remains clear that:

- (1) The Council cannot demonstrate a five year supply of gypsy and traveller sites.
- (2) There remains a substantial shortfall in pitch provision in the district.

**Table 1 indicates the shortfall is around 80 pitches against current need estimates.** This can be considered at the top end of pitch estimates (as growth may be scaled back as a result of the revised G&T definition). By comparison, the current level of unauthorised sites equates to around 60 pitches (based on the January 2018 G&T count)

**Table 1: Gypsy and Traveller Sites - Permanent Accommodation (pitches)  
Assessment of need for against delivery/provision - 2018**

1. Assessment of existing need as at 2010

	Pitches
Net flow to/from bricks and mortar accommodation	4
Estimate of pitches on unauthorised sites	28
Estimate of need for local residential pitches based on unauthorised encampments	14
Expiry of Temporary pitches 2010 - 2015	4
Vacancies on former social rented sites	-6
<b>Existing Need for pitches</b>	<b>44</b>

2. Estimate of future G&T pitches need (2013 roll forward)

New Household formation 2010-2015	25
New Household formation 2015-2020	25
New Household formation 2021 - 2022	10
<b>Future Need for pitches (based on growth estimates)</b>	<b>60</b>

**Existing and household formation 104**

3. Delivery of Pitches (1/1/2010 to 31/7/2018)

Pitches granted consent	26
Expiry of new temporary permissions	0
Pitches allocated in emerging/adopted local plans	0
Pitches through community-led initiatives	0

4. Estimates of shortfall in pitches as at 31.8.2018

<b>Shortfall against existing need</b>	<b>18</b>
Shortfall against existing and future need	78
Shortfall based on unauthorised sites (Jan 2018)	61