

Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation Assessment 2021 update

City of Stoke-on-Trent Addendum

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Stoke-on-Trent: Addendum to the 2020 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment

Introduction

The Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent 2020 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) provides the latest available evidence to identify the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople across the two local authority areas up to 2037. This summary reports the key findings for Stoke-on-Trent.

The City of Stoke on Trent Council are updating their local plan to 2040. This addendum provides evidence of an additional 3 years of need to ensure that the Council has a robust and up to date evidence base for the revised plan period to 2040.

The GTAA has comprised the following evidence sources:

- a review of existing (secondary) data;
- stakeholder discussions; and
- interviews and data obtained for 52 Gypsy and Traveller households out of a total of 53 households (representing an overall 98.1% response).

This data has been analysed to provide a picture of current provision and activity across the City and an assessment of future need. The findings of the study provide an up-to-date, robust and defensible evidence base for policy development.

Population and current accommodation provision

The 2011 Census identified a total of 67 households in Stoke-on-Trent where the Household Reference Person had a 'White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller' ethnicity. Of these 31 lived in a caravan and 36 in bricks and mortar housing.

The bi-annual DCLG Traveller caravan count (January 2020) has identified a total of 45 caravans (all social rented) and an average of 55 caravans over the last nine counts starting in January 2016. There is no Travelling Show person accommodation in the city.

In terms of Gypsy and Traveller site provision, there is one Council authorised site at Linehouses (45 pitches and 44 households and one pitch currently vacant) and one permanent authorised site at Lakeview (10 pitches, 9 households and one pitch currently vacant).

The triangulation of secondary data, Council records and fieldwork survey has identified a total of 55 Gypsy and Traveller pitches occupied by 53 Gypsy and Traveller households and 2 vacant pitches at the time of fieldwork.

Planning policy requirements for needs assessments

The 2019 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states in Paragraph 61 **‘the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policy (including travellers)’**. A footnote in the NPPF then states **‘Planning Policy for Traveller Sites sets out how travellers’ housing needs should be assessed for those covered by the definition in Annex 1 of that document’**.

The 2015 Planning Policy for Traveller Site (PPTS) document states that **‘local planning authorities should make their own assessment of need for the purposes of planning’** and **‘ensure that their Local Plan includes a fair, realistic and inclusive policies to increase the number of traveller sites in appropriate locations with planning permission, to address under provision and maintain an appropriate level of supply’**.

In the absence of further guidance on preparing GTAAs, the methods adopted by arc⁴ reflect the PPTS, build upon those methods established through previous guidance, our practical experience and decisions made at planning inquiries and appeals.

‘Cultural’ and ‘PPTS need’

In order to reconcile the requirements of national policies, the GTAA establishes an overall ‘cultural’ need for pitches which accords with the overall need for the Travelling community and takes into account the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equalities Act 2010 and the Housing and Planning Act 2016 section 124. A PPTS ‘policy filter’ is then applied to identify the level of need associated with those households meeting the definitions set out in the PPTS Annex 1. It is our understanding that the needs arising from the PPTS analysis establishes the level of need against which a 5-year land supply is assessed, but the Council should be mindful of a wider obligation to consider overall ‘cultural’ need. For Stoke-on-Trent, the PPTS need is slightly lower than the cultural need and it is recommended that the Council plans for a minimum need of 17 pitches over the next 5 years, recognising that some of this need may be met through turnover and new pitch development.

Plan periods

Need has been assessed over a short-term 2020/24 to 2024/25 and longer-term 2025/26 to 2039/40 period.

Gypsy and Traveller pitch requirements

For the period (2020/21 to 2039/40) the GTAA has identified the following Gypsy and Traveller pitch needs: cultural need of 50 pitches of which the PPTS need is for 45 pitches. Needs figures are broken down into time periods as show in Table ESS1.

Table ESS1 Gypsy and Traveller pitch need: Stoke-on-Trent for the period 2020 – 2039/40

Period	Cultural need	Of which: PPTS NEED
5yr Authorised Pitch Shortfall (2020/21 to 2024/25) (A)	19	17
Longer-term need	-	-
Over period 2025/26 to 2029/30 (B)	5	5
Over period 2030/31 to 2039/40 (C)	26	23
Longer-term need TOTAL D=B+C	31	28
TOTAL NET SHORTFALL 2020/21 to 2039/40 (A+D)	50	45

NOTE This table differs to the 2020 GTAA Table ESS1 because the net shortfall data covers a longer time period to 2039/40. The longer-term need has also had a further rounding adjustment applied so it now reads 5 over the period 2025/26 to 2029/30 rather than 6 in the 2020 GTAA.

The main driver of need in the first five years is the need from in-migration and emerging households.

The GTAA analysis needs to take account of the potential additional supply of pitches before a final shortfall figure is calculated.

Longer-term pitch need modelling has been carried out using known household structure information from the household survey of households living on pitches. On the basis of the age of children in households, it is possible to determine the extent of 'likely emergence', which assumes that a child is likely to form a new household at the age of 18.

The year when a child reaches 18 has been calculated and it is possible to assess how many newly forming households may emerge over the period 2024/25 to 2039/40. A reasonable assumption is that half of these children will form new households, bearing in mind culturally women tend to move away on marriage and men tend to stay in close proximity to their families on marriage. The model therefore assumes that 50% of children will form households when they reach 18 and that these households remain in Stoke-on-Trent¹. Demographic data is available up to 2038. Data for the final two years of the plan period (2038/39 and 2039/40) have been extrapolated based on the annualised requirement over the period 2025/26 to 2037/38.

The potential supply of authorised pitches on public sites through turnover (that is pitches becoming vacant through the movement or death of the occupant) should be considered. Although turnover is limited on the Linehouses site, it is anticipated that 27 pitches will become available over the period to 2039/40 through turnover as pitches become vacant. Land for up to 29 pitches has been identified through discussions with land-owning members of the Travelling community. It is recommended that the Council engage with the land owners to review potential new site viability.

The overall impact of turnover and new pitch development has the potential to address identified need across Stoke-on-Trent over the period to 2039/40 as set out in Table ESS2.

¹ This approach has been tested at inquiry and the assumption has been corroborated by several Travelling interviewees

Therefore, the Local Plan should recognise an overall need for 50 pitches (cultural) and 45 PPTS over the period to 2039/40. The result of including expected turnover of 1.35 pitches each year (27 pitches over 20 years) is a reduction in cultural need to 23 pitches and PPTS need is reduced to 17 pitches over the period to 2039/40. There is also potential to develop up to 29 pitches which would address the pitch need entirely. Even with a reduced level of turnover, the potential delivery of new sites would address identified need and a call for additional sites as part of the Local Plan process would not be necessary.

The analysis is based on the current population living on sites in the city. An allowance for movement from bricks and mortar accommodation has been made but this has a minimal impact on the overall need. GTAA's cannot take into account additional need arising from families moving in the area in the future but we do recommend that Council considers this need on a case by case basis should it arise.

Table ESS2 Addressing Gypsy and Traveller pitch need: Stoke-on-Trent

Stoke-on-Trent	Cultural need	PPTS NEED
5yr Authorised Pitch Shortfall (2020/21 to 2024/25) (A)	19	17
Anticipated minimum turnover on council site (B)	7	7
Residual need 2020/21 to 2024/25 after turnover (C) = A-B	12	10
Longer-term need 2025/26 to 2039/40 (D)	31	28
Anticipated minimum turnover on council site (E)	20	20
Residual need 2025/26 to 2036/37 after turnover (F) = D-E	11	8
Potential pitch development (assuming that this provides pitches for identified households in need) (G)	29	29
Residual need 2020/21 to 2039/40 after turnover and potential pitch development considered (H) = C+F-G	-6	-11
Summary	Cultural need	PPTS NEED
Plan period Authorised Pitch Shortfall (2020/21 to 2039/40) (I = A+D)	50	45
Anticipated minimum turnover on council site (J = B+E)	27	27
Potential pitch development (assuming that this provides pitches for identified households in need) (K)	29	29
Residual need 2020/21 to 2039/40 after turnover and potential pitch development considered (I-J-K)	-6	-11

NOTE This table differs to the 2020 GTAA Table ESS2 because the net shortfall data covers a longer time period to 2039/40

Travelling Showperson plot requirements

There is currently no Showpersons provision in Stoke-on-Trent and no need was identified.

Temporary stopping places and transit provision

There are a number of ways to delivery temporary places where Travellers can stop whilst passing through a local authority area. These include transit pitches, stop over places and negotiated stopping arrangements. Data on unauthorised encampment activity helps to establish the extent to which transit provision is needed. Across Stoke-on-Trent, unauthorised encampment activity has been reducing over the past 3 years (with an annual average of 7 encampments) but over the period 2013-20 an annual average of 16 encampments has been reported (Table ESS3).

Table ESS3 Unauthorised encampment activity: Stoke-on-Trent

Data	Number
Number of encampments recorded Apr 2013 to March 2020	129 (average of 16 each year over period 2013-20; fallen to 7 over 3 years 2018-2020)
Number of caravans (based on 2018-2020 data) Mode (most frequently reported)	6
Average	4.5
Median	5
Range	1 to 9

Given the level of unauthorised encampment activity, the Council should make use of the existing transit facility on the Linehouses site which can accommodate up to 5 caravans (which equates to 2.5 pitches based on two caravans per pitch). This provides sufficient capacity to accommodate caravans on 57.1% of unauthorised encampments. To accommodate caravans from around 80% of encampments, capacity for up to 6 caravans would be needed (around 3 pitches). Therefore, the Council would require an additional 0.5 pitches to complement the existing 2.5 pitches at Linehouses.

In order to accommodate the maximum number of caravans reported on unauthorised encampments (9), up to 4.5 transit/stopover pitches would be needed (2 additional pitches to complement the existing 2.5 pitches at Linehouses. A negotiated stopping policy², particularly for larger encampments, could also be considered.

² See <https://www.negotiatedstopping.co.uk> for further details