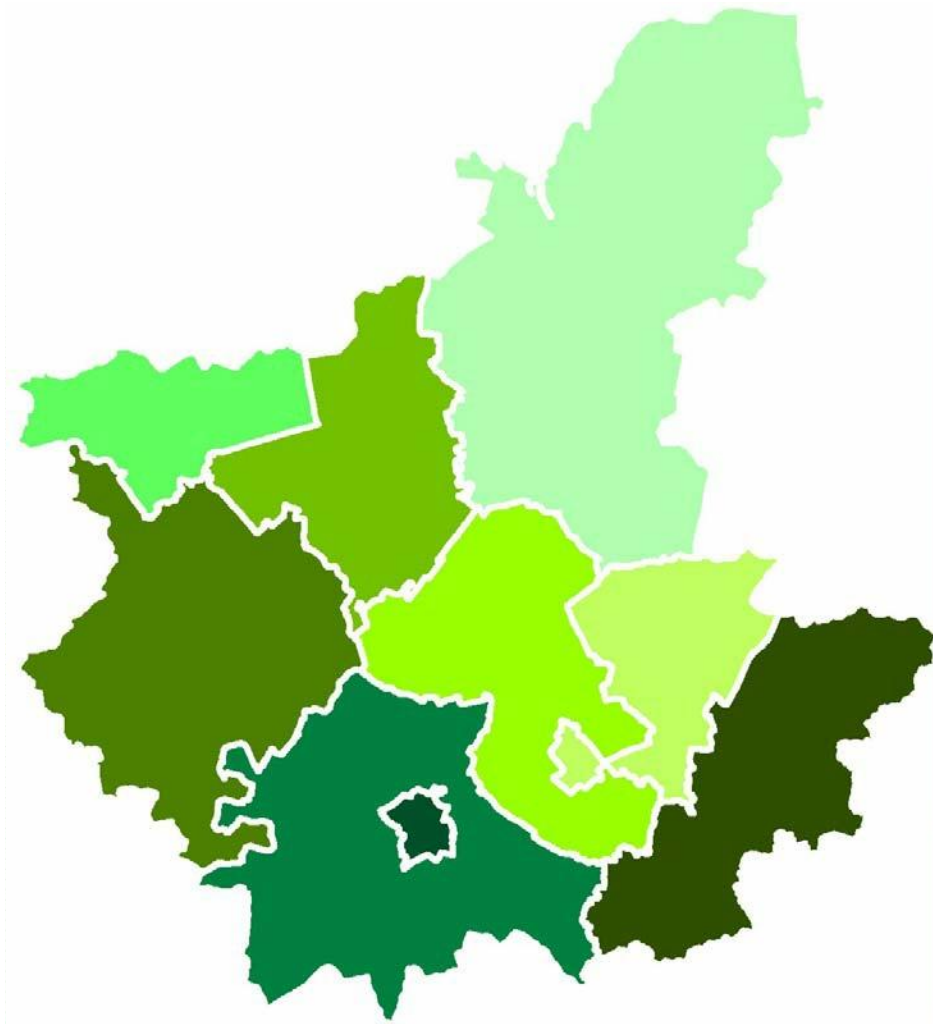


# **CAMBRIDGE SUB-REGION TRAVELLER NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

**May 2006**



Commissioned from Anglia Ruskin University  
and Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College  
by Cambridgeshire County Council for a consortium of public  
authorities

Principal authors: Robert Home and Margaret Greenfields



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## ABBREVIATIONS

A&E	Accident & Emergency
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
CRE	Commission for Racial equality
DfES	Department for Education & Skills
DH	Department of Health
GP	General Practitioner
GTAA	Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessment
ODPM	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
RSL	Registered Social Landlord
TES	Traveller Education Service
TTE	Cambridgeshire Team for Traveller Education

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. This project assesses service needs for Gypsies and Travellers in the Cambridge area. The area covered was the Cambridge sub-region, comprising Cambridge City, East Cambs, Fenland, Forest Heath (Suffolk), Huntingdonshire, St. Edmundsbury (Suffolk) and South Cambs, with the addition of Peterborough (unitary district) and King's Lynn & West Norfolk (Norfolk). The study was commissioned by Cambridgeshire County Council on behalf of a consortium of these public authorities. It also provides an assessment of the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers 'residing in or resorting to their district' (GTAA), as required under the Housing Act 2004 and following ODPM guidance (2006).

2. The main quantitative data sources were the findings of an interview survey of 313 Gypsies/Travellers within the study area (on sites of all types and in housing) undertaken in 2005, the official six-monthly counts of caravans since 1980, and local school rolls data.

3. The Gypsy/Traveller population of the study area (including those in housing) was estimated at 6500-7000, making them one of its largest ethnic minority groups. Survey respondents were asked to self-identify within six categories: English Gypsies/Romanies, Irish Travellers, new Traveller, Scottish Traveller-Gypsy, Showman and Other. Most English Gypsies in the study area were 'born and bred' within the region, and the survey found a quarter of the Gypsy/Traveller population to be Irish Travellers.

### **Accommodation Assessment.**

4. Total caravan numbers in the study area have nearly doubled in 25 years (from about eight hundred to sixteen hundred), with an increase of two-thirds in the six years 1998-2004; this reflects both natural population increase and significant in-migration. Total numbers over that period have risen in five districts, and fallen in four. Two districts (South Cambs and Fenland) now have over 400 caravans, three (Peterborough, Kings Lynn & W. Norfolk and East Cambs) are in the range 100-200, and four (St Edmundsbury, Cambridge City, Huntingdonshire and Forest Heath) are below 100. The districts with the greatest increase in caravan numbers were South Cambs and Fenland (each doubling since 1997). Clustering in certain districts reflects both Gypsy/Traveller preferences, and local policy (eg planning policy and closure of sites). The counts record an average of 9% more caravans in July than January over 1980-2004, but that seasonal differential is declining.

5. Authorised accommodation is on council and private sites. In 1983 the study area had only four council sites, but by 2005 the number had risen to 15 (three other sites having closed). Three former transit sites have become mostly long-stay. Council site caravan numbers have fallen slightly since their peak of about 400 in the early 1990s. The number of private authorised caravans, overwhelmingly on owner-occupied sites, has grown, both nationally (from 14% to 25% of counted caravans in 25 years), and within the study area (from about 100 in 1980 to about 600 now).

6. Unauthorised caravan numbers have fluctuated, declining in the 1990s but rising sharply since about the year 2000. They are scattered in mostly rural locations, some

on small, single-family sites, but increasingly in recent years have tended to concentrate on a few larger, high-profile sites, often next to authorised sites. They cause tensions and receive much negative publicity, but absolute numbers are small when compared, for example, with housing supply forecasts for the general population.

7. Data-sources are limited on numbers of Gypsy/Travellers in 'bricks-and-mortar' housing (whether private or council/social), or on movement into (and out of) housing. There are, however, potential 'best value' benefits if someone preferring to live in a caravan can move there from public housing: the development costs of a council caravan pitch are half that of a council house.

8. The survey interviews confirmed that there is a pressing need for more sites of all kinds (public and private, long-stay and transit). Gypsies/Travellers would prefer small, self-owned long-stay sites for family groups, preferably on the edge of a village, and near established Gypsy/Traveller communities.

9. Applying the ODPM (2006) preferred methodology, Gypsy/Traveller accommodation need in the nine districts of the study area is estimated as follows (in pitches, ranked and rounded). The five variables are: existing authorised provision, unauthorised demand, over-crowding, transfer into and out of housing, and natural increase (household formation).

**District Gypsy/Traveller Accommodation Needs for Permanent Pitches  
2005-2010  
(ranked and rounded)**

<b>District</b>	
Fenland	160-205
South Cambs	110-130
East Cambs	25-45
Kings Lynn & W. Norfolk	45-60
Forest Heath	15-20
Huntingdonshire	15-25
Peterborough	10-15
St Edmundsbury	10-20
Cambridge (City)	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>405-535</b>

10. It is, desirable therefore, to plan for a range of 405-535 additional pitches over the next five years, concentrating upon sites for long-stay accommodation first rather than transit sites or emergency stopping places, neither of which are Gypsy/Travellers preference. Self-help provision should be promoted during the inevitably slow transition to further public site provision. A programme of site provision should be initiated, including the following activities:

- a) investigate suitable land in council ownership to contribute, either for transit sites or for sale as private sites;
- b) identify and encourage suitable social housing providers to prepare for future bids under the Regional Housing Strategy, in consultation with Gypsy representatives;



c) monitor and review planning policy and planning decisions on private Gypsy sites, with a view to increasing the supply of private authorised accommodation. A sub-regional or county-level group should be created, bringing elected members, officers and Gypsy representatives together on a regular basis to agree future provision strategies, focussing particularly upon reducing the shortfall of authorised accommodation, agreeing a mix of sites between districts and between public and private, and improving relations between the Gypsy and settled communities.

### **Other issues**

11. The survey established that types of work have changed in recent years, with a decline in traditional farm work, and increased competition from cheaper immigrant labour, contributing to severe economic disadvantage and social exclusion. Family networks and informal reciprocal arrangements are important for encouraging and sustaining economic activity, and seasonal social security benefits are important income sources, especially for those on council sites.

12. The survey confirmed a high incidence of serious health problems (especially childrens' special educational and care needs) and educational disadvantage. Other problems included high levels of racism from neighbours, feelings of isolation and loss of identity, and drug abuse on estates.

13. Other recommendations are:

- a) To provide Gypsies/Travellers with better advice on local services available to them
- b) To improve training for public authority staff on Gypsy/Traveller needs and cultural factors.
- c) To promote understanding of Gypsy culture through libraries, museums and material for schools.
- d) To achieve greater involvement of the Gypsy/Traveller community in future service and accommodation assessments.

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

### 1.1 The brief

1.1.1 The brief (from Cambridgeshire County Council Research Group) required a major new assessment of service needs for Travellers, based upon a survey and supported by material from relevant public agencies and other sources. It derived in part from the Cambridge Sub-Region Housing Strategy 2004-2008/09, which had identified the limited state of information about Gypsy/Traveller needs. The aims of the study were:

- a) To assess the current and potential future need within the Travelling communities in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough for learning, health services and other services provided by local authorities and their partner organizations.
- b) To understand the demographic profile of the Travelling Community, household formation within it, accommodation and housing needs and routes into accommodation and housing.
- c) To increase understanding of how services might best be provided to meet Travellers' needs, such as how to make services and accommodation accessible to Travellers.
- d) In accordance with the statutory requirement (since 2004), to provide an accommodation assessment, applying the approach recommended in the ODPM draft practice guidance for such assessments, published in February 2006 (ODPM 2006).

1.1.2 The study area is the Cambridge sub-region of the Eastern region, which comprises the following seven districts: Cambridge City, East Cambs, Fenland, Forest Heath (Suffolk), Huntingdonshire, St. Edmundsbury (Suffolk) and South Cambs. Also included were Peterborough (unitary district), and King's Lynn & West Norfolk (Norfolk district).

**Figure 1. Study Area**

Source: Data from EDINAa UKBORDERS



## **1.2 National and legislative background**

- 1.2.1 Three Acts of Parliament since 1960 have had a major impact upon the Gypsy/Traveller way of life. The Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act of 1960 had a negative effect on Gypsies/Travellers, leading to the closure of many sites traditionally used by them. The Caravan Sites Act 1968 (Part II) required local authorities 'so far as may be necessary to provide adequate accommodation for Gypsies residing in or resorting to their area'. It empowered the Secretary of State to make designation orders for areas where he was satisfied that there was adequate accommodation, or on grounds of expediency. By 1994 a third of local authorities (including several in the study area) had achieved designation, and thus became exempt from making further provision and given additional powers against unauthorised encampment. The 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act repealed most of the 1968 Act, abolished any statutory obligation to provide accommodation, discontinued government grants for such sites, and made it a criminal offence to camp on land without the owner's consent.
- 1.2.2 Since the 1994 Act the only places where Gypsies/Travellers can legally park their trailers and vehicles are as follows (in order of importance):
- a) Council Gypsy caravan sites. By 2000 nearly half of Gypsy caravans were accommodated on council sites, although new council site provision stopped with the end of the statutory duty,
  - b) Privately owned land (usually by a Gypsy/Traveller) with appropriate planning permission, now accommodating a third of Gypsy caravans in England.
  - c) Some land with established use rights, other caravan sites or mobile home parks by agreement or licence, and land required for a seasonal farm worker (under site licensing exemptions).
- 1.2.3 By the late 1990s, pressure was being exerted upon government over the damaging effects of the 1994 Act. A Home Office study found that groups of Travellers were being 'chased...from one bit of land to another bit of land, to another bit of land to another bit of land...you just chase them around' (in the words of a police officer). Travellers were tending to group together into larger bands on fewer sites, leading in turn to higher public anxiety over their presence, and further rounds of evictions. A major review of law and policy included a Parliamentary Committee report (House of Commons 2004), the replacement of Circular 1/94 by Circular 1/2006, and guidance on accommodation assessments (ODPM 2006).

## **1.3 Accommodation needs**

- 1.3.1 The University of Birmingham study for ODPM (Niner 2002) estimated the need for more caravan pitches in England at 1,000-2,000 residential, and 2,000-2,500 transit or stopping places, over a five-year period. Rolling out such a programme would require 600-900 new pitches per annum, but in the immediately following two-year period (January 2003-January 2005) there was a net gain equivalent to 130 pitches a year - only 15%-25% of the need identified by Niner, a rate of delivery which would take over thirty years to reach the target.

- 1.3.2 The costs of the present situation are high (Morris & Clements 2002). One council in the region has spent over a million pounds in the past two years on legal and other costs attempting to remove illegal encampments, and there are similar examples elsewhere. The costs, in financial, health and other respects, to the Gypsies/Travellers themselves are also high: our survey interviewed several respondents who had been displaced from council sites that had closed, or from their own land by council action or by other homeless Gypsies/Travellers, at great cost (in money and health) and disruption to themselves, and accordingly found themselves in a precarious and insecure situation. The settled community is also adversely affected, but at least it generally enjoys the basic housing right of secure accommodation. The ODPM guidance refers to a 'vicious circle of tension', and inter- and intra-communal tension has grown in the study area because of the accommodation issue.
- 1.3.3 Regional Housing Boards are now charged with producing a Regional Housing Strategy, to meet the changing accommodation needs of local residents. The Housing Act 2004 (followed by the 2006 ODPM draft guidance) requires local housing authorities, when undertaking a review of housing needs in their area, to carry out a specific assessment of the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers 'residing in or resorting to their district' – a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (or GTAA). The GTAA is intended to be an essential element in local housing strategies and investment, and in the evidence base for local planning policy.
- 1.3.4 In January 2006 the Examination in Public of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the East of England considered policy on Gypsy/Traveller site provision. The East of England Regional Assembly has proposed a single issue strategy to be developed, involving GTAAs following the ODPM model.

#### **1.4 Data sources and quality**

- 1.4.1 The main data source for the study was a survey, undertaken by a supervised team of mainly Gypsy/Traveller interviewers, which interviewed 313 Gypsies/Travellers, on sites of all types (including 40 in housing) within the study area in 2005. It is believed to be the largest and most comprehensive survey of Gypsy/Traveller accommodation and service needs yet undertaken in England. The methodology is innovative, particularly for its Gypsy/Traveller involvement (technical details in Appendix A). Quotations from those interviewed are cited in this report, but anonymity was guaranteed to participants.
- 1.4.2 The survey findings were cross-checked with other data sources. Central government has since 1979 required 'gypsy caravans' (distinguished from other types of caravan or mobile home) to be counted six-monthly by local authorities under three categories (council authorised, private authorised, and unauthorised). The first count recorded some 8,000 caravans in England, and the figure has now risen to over 15,000. The count has been criticised for various reasons (eg the lack of a consistent methodology across authorities; the 'snapshot' approach on only two days; lack of Gypsy/Traveller involvement and support; and temptations to under-count), but remains the only time-series

record of the distribution of Gypsy/Traveller caravans in England. Its methodology has been twice reviewed, but few of the recommendations have been implemented. The count does not record showmen, new Travellers, Gypsies/Travellers on mobile home parks (private and public), or those with a caravan stationed in a residential curtilage.

1.4.3 Another data source is school rolls. The register of Gypsy/Traveller school-age children kept by Traveller Education Services (in Cambridgeshire the Team for Traveller Education) provides regional benchmark data, including the distribution by type of accommodation, which is particularly useful for estimating numbers in housing and on unauthorised sites. The figures also include about 150 school-age children who appear during the week of the Cambridge Midsummer Common fair, but it has been assumed that these are not generally seeking accommodation in the study area, and so have been excluded for the purposes of this study.

1.4.4 Other important data sources were:

- a) Local research, particularly the baseline material provided by Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridgeshire Travellers Review (1998), the EEDA report (Ormiston Children and Families Trust 2005), and recent Norfolk guidance (South Norfolk 2005).
- b) Related research studies, including the Birmingham University study of local authority sites (Niner 2002), the Sheffield University health study (Parry 2004), the Leeds study (Baker 2005), and the Essex needs study (Salford 2006).
- c) The Adams (1975) study, based upon in-depth interviews with 125 families. Its findings on family size, household structure and experience of house-dwelling are similar to our own, although in some aspects less detailed (eg little on site type, tenure and future needs).

## **2. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDY AREA GYPSY/TRAVELLER POPULATION**

### **2.1 Definitions**

**2.1.1** The statutory definition of 'Gypsy' (1968 Caravan Sites Act) refers to 'persons of nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin', and has been much refined by case law. This study has followed the definition in Circular 1/2006, and the more inclusive approach recommended in the ODPM draft guidance. It therefore includes travelling showpeople, those leaving the settled community for a travelling lifestyle, and ethnic Gypsies in settled accommodation. Survey respondents were asked to self-identify within six categories: English Gypsies/Romanies, Irish Travellers, new Traveller, Scottish Traveller-Gypsy, Showman and Other. Figure 2 presents the distribution of survey respondents, with 'Other' including new Traveller and Scottish Traveller-Gypsy.

### **2.2 Estimates of numbers**

**2.2.1 National** We have attempted to relate numbers of Gypsies/Travellers in the study area to those in England. Official counts currently record over 15,000 Gypsy caravans in England, estimated to represent about 10,000 families, or 40,000 individuals. Estimates of the total national Gypsy population (including those in conventional housing) have ranged between 75,000 and 300,000 (Morris & Clements 1999) (see Appendix A).

**2.2.2 Regional** The Eastern region has 11% of the general population of England, but 23% of its Gypsy caravans. Traveller Education Service records show Gypsy/Traveller children to be 1.3% of total school rolls in the region (higher than their proportion nationally). We have estimated a total Gypsy/Traveller population for the Eastern region at the higher end of a range 17,000-50,000, making it one of the largest ethnic minority groups.

**2.2.3 Study area** A survey of households in the study area was undertaken during 2005, and figures 2 summarises the distribution of responses. The survey found an average household size of 4.77 persons, consistent with other research, and considerably greater than that (2.3) for the majority white British population (which has an older age structure and higher proportion of one-person households). There was a higher proportion of children than the whole population, and lower proportions of older people, probably reflecting high birth rates and low life expectancy respectively. The larger household sizes reflect both higher proportions of children, the extended family structure (often including grand-parents, thus three generations in one household), and probably the effects of accommodation shortage. The survey found an average of 2.89 persons per caravan (2.05 on council sites), which is slightly higher than that found in the Cambridgeshire Travellers Review (1998)

**Figure 2: Distribution of survey respondents by type (%)**

Source: Survey data

District	English Gypsy	Irish Traveller	Showman	Other	New Travellers	No ethnicity provided	Total
Fenland	74	1	-	4	-	-	79
South Cambridgeshire	18	50	2	-	2	-	72
East Cambridgeshire	29	-	-	-	-	-	29
King's Lynn & West Norfolk	14	-	1	-	-	-	15
Peterborough	60	10	-	-	-	1	71
Forest Heath	16	-	-	-	-	3	19
Huntingdon	14	-	-	1	-	-	15
Cambridge City	-	9	-	-	-	-	9
St Edmundsbury	4	-	-	-	-	-	4
<b>Study Area</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>313</b>
	<b>73%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>100%</b>

**2.2.4 Study area population** Derived from the TES, survey and count data, Figure 3 estimates the Gypsy/Traveller population in the study area at 6829 in 2005, making them probably the second largest ethnic minority in the study area, similar in size to the Indian population, (the Pakistani community is greater in size according to the 2001 Census at around 8,550). The Cambridgeshire Travellers Review 1998 estimated 2,500 caravans in Cambridgeshire; the difference largely reflects in-migration since 1997, and application of a different methodology. Our estimates use the caravan totals averaged from official counts 2002-2004, and assume 1.7 caravans per household, an average household size of 4.8, and the proportion of housed population from TES school roll data. We estimated housed Gypsies/Travellers to comprise about a third of total numbers, which is less than in other studies; we have chosen to be cautious, given the uncertainties about what proportion of housed households might want caravan accommodation.

**2.2.5 Irish Travellers** We believe that our survey data from Irish Travellers is unique, and allows their needs to be separately analysed (see note in Appendix A). About a quarter of the Gypsy/Traveller population surveyed were Irish Travellers. The growth in their numbers seems to have mainly taken place in the past six years (longer than the period for establishing local connections for homelessness status). Irish Travellers were more often found on unauthorised sites, representing only 7.4% of those on council sites. Appendix A gives further details.



**Figure 3. Estimated Gypsy/Traveller population in study area districts, ranked and rounded**

Source: Derived from ODPM counts and TES school roll data

<b>District</b>	<b>Caravans</b>	<b>Households in caravans</b>	<b>Households in housing</b>	<b>Total householdshouseholds 2005</b>	<b>Total households 2010</b>	<b>Population 2005</b>
Fenland	485	285	309	594	689	2851
South Cambs	425	250	28	278	322	1334
East Cambs	180	106	115	221	257	1061
Kings Lynn & WN	160	94	24	118	137	566
Peterborough	120	71	8	79	92	379
Forest Heath	65	38	10	48	55	230
Huntingdonshire	60	35	5	40	46	192
Cambridge (City)	30	18	37	55	64	264*
St Edmundsbury	10	6	2	8	9	38
<b>Total</b>	<b>1535</b>	<b>903</b>	<b>538</b>	<b>1441</b>	<b>1671</b>	<b>6915</b>

\*The figure for Cambridge City may be high. Taking into account the high proportion of housed Gypsies/Travellers compared to those in caravans in the City gives a lower estimate of around 225.

## 2.3 Patterns of work and travel

**2.3.1 Work** Most Gypsies/Travellers prefer self-employment, in such occupations as farm and land work, tree-logging, vehicle trading, tarmacking, carpet-dealing and external building work. Our survey found evidence that:

- a) Types of work had changed over the years, with a decline in traditional farm work, and increased competition from cheaper immigrant labour.
- b) Gypsies/Travellers find it increasingly difficult to make a living from traditional occupations, contributing to severe economic disadvantage and social exclusion.
- c) Difficulties in travelling, and being frequently moved, made it harder to get work. Some Gypsies now travel more to continental Europe, and Irish Travellers have entered the sub-region in search of work.
- d) Family networks and informal reciprocal arrangements are important for encouraging and sustaining economic activity.
- e) Seasonal social security benefits are important income sources, especially for those on council sites.
- f) Difficulties with the theory part of the driving test (because of low literacy levels) is affecting younger Gypsies/Travellers.

**2.3.2 Travel.** The survey found that travel patterns were complex. Most English Gypsies in the study area were 'born and bred' within the region, often having regional connections over several generations. Most of those surveyed were based within the region, moving between known sites, but also travelled elsewhere. For example, a Gypsy interviewed on one day might be encountered the next day in another district. It was difficult to distinguish those Gypsies/Travellers 'residing in' (ie 'local') from those 'resorting to' an area. Some respondents travelled in Europe as well as the UK, and one had a successful (over £1 million turnover) business based in both France and the UK. Few Irish Travellers claimed to travel in Ireland, more often around London and the Midlands (as well as the study area). Four of those interviewed were effectively internally displaced persons, having lost battles to get planning permission on land they owned, or been required to leave when council sites closed or private sites were full. They were found on unauthorised sites, but were reluctant to apply as homeless persons because they knew councils had no suitable accommodation to offer.

**2.3.3** The survey asked respondents how many of their siblings still travelled, and 38.5% said none. Many (especially on council sites) said that travelling had become extremely difficult since the 1994 Act: 'nowhere to go without being moved on'; 'I don't travel, only on holiday, because there's no transit sites and nowhere to pull'; 'I don't travel these days – it's not allowed'. Even so nearly 2/3rds of respondents reported that siblings still travelled, and in 4/5ths of these cases **all** siblings still travelled. It appears that in larger families it is more likely that most or all members retain their travelling patterns, perhaps because cultural continuity and familial support may be stronger in a large kin grouping.

**Figure 4: Location of travel for those on sites**

Source: survey data (excludes housed respondents)

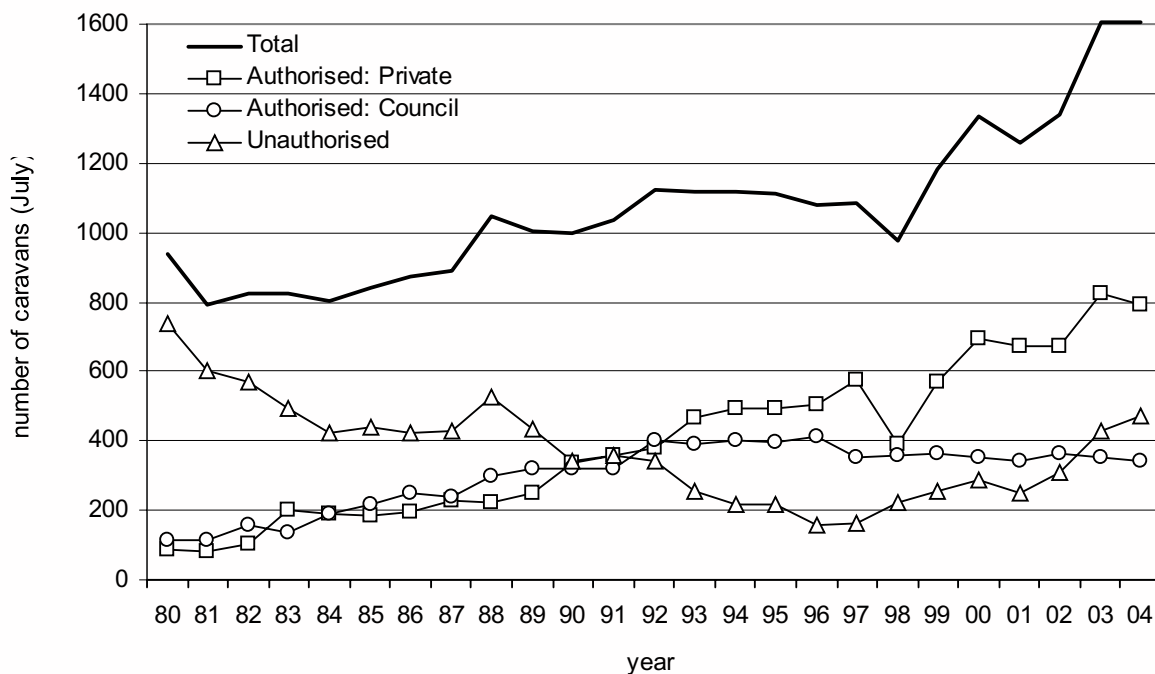
<b>District</b>	<b>All over</b>	<b>Cambridgeshire</b>	<b>Cambridgeshire and London</b>	<b>Fairs &amp; coast</b>	<b>28 specified locations, no more than 2 mentions each</b>	<b>Does not travel</b>	<b>No response</b>	<b>Total</b>
Fenland	12	1	-	6	10	13	14	56
South Cambridgeshire	17	11	10	-	11	5	18	72
East Cambridgeshire	2	1	-	2	1	-	23	29
King's Lynn & West Norfolk	6	-	-	-	5	-	4	15
Peterborough	10	-	-	-	1	-	60	71
Forest Heath	4	-	-	1	7	1	4	17
Huntingdon	-	-	-	10	-	-	5	15
Cambridge City	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
St Edmundsbury	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	3
<b>Study Area</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>278</b>
	19%	5%	4%	7%	13%	7%	46%	100%

### 3. ACCOMMODATION ASSESSMENT

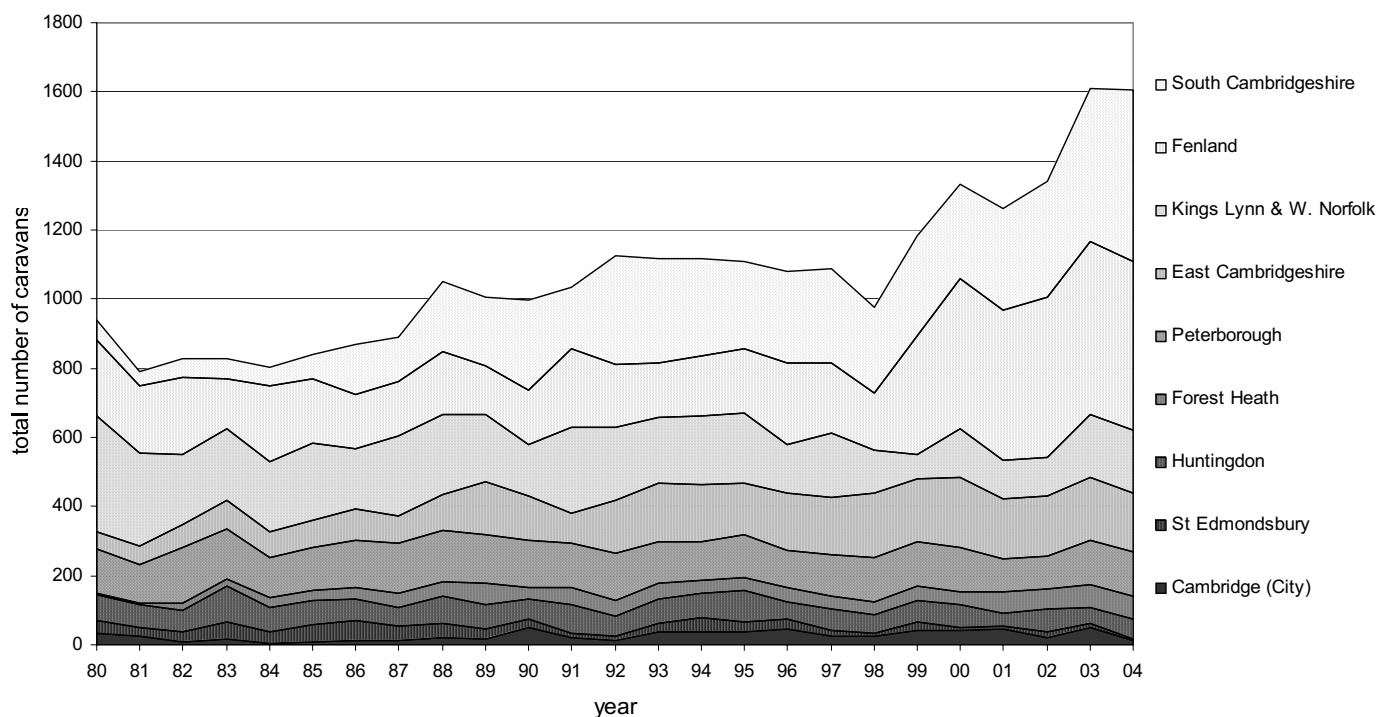
#### 3.1 Introduction

**3.1.1** The official six-monthly counts distinguish three site categories (council authorised, private authorised, and unauthorised), and government policy guidance also refers to long-stay or permanent residential sites, transit sites and emergency stopping places. Figure 5 shows for the study area total caravan numbers in the three count categories (council, private and unauthorised) since the start of official counts in 1980. A previous survey in the 1960s (undertaken in the lead-up to the 1968 Act) recorded only 120 caravan-dwelling households in Cambridgeshire (25% on 'permanent' sites), but since then recorded numbers have increased greatly. Total caravan numbers nearly doubled over the 25 years 1980-2005 (from about 800 to about 1,600), with an increase of nearly two-thirds in the six years 1998-2004. This is greater than can be accounted for by under-counting or natural increase, and reflects much in-migration due to the perceived attractiveness of the area. Council site numbers rose to about 400 in the early 1990s, but then fell after the 1994 Act to about 370 as some sites close (with some transfer of sites to private ownership). Numbers on private authorised sites have risen steadily, from about 100 in 1980 to about 800, while unauthorised caravans have fluctuated, declining in the 1990s but rising sharply since about the year 2000.

**Figure 5 Caravans by site type in study area, 1980-2004 (July counts)**  
Source: ODPM six-monthly counts



**3.1.2** Figure 6 shows the distribution of caravans between districts since 1980. The districts with the most marked increase in caravan numbers were South Cambs and Fenland, each experiencing a doubling since 1997. Five districts have averaged over 100 caravans, the rest significantly smaller numbers.



**Figure 6. Total caravans by study area districts, 1980-2004 (July)**

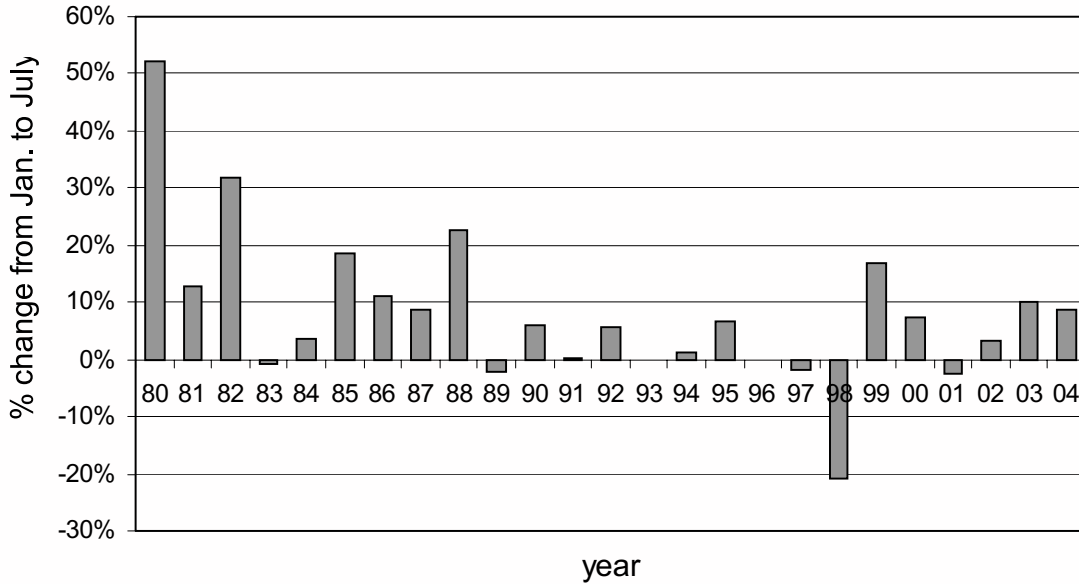
*Source: ODPM counts*

### **3.2 Seasonal fluctuations**

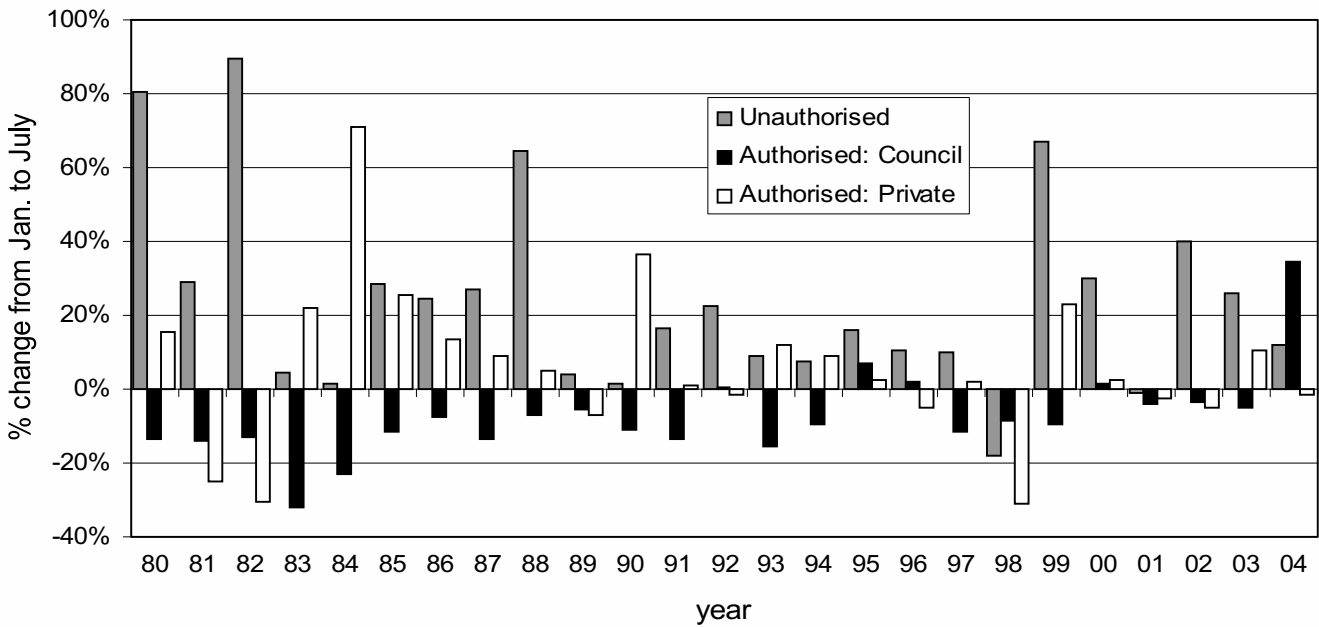
**3.2.1** The following three figures show seasonal fluctuations in the official counts. Over the 25-year period 1980-2004, 9% more caravans on average were recorded in July than January. These are mostly in the unauthorised category, and reflect greater Gypsy/Traveller movement in the summer months, while lower numbers in the winter reflect caravans being placed in store or sold, or in locations where they are not recorded. The July/January differential has declined in recent years, which seems to reflect an increased supply of private authorised sites, and the effects of the 1994 Act (making Gypsies less likely to travel). Two districts stand out for their high July/January differentials (Fenland and Kings Lynn & West Norfolk), which we attribute to the seasonal supply of farm work; this differential has declined in recent years, probably reflecting changes in farming practice (farm consolidation, increased mechanization of crop-picking, and preference for imported labour, who are accommodated differently). These trends support the picture of declining traditional employment within the Gypsy/Traveller community.

**Figure 7. Percentage change in total caravan numbers in study area (January/July) 1980-2004.**

Source: ODPM counts



**Figure 8. Change in total caravans in study area between January and July counts, 1980-2004.**



Source: ODPM counts

**Figure 9: Incidence of January/July variations of more than 25 caravans by district, 1980-2004 (large increases in bold).**

Source: ODPM counts

District	Number of occurrences 1980-2004	
	Increase	Decrease
Cambridge (City)	3	1
East Cambs	5	2
<b>Fenland</b>	<b>15</b>	1
Forest Heath	0	0
Huntingdonshire	0	4
<b>Kings Lynn &amp; W. Norfolk</b>	<b>14</b>	1
Peterborough	2	6
South Cambs	3	7
St Edmundsbury	0	1

### 3.3 Council sites

- 3.3.1 In 1983 the sub-region had only four council sites (one each in Huntingdonshire and Peterborough, and two in Fenland), but by 2005 the number had risen to 15, listed in Figure 10. The numbers of pitches have fluctuated slightly over the years, averaging 2.3 caravans per pitch. The ‘capacity’ column (caravans per site) can be questioned in some cases because of local factors: East Cambs counts, for example, shows consistently fewer caravans on council sites than the declared capacity.
- 3.3.2 Between 1995 and 2002 caravan numbers on council sites in England fell by about 600, as a result of sites closing or reducing in size following abolition of the statutory duty. Three sites closed in the study area, two in South Cambs (Meldreth and Willingham) and one in St. Edmundsbury (Rougham Hill).
- 3.3.3 English Gypsies comprised 91% of survey respondents on council sites. Of those on council sites, 76% had been in occupation over 5 years, and 50% over 10 years. By contrast, on private authorised sites only a third (33%) had been there more than 5 years, 15% more than 10, while on unauthorised none had been there more than 5 years.
- 3.3.4 The quality of council sites varies. The best sites were small and long-stay, occupied by related families. Some sites appeared to function well, and survey respondents seemed content (eg St. Neots, and some of the Fenland sites): ‘family, peaceful, close to schools and facilities’. Fenland seems to have become an example of good practice, paying attention to the rights and requirements of site residents, building relationships with the community, and consulting on sites and services provision. The Norwood Lane site (in Peterborough), on the other hand, received particularly heavy criticism.

- 3.3.5 Among the problems identified with council sites from the survey were:
- a) Insecure postal delivery was a common complaint, representing a potential breach of human Article 8 rights to correspondence (Article 8, European Convention on Human Rights). Those on council sites said that postmen were reluctant to deliver (perhaps because of dogs), and left all the post at one central point, rather than to each plot, with not all post being delivered reliably. While preparing for the survey, two of our Gypsy interviewers did not receive their batch of questionnaires, which were 'returned to sender', perhaps because the card notifying it was left on a caravan step and blew away. Where neighbour disputes occur, this may result in interference with post. Secure mail boxes for each plot, even if at a central point, would be good practice for future site provision, both on private and council sites.
  - b) Getting work. A number of respondents indicated that their address made it difficult to get work if it was known to be a Gypsy caravan site, some had similar difficulty to register at facilities such as health clubs. Registering with some doctors particularly affected those on the roadside or being frequently moved on by the authorities. A related problem was that postcodes identified Gypsy caravan sites, and entering a postcode on an application form could result in being refused insurance, or omitted for the census or electoral roll. The association on a database of an address or postcode with the word 'Gypsy' was enough to incur negative discrimination.
  - c) Numerous poor design features were mentioned: poor lighting, poor utility buildings, no separation of vehicles and pedestrians, inadequate turning space for emergency vehicles, lack of play-space for children, poor drainage, no disabled access, remoteness from shops and services. The structure of extended families was being undermined by the lack of expansion space (many would like more space to have family near).
  - d) Lack of fire prevention measures (eg extinguishers for electrical fires) and lack of regular health and safety inspections. (Gypsy caravans are impossible to insure.).
- 3.3.6 A common complaint was of council neglect and poor management: 'they just come to collect the rent, and no-one cares about the site'. While private sites are regulated by the local authority under site licensing powers, council sites are exempt, presumably on the basis that a responsible local authority would comply with its own standards, but in reality that sometimes does not occur. Some such problems may also be encountered by housing tenants, but interview responses from those on council sites suggest that they are less likely to have them dealt with. Some were aware of their disadvantageous position relative to council housing tenants: 'If I had a council house I would be able to buy it. Why can't I buy my own land and be able to live on it?'
- 3.3.7 Those on council Gypsy sites lack the security of tenure enjoyed by tenants on mobile home parks, being mere licensees subject to (usually) 28 days' notice, and with no requirement to offer alternative accommodation. Some were put back on the road after the closure of council sites. (The discrepancy between the rights of housing tenants and site licensees has recently been declared unlawful by the Connors case.) Our survey found that 40% of our respondents did not



understand the difference between tenancies and licences, and, of those who said they did, few got it right, most believing that a licence referred to having your own site and being thus 'able to do what you want'. This response seems to reflect an ignorance of legal and official matters, linked to low literacy levels and general exclusion.

**Figure 10: Council-owned Gypsy sites in study area (2005)**

Source: ODPM

District	Site location	Pitches	Capacity	Date opened (date upgraded)
East Cambs	Earith Bridge	13	38	1987, 1995 (2001)
East Cambs	Burwell	8	24	1995
East Cambs	Wentworth	8	24	1987 (2001)
Fenland	Fenland Way, Chatteris	12	24	1987
Fenland	Newbridge Lane, Wisbech	24	92	1971
Fenland	Sandbank, Wisbech St. Mary	20	20	1991
Fenland	Turf Fen Bridge, Parson's Drove	8	24	1982 (transit)
Fenland	Seadyke Bank, Murrow	12	36	1995
Huntingdonshire	Cambridge Road, St. Neots	20	36	1983 (1999)
Peterborough	Oxney Road	24	48	1978
Peterborough	Norwood Lane (Paston Ridings)	38	76	1985 (20 of 50 transit 1988)
South Cambs	Blackwell, Milton	15	30	1996 (15 transit 1988)
South Cambs	New Farm, Whaddon	14	28	1986 (1999)
King's Lynn & West Norfolk	Saddlebow	27	50	1991 (1996)
Forest Heath	Beck Row	35	70	1993 (2002)
<b>Total</b>		<b>278</b>	<b>620</b>	

**3.3.8 Transit sites** Even if every Gypsy/Traveller family in the country had their own long-stay or 'settled' base, there would still be a need for transit sites for those who are travelling, particularly in the summer months from April to October. If sites existed police would be able to refer unauthorised encampments to them, enhancing their existing statutory powers. The count statistics show that authorities with transit provision experience fewer unauthorised encampments, but there is little consensus on how they should be provided and what facilities offered. With severe pressure upon authorised accommodation of any kind, a number of sites intended as transit have become long-stay, with families staying because they have no alternative. As a result the distinction that is often made, between 'settled' Gypsies needing residential pitches, and those resorting to an

area for a short period, and so apparently needing only transit accommodation, is hard to maintain in practice.

- 3.3.9 There are in England about 300 council transit pitches (and perhaps 200 private) (Niner 2002). No council transit sites exist in the study area, and (unsurprisingly) none of our survey respondents were able to identify where the nearest transit site was. Three transit sites formerly existed (in Fenland, Peterborough and South Cambs), but all have now become long-stay (and their facilities are much criticised by their occupiers). TES data suggests that, of recorded Gypsy/Traveller children on unauthorised encampments, 40% are roadside or 'highly mobile', rather than on Gypsy-owned land, which suggests a significant demand for transit accommodation.
- 3.3.10 Transit sites can be particularly difficult to manage, for various reasons: high turnover, non-payment of rent, vandalism of facilities, anti-social behaviour, complaints from neighbouring land users, conflict between different occupiers, and difficulty in enforcing maximum length of stay. The survey found transit sites unpopular, not only because of generally poor locations and conditions, but also because of lack of knowledge or choice about other occupiers (sites could be used by people claiming to be Travellers, or individuals seeking anonymity for whatever reasons). Many survey respondents (72%) felt that transit and residential sites should not be placed at the same location, and offered the following comments: 'never – too much trouble'; 'never: they come and go, but have no respect for the other residents'. Our survey also found that council and private authorised sites were often accommodating temporary occupiers informally, and thus were fulfilling some of the functions of transit sites.
- 3.3.11 Emergency Stopping Places, suitable for overnight or short stay (up to 28 days) with temporary facilities, have been promoted by government, with councils urged to identify land in their ownership that could be suitable, perhaps on a temporary basis. Such sites as exist, however, have an even worse record of management problems than transit sites, and this study does not consider them a realistic option in the study area, at least until the shortfall of other types of site is corrected. The limited facilities they offer are in any case incompatible with a policy aim of better social inclusion.

### **3.4 Private authorised sites**

- 3.4.1 The number of such sites (which are overwhelmingly owner-occupied) has grown, both nationally (from 14% to 25% of counted caravans in 25 years), and within the study area. Most of these 'self -provided' sites are in rural locations, where the cost of purchase may be less, and where travelling people consider that their cultural and employment related needs may best be met. They may attract unauthorised caravans, clustering on or near the authorised sites; this is sometimes described as the 'honey pot' effect, but in reality reflects the shortage of accommodation.
- 3.4.2 Gypsies have gradually, and only reluctantly, been accorded special policy consideration in the 'plan-led' planning system, and most local plans now have

specific criterion-based planning policies for them. The most frequently used criteria are: closeness to facilities and services, minimal impact on amenities, acceptable vehicular access, potential for screening or landscaping, capable of being serviced, not located in protected areas, and minimal impact upon environment or countryside. Research indicates, however, that councils refuse as much as 95% of planning applications for private Gypsy sites, with about 30-35% subsequently succeeding on appeal (Williams 1999).

- 3.4.3 Private sites may vary considerably in quality, but generally appear to work well, and are subject to caravan site licencing by the local authority (unlike council sites). Some may accommodate only small groups (perhaps a single or extended family), while others contain large numbers of families (eg sites in Chesterton Fen Road, South Cambs). Of those surveyed, 48% on private sites wanted more caravans if they could, probably reflecting restrictions on numbers imposed by planning permissions. We found a number of households stopping on others' sites as 'squatters', who represent 'hidden homeless households' in the ODPM guidance terminology. Young married couples are particularly likely to depend upon 'squatting' on pitches, or short halts at authorised sites owned by relatives. The health of those on private sites appears to be generally better than on council sites, with the ratio of those reporting good:bad health being 4:1 on private, but only 2:1 on council.
- 3.4.4 Showmen accommodate themselves separately on land usually classed as winter quarters, but at least partially occupied most of the year. Such sites exist in the study area at Meldreth, Wilburton and Tilney St. Lawrence, and we estimate the showman population as about 25 households (from survey and TES data). Once planning permission had been obtained, these sites seemed to operate with no difficulties. There is some demand for further provision, which we estimate as 5 pitches for the period 2005-2010.
- 3.4.5 Apart from the official count figures, Gypsies/Travellers may also be found stopping on non-Gypsy caravan sites or mobile home parks, and we encountered two such sites. They can offer a potential contribution to future provision, subject to negotiation with site owners.

### **3.5 Unauthorised and roadside sites**

- 3.5.1 Unauthorised caravans in England now number about 2,500, and the figures have been accepted in case law as an approximate measure of need for accommodation. A distinction should be made between two types:
- Caravans on Gypsy-owned land without planning permission, and often subject to local authority enforcement action (although some sites are 'tolerated'). Since the police have no powers under the 1994 Act against such land, Gypsy-owned land is increasingly attractive: 58% of the unauthorised caravans in our survey were on such land, whether owner-occupied or otherwise. Our survey found several families who had been displaced from their own authorised site and were now living on unauthorised sites. There has been a growth in (and negative media attention to) Gypsy and Traveller 'self-provided' sites, many of which are in rural locations where the cost of purchase is lower than elsewhere.

- Caravans on other land, usually at the roadside or on highway or other public land, who may be subject to removal action from both police and council. Some of these were Gypsies/Travellers moving around (including a small encampment encountered of 'new Travellers'), while a few were displaced from council housing, who were seeking to be re-housed.
- 3.5.2 The six-monthly counts record both such sites, but probably undercount roadside caravans, being a snap-shot on two particular days. Police records of 'unauthorised encampments' through the year relate to specific incidents where they were called out, and often relate to the same group of caravans moving from site to site, so are not particularly helpful for assessing accommodation need.
- 3.5.3 TES roll records distinguish between unauthorised sites of less or more than two months, the latter usually being Gypsy-owned land. They show for Cambridgeshire some five hundred statutory school-age children on such sites (+ 68 'overwintering fair and circus children). Of these 40% were on longer-stay sites (over two months), the rest being more mobile Gypsies/Travellers, usually on the roadside.
- 3.5.4 Housing legislation defines the occupier of a caravan (or 'moveable structure') as legally homeless if there is nowhere that he or she can legally place it and reside in it, yet local authorities are not obliged to make equivalent accommodation available. According to the ODPM homelessness code of guidance Gypsies/Travellers should be considered on the same basis as any other applicant, and can be offered 'some other suitable form of housing', although it recognises that they may not wish to settle in conventional housing. Statistics of homelessness applications rarely differentiate Gypsy/Traveller applicants from others, and in any case few Gypsies/Travellers seem to apply. South Cambs reported only 1-2% of its homelessness applications from Travellers, although its unauthorised caravans have grown by over 100 in recent years.
- 3.5.5 Unauthorised caravans in the study area are scattered in mostly rural locations, some on small, single-family sites, but increasingly in recent years have tended to concentrate on a few larger, high-profile sites (notably in South Cambs at Cottenham and Willingham, and in King's Lynn & West Norfolk at Hay Green), often next to private authorised sites. Private authorised sites may contain more caravans than permitted (e.g. at Marshland St. James, in King's Lynn & West Norfolk). The total numbers are small when compared, for example, with numbers of homelessness applications, or with housing supply forecasts for the general population, but receive much negative publicity, from both local and national press. Several council web-sites have specific web-pages devoted to the issue. When household sizes reach around six individuals they seem to displace to unauthorised sites, perhaps because of the difficulty in accessing a large enough pitch on an authorised site. As household size increases we see a slight decline in numbers re-housed into 'bricks-and-mortar', perhaps because typical social housing does not accommodate larger households, and also a desire to be with other family members for mutual support.
- 3.5.6 Councils and the police spend significant sums of money trying to close unauthorised sites down, usually without having alternative suitable

accommodation to offer. Councils and the police in the study area are concerned to improve the situation, hence their commissioning this and other work.

- 3.5.7 Those in unauthorised caravans experience greater difficulties in access to basic services, and stress associated with impending eviction procedures. (Anecdotally this particularly affects children, and is a reason cited for moving into housing in some cases (see evidence provided to the ODPM Select Committee by the Traveller Law Reform Coalition in 2003). They also usually have poor relations with the settled communities, and sometimes extended families and support networks are broken up. They tend to have larger families (average of 4 rather than 3 children, average of 6 siblings per household compared with 5 for all), and are more likely to be of Irish background.

**Figure 11: Average unauthorised caravan numbers by district, 2002-2004**

*Source: ODPM January and July counts*

<b>District</b>	<b>Unauthorised</b>
Fenland	165
South Cambridgeshire	87
Kings Lynn & W. Norfolk	46
East Cambridgeshire	22
Forest Heath	21
Huntingdonshire	14
St Edmundsbury	6
Cambridge (City)	3
Peterborough	1

### **3.6 Gypsies in housing**

- 3.6.1 Official statistics are lacking on this group, with little information on movement into and out of) housing. Data is starting to be collected on RSL lettings to Gypsies/Travellers, but is incomplete for our purposes. There are, however, substantial numbers of housed Gypsies/Travellers (estimated about two thousand in Fenland and East Cambs districts alone). If someone is accommodated in public housing who would prefer to be in a caravan, there is a potential saving of public funds: the development cost of a council caravan pitch has been estimated at half that of a council house. We have, therefore, attempted to include this potential, if small, demand as part of our needs assessment.
- 3.6.2 Our survey interviewed 40 Gypsies/Travellers in housing, traced by referral from caravan respondents and adapting the Andalusian snowball method (Gamella 2002, detail in Appendix A). We found the following problems: high levels of racism from neighbours; feelings of isolation and loss of identity; feeling 'closed in'; drug abuse on estates. Those in housing were more likely to have poor health (which may have been why they chose to go into housing in the first place). 'We are worried all the time about the neighbours; I wish we'd never gone in a house. They complain all the time, just about us - no one else on the street, even though there's people breaking motors in their front garden and selling drugs'

- 3.6.3 Of Gypsies/Travellers interviewed on sites, 26% had formerly lived in a house, but only 12% said that they would live in a house if they had the chance. The low rate of homelessness application by Gypsies/Travellers in South Cambs confirms a resistance to going into 'bricks and-mortar' accommodation. Those who had lived in a house cited (as reasons for going into housing) the following: education of children, having lived in a house as a child, illness, loss of site and 'you can't travel any more'. For those who had left housing, reasons included: 'didn't like it', 'became depressed', and 'couldn't stand not travelling', 'could not settle' and 'cut off from my family'. None of our respondents who were or had been in housing found the transition easy. While they may have willingly exchanged the hardship and inconvenience of roadside life for running water and other amenities, many reject the constraints imposed by such an alien way of living, with the loss of close-knit community ties and shared values, physical isolation and loneliness. Research cited by Baker (2002) found that a fifth of housed Traveller families were unable to settle and soon returned to their traditional way of life, and other reports put the failure rate as high as 50%.
- 3.6.4 One approach proposed to the transition to 'bricks and mortar' is the concept of small group housing schemes, which has been tried in Ireland and Northern Ireland. Our survey, however, found no knowledge of, and little interest in, it. Indeed, several said that they kept quiet about being Gypsies/Travellers on their estate, to avoid racism, and would not want to draw attention to themselves in such a way. We can only suggest that the potential be further explored, perhaps by RSLs as their experience of providing Gypsy/Traveller accommodation grows.

### **3.7 Survey findings on accommodation preferences**

- 3.7.1 Our survey respondents spoke about the need for more sites more than any other topic. Competition was fierce to obtain a pitch anywhere, rather than be exposed to the risk of constant eviction, and some families were contemplating moving to Ireland or the Continent to avoid the effects of the 1994 Act. The preferred site solution was small, self-owned long-stay sites for family groups, preferably on the edge of a village, and near established Gypsy/Traveller communities.
- 3.7.2 There was extreme scepticism about the prospects for further council site provision: 'Are you joking? The council looking to help us?', 'If we could be on the road again, no Travellers would be on any council site'.
- 3.7.3 The ODPM guidance recommends identifying the location of where additional pitches and sites are needed, but our survey found no specific geographical location preferred by our respondents, just 'more sites anywhere'.
- 3.7.4 Figure 12 gives survey results on attitudes to having their own land. Respondents wanted to provide for themselves: 'The Gypsies know what to do: stand back and let them do it themselves'. Of respondents 49% wanted to own their own site (excluding those who already had it), but were deterred by the costs and difficulties with planning permission. Those on unauthorised sites wanted to stay where they were: 'I would like to be left here in peace'.

- 3.7.5 Many wanted more space on the plots they had (where council or private), to allow separate sleeping arrangements for boys and girls. Appendix A gives further detail. Although 39% wanted more caravans on their plot (50% of respondents on private authorised sites, where caravan numbers are usually controlled by condition), 28% of respondents said that there was enough space for visitors on their site. They wanted more flexibility to accommodate friends and relatives, but most on private sites were afraid of losing the permission they already had. Some said that they would prefer to accommodate visitors on their sites, rather than have more transit sites provided.
- 3.7.6 Asked what facilities they would like, response included: 'up-to-date modern facilities near to shops, schools and doctors', 'more old-age pension sites with nice open spaces', 'more trees and grass'. Specific points were made: play areas for children, parking, working areas, communal and laundry facilities, landscaping (no earth bunding), more flexible rules, new utility blocks (on council sites), better fences and gates.

**Figure 12: Number of respondents living on sites who have owned land and/or want their own site**

Source: survey data

District	Have owned land	Never owned land	Non response	Total	Want own site	Do not want own site	Non response	Has own site	Total
Fenland	24	32	-	56	17	35	1	3	56
South Cambridgeshire	10	56	1	67	30	33	3	1	67
East Cambs	5	22	2	29	17	11	1	-	29
King's Lynn & West Norfolk	7	7	1	15	7	-	3	5	15
Peterborough	-	65	6	71	42	23	6	-	71
Forest Heath	9	7	1	17	12	4	1	-	17
Huntingdon	2	13	-	15	8	7	-	-	15
Cambridge City	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
St Edmundsbury	1	2	-	3	2	-	-	1	3
Study Area	58	204	11	273	135	113	15	10	273
% total	21	75	4	100	49	41	6	4	100



### **3.8 Accommodation Assessment 2005-2010**

- 3.8.1 This assessment follows (with some adjustments) the methodology set out in current ODPM guidance (February 2006, especially para.80), which was published after our survey was completed. We have also referred to the Birmingham study methodology where appropriate (Niner 2002).
- 3.8.2 The ODPM guidance (2006) equates a household with a pitch, but the relationship of caravans, households and pitches can be complex. The number of caravans on a family pitch may vary (our survey found an average of 1.6, in line with other studies), as does the size of a caravan, which can vary from a small tourer up to a 1200 sq.ft. mobile home under present law. While the official counts record families as well as caravans, that data is unreliable and less robust than our survey findings.
- 3.8.3 Following the approach in ODPM guidance, we do not distinguish need between different groups of Gypsies/Travellers. The Irish Traveller population has grown, and may now comprise as much as a quarter of the Gypsy/Traveller population in the study area, being concentrated mostly in the Peterborough and South Cambs districts.
- 3.8.4 Figure 13 shows changes in district caravan numbers since 1980, since any estimate of future accommodation needs should take account of historical trends, not least to adjust for temporary fluctuations. Total numbers over that period have risen in five districts, and fallen in four. Two districts (South Cambs and Fenland) now have over 400 caravans, four (St Edmundsbury, Cambridge City, Huntingdonshire and Forest Heath) below 100, while three (Peterborough, Kings Lynn & West Norfolk and East Cambs) are in the range 100-200. Clustering of caravans in certain districts reflects both Gypsy/Traveller preferences, and local policy (eg planning policy and closure of sites).
- 3.8.5 Figure 14 presents our quantitative assessment of the accommodation needs (in pitches/households) of the Gypsy/Traveller population in the study area, over the five-year period 2005-2010. Some local factors in individual districts affected the calculations, as referred to in Appendix B. The assessment applies five variables (following the ODPM draft guidance): current supply, current demand (unauthorised caravans), over-crowding, transfer from housing, and family formation. The approach to each is explained in the notes.

**Figure 13. Increase of total caravans in study area districts (count averages 1980-1982 and 2002-2004, ranked)**

*Source: derived from official count statistics*

District	Average 1980-1982	Average 2002-2004	% change
Fenland	213	485	+128
South Cambs	51	425	+733
East Cambs	58	177	+205
Kings Lynn & W. Norfolk	269	157	-42
Peterborough	132	117	-12
Forest Heath	10	64	+540
Huntingdonshire	67	57	-15
Cambridge (City)	22	28	+27
St Edmundsbury	31	11	-65
<b>Total</b>	<b>853</b>	<b>1521</b>	<b>+78</b>

**Figure 14: District Gypsy/Traveller Accommodation Needs 2005-2010 (ranked and rounded)**

District	Fenland	SCambs	ECambs	Hunts	Camb City	Forest Heath	Kings Lynn	Pb'ro	St. Eds	Cambs County	Total Study Area
<b>CURRENT SUPPLY (council and private authorised pitches) (1)</b>	165-200	210-220	90-120	20	0	35	80-90	75-90	0	485-560	675-775
<b>CURRENT AND FORECAST DEMAND</b>											
Unauthorised households in caravans (2)	90-100	55-65	10-15	10-15	15	10-15	30-35	1	0	180-210	221-261
Overcrowding allowance (3)	15-20	25-30	5-10	5	0	5	10-12	7-10	0	50-65	72-92
Transfer from housing (4)	15	5	1-5	1	0	1	1-2	1-2	0	22-26	25-31
Family formation (5)	40-70	25-30	10-15	1-5	0	1	5-10	1-2	1	76-120	84-134
<b>EXTRA PITCH NEED 2005-2010</b>	160-205	110-130	25-45	15-25	15	15-20	45-60	10-15	10-20 *	325-420	405-535

\* St. Edmundsbury: Takes account of additional factors, as shown in the St Edmundsbury GTAA. Because of this, the extra pitch need should be summed horizontally, not vertically.

Totals in Figure 14 are rounded



**Note 1: Current supply** The ODPM approach includes all occupied council and authorised private pitches, and equates a pitch with a household. As data sources we have used schedules of sites provided by councils, and the six-monthly count returns, and provide a range of figures to reflect different household:caravan ratios. We have cross-checked our figures against the assumptions in ODPM & Niner, but found little need to adjust our figures. For instance, given the lack of any transit provision in our study area, we have assumed full occupancy, interpreting any under-occupation in counts as temporary absence. Niner also allowed for current unused sites/pitches being brought back into use, but we understand that closed sites and pitches are unlikely to be re-opened, and the proposed new emergency stopping site in Cambridge City has been abandoned (although the City Council states it is seeking an alternative).

**Note 2: Current demand (unauthorised caravans).** We convert official caravan counts into households, supplemented by more detailed schedules from some districts. ODPM guidance subdivides this into several categories, but we regard that as over-complex and overlapping. We have applied the average (January and July) of the last three years of count figures, but adjusted for roadside caravans not seeking accommodation in the area, and other factors.

**Note 3: Over-crowding** Niner assumed that 10% of council pitches were over-occupied, but our survey found higher levels of overcrowding, reflecting effects of the 1994 Act, larger household sizes among Irish Travellers, and other factors. We have applied 10%, but to all types of caravan accommodation (both authorised and unauthorised), adjusting in some districts to reflect local factors (eg large pitches in Chesterton Fen Road and Fenland council sites). Concealed households are subsumed in this calculation.

**Note 4: Transfer from housing** ODPM includes a small figure for those 'in housing but with a need for site accommodation', and Niner assumed that, of Gypsies in housing, 1-5% wanted a pitch rather than a house. Our survey of 40 housed Gypsies/Travellers produced a higher preference rate (from which should be subtracted those in caravans wanting housing), but we recognise that this was a relatively small sample, and are reluctant to equate a stated preference with real demand. We have, therefore, been cautious, applying a 5% allowance (of housed families as at 2005) for housing transfer to caravan pitches, adjusting in some districts to reflect local factors. We recommend that this be kept under close review.

**Note 5: Family formation** ODPM, following Niner, applied a 3% per annum household growth rate, reflecting the demographic profile of the Gypsy/Traveller population. Niner assumed that 70% of the increase would need caravans, although our survey findings suggest a rather higher figure (80%). We have applied Niner's figure to a 3% growth rate.

### 3.9 Some policy implications

- 3.9.1 **Private and public provision.** Figure 14 does not distinguish between private and public provision. Recent official counts (2002-4) show a ratio of council:private authorised caravans for England of 54:46, in the Eastern Region 46:54, in the study area 32:68, and in Cambridgeshire 30:70. While the national and regional proportions should not be taken as a target, the evidence suggests that there is scope for increased council provision in the study area, which has seen the closure of three sites in recent years. Some existing sites are in clear need of upgrading or even redevelopment, with the Norwood Lane site (Peterborough) being the most pressing. Since private site provision requires the grant of planning permission, a more positive approach by local planning authorities, especially towards small, self-help, long-stay Gypsy sites in appropriate locations, could do much to ease the situation. A small contribution may also come from non-Gypsy caravan sites and mobile home parks.
- 3.9.2 **District allocation.** Figure 14 does not seek to re-distribute pitches between districts, although it does include new pitches for Cambridge and St. Edmundsbury, reflecting council decision and historic provision respectively. We are reluctant to allocate a quota of future pitch provision to districts, but recognise that to provide only for the present distribution of caravans would favour those with low numbers, and indeed reward those who have closed sites. We recommend that any policy for future provision should aim to redistribute more evenly, particularly towards districts with low numbers where there is evidence of potential demand. With increased capital funding available at the regional level, we favour an approach to provide new sites in the two districts with the largest shortfall (South Cambs and Fenland) and upgrading Norwood Lane (Peterborough) and Parson's Drove (Fenland), with other provision in authorities which currently have little provision.
- 3.9.3 **Long-stay and transit provision.** Figure 14 does not distinguish between residential and transit pitches. Based upon our research and survey findings, we tentatively recommend a ratio of two long-stay to one transit pitch. Evidence, both nationally and locally, indicates that the immediate need is for long-stay accommodation, while the police advocate further transit provision to allow them to use their increased powers. Given the attractiveness of the study area (geographical location of the M11, A1 and A14, and relative prosperity), some transit provision is needed, probably in the Cambridge area.
- 3.9.4 **Transfer from housing.** There are benefits (not least in terms of best value and cultural diversity policy), in including this in the estimate of need, but the issue can be problematic and contentious, and is particularly difficult to quantify. The 'best-value' benefit arises because caravan sites are cheaper (about half the capital cost) than houses to build, allowing public housing stock to be re-allocated (particularly in the study area, where there is strong demand for conventional housing).
- 3.9.5 **Pitch size.** We recommend that future pitch sizes on long-stay sites should include some pitches large enough to accommodate three caravans (including one mobile home), rather than the two recommended in previous official

guidance. Such larger pitches would provide for larger and extended families, reduce overcrowding, and allow visitors. One size does not fit all.

- 3.9.6 **Partnerships** A mechanism for inter-authority co-operation should be created, to support bids to the regional housing body. Such a sub-regional or county-level group should bring elected members, officers and Gypsy representatives together on a regular basis, allowing conflict resolution through direct communication rather than protracted and expensive litigation. (A model for such a forum, known as the Travellers Community Relations Forum, currently exists in Surrey and is chaired by a district chief executive.) It should consider future strategies, but focus particularly upon reducing the shortfall of authorised accommodation, facilitating private applications for long-stay private sites, agreeing a mix of sites between districts, and improving relations between the Gypsy and settled communities. It should initiate a programme of public site provision, and investigate suitable land in council ownership to contribute, either for transit sites or for sale as private sites. It should also monitor and review planning policy, planning decisions on private Gypsy sites, and police activity under the Criminal Justice Act 1994, with a view to increasing the supply of private authorised accommodation.
- 3.9.7 **Gypsy/Traveller involvement** Following the positive experience of community involvement in undertaking the survey, Gypsy surveyors should be considered to assist with future official six-monthly counts, in accordance with recommendations in recent ODPM research. This will maintain a valuable data source for assessing accommodation needs, and build capacity and reduce suspicion within the Gypsy community.

## 4. SERVICE NEEDS AND ATTITUDES

4.1. **Introduction** The project brief included a requirement to investigate the use of public services by Gypsies/Travellers, and how services might be improved. Other studies have identified a strong wariness of service providers, and lack of confidence in them to meet Gypsy/Traveller needs. Our survey found a generally similar situation: asked what local authority services they used, few responded, and few had opinions on how they could be improved. We have, however, obtained much useful data, especially when checked against other research findings.

### 4.2 Health and Demographics

4.2.1 In health terms, Travellers are arguably the most socially excluded group in society, with health outcomes and status significantly poorer than that found in the lowest socio-economic group in the UK population. Parry & others (2004) found that Gypsy Travellers have much poorer health status, and more self-reported symptoms of ill-health, than other UK-resident, English speaking ethnic minorities and economically disadvantaged white UK residents. They have poorer health than that of their age/sex-matched comparators, and reported chest pain, respiratory problems, and arthritis were more prevalent. Their mortality rate is between one and one and a half times that of the housed population. A range of other studies (cited in the Sheffield study) have found that maternal mortality is higher for Gypsies and Travellers than for any other one ethnic group, with deaths often directly related to lack of stable sites and adequate maternal care, exceptionally high rate of miscarriage, still-birth and perinatal death. Travellers also exhibit high infant mortality and child accident rates associated with instability of sites and lack of access to health care.

4.2.2 The age distribution from our survey broadly corresponded with other research: a higher proportion of children than the whole population and lower proportions of older people, probably reflecting high birth rates and low life expectancy respectively. Larger household sizes reflect both higher proportions of children, the extended family structure (often including grand-parents, ie three generations in one household), and probably the effects of accommodation shortage. Our survey asked about siblings, and the average number of siblings per respondent was 5.2 (5.6 for housed Gypsies and Travellers), while older respondents (aged over 50) averaged 4.5 children and 6.2 siblings, which is significantly higher than the whole life fertility rate for the general population.

4.2.3 Our survey found the average number of children per respondent (not all living in the household) to be 3.6 (3.25 for English Gypsies and 3.9 for Irish Travellers). Although it was sometimes difficult to gather data on the number of school age children in the population surveyed (see further under 'education'), by constructing a theoretical sample (respondents between the ages of 21 and 42 who referred to the number of their 'children') we believe we have identified the majority of young people of school age, resident within the survey sample. The average number of children born to this cohort was 3.4 children, with the possibility of greater population growth amongst younger members of the cohort. In support of the proposition that the Gypsy and Traveller population is young,



and increasing, the 2005 Leeds study found 28.3% of Gypsy/Travellers of school age (compared with 14.2% of the general Leeds population in the 2001 census).

- 4.2.4 Our survey found 12.9% of respondents who stated their age to be older than 65, (equivalent to 17.4% of English Gypsies and 3.7% of Irish Travellers who provided data on their age) with a male:female ratio in that age group of 48:52, compared with 43:57 in East of England (2001 census). The 1965 census found 3.4% of Gypsies and Travellers over 65, the 1975 study 2%, the Leeds 2005 study 2.3% over 60 (compared with 19.9% of the 2001 general population of Leeds, and 16.5% of East Anglia respectively). This improved life expectancy in our survey for English Gypsies probably reflects better access to health services and living with other family members, particularly for those living on council sites (85% of the English Gypsy population in this age group).
- 4.2.5 Alongside this evidence of improved life expectancy amongst older Gypsies in the study area, we note that changing demographic patterns (and in a number of cases shortage of pitches) means that a few elderly people are extremely isolated as they do not have relatives on the same site, and dependant upon other site residents for their needs (e.g. shopping when sites are rural and/or isolated and bus services may be non-existent, or distant bus stops unreachable by a person with limited mobility). Whilst it has been generally assumed that Gypsy and Traveller communities will 'care for their own', and in the main this pattern still holds true, it is important that health and social care agencies are aware that as the Gypsy and Traveller population ages such services will need to become more pro-active in ensuring that their services are available to all members of their local community.
- 4.2.6 In several cases interviewers reported their concerns over elderly and/or disabled people who were on isolated sites, or living some distance away. 70% of respondents aged over 75 years of age were living alone, and, whilst sometimes they had relatives who cared for their daily needs, we were informed of at least two respondents with disabilities requiring assistance in day-to-day living, but with no close relatives on site, and not in contact with health or social care agencies. In one case the elderly person concerned had expressed an interest in living nearer their adult child on another site, but had no idea how to arrange a transfer to another site, or even (possibly) sheltered conventional accommodation.
- 4.2.7 Monitoring of older Gypsies for health and support needs and culturally specific support potentially provides a benchmark for race relations and minority health initiatives and we recommend further research and consultation with community groups to ensure that service providers are able to target services appropriately.
- 4.2.8 **Specific health conditions** The Sheffield study found the most marked health inequalities were in occurrence of anxiety (or 'nerves', particularly related to accommodation), respiratory problems (asthma and bronchitis), heart disease, diabetes, and in the excess prevalence of miscarriages, stillbirths, neonatal deaths and premature death of older offspring. Our survey found a similar range of health problems, as follows:

**Figure 15: Reported health conditions**

Source: survey data

<b>Condition</b>	<b>Number of responses*</b>
No health problems in immediate family	149 (55%)
Health Problems in immediate family	120 (45%)
Back problems	38 (14%)
Asthma + Emphysema/Chest (asthmatic children)	51 + (9) (19%)
'Nerves'	36 (13%)
Arthritis	17 (6%)
Disabled Children	16 (6%)
Cardio-vascular conditions	22 (8%)
Disabled relative	18 (7%)
Unspecified health problems	5 (2%)
Epilepsy	1 (1%)
Diabetes	5 (2%)
Eczema/psoriasis	2 (1%)

\*Responses = 269/313 (85.94%)

4.2.9 In our survey 43.8% of English Gypsy respondents and 47.15% of Irish Travellers reported close family/household members with health problems, and/or children with disabilities (including epilepsy, blindness, deafness, kidney disease, genetic conditions, and learning disability). The relatively high incidence of families supporting a disabled child corresponds with the high percentage of special schools with Gypsy/Traveller pupils on their roll, (five of nine 'special schools' have Gypsy or Traveller pupils according to the Traveller Education Benchmarking exercise 2002/3). Health status was poorest for Gypsies/Travellers on council sites (although this may reflect the older cohort on such sites), as shown in Figure 16. Comments from the survey included:

- 'I'm looking after me mother now, but I've got a bad heart valve, diabetes and arthritis. My sister lives in Darlington, she's not well either, so I'm worried about anything happening to me.'
- 'Because you live so close to people, if they've got a cold or germs you get it as well.'

**Figure 16: Reported health status by site (%)**

*Source: survey data*

<b>Reported health status 257/273 respondents (94%)</b>	<b>Private authorised</b>	<b>Unauthorised</b>	<b>Council</b>	<b>No planning status specified</b>
Good	55%	37%	39%	78%
Average	17%	14%	13%	-
Poor	28%	49%	48%	22%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

**4.2.10 Accommodation issues and health.** Accommodation was an overriding factor, mentioned by most respondents in our survey, and confirmed by other research, as the context for bad health effects, because of the impact of increased evictions, restricted access to healthcare and education, an increase in unsafe conditions on roadside sites, and a breakdown of social and community support networks. Ill-health is exacerbated by living on road-side sites with limited access to clean water, and Gypsies/Travellers particularly suffer from disease linked to sanitation and environment. Unsited Travellers experience inequality in matters such as registering with a GP, obtaining hospital appointments and contact with health services; a settled address is increasingly important for receiving post, and obtaining access to medical, educational and welfare services. Both health and education suffer as a result of rapid repeat evictions: high child accident rates, for example, have been associated with site insecurity and lack of access to appropriate health care. Our survey found families exhausted from constant movement, and in some cases unable to repair vehicles or even prepare food for their children before having to move on yet again. Travellers are particularly at risk from diseases corresponding to their environment, e.g. respiratory illnesses, enteric infections such as dysentery, skin disorders such as impetigo, infectious diseases such as Hepatitis A and B, mainly due to poor sanitation and lack of water supply when living on road-side sites with limited access to clean water. Secure accommodation can help establish stable relations with the health care system, leading to medical benefits, and better knowledge of welfare and educational entitlements, with health workers as enablers and contact points. Access to improved dental care and oral health through the ability to obtain regular check-ups and on-going treatment can only be assisted by stable sites.

4.2.11 Comments about the link between accommodation and health from our survey included:

- ‘You can’t let an old ill person live in a trailer and if you haven’t got a big chalet or house what are you going to do? You can’t put them in an old peoples home everyone would be laded (embarrassed) to death.’
- ‘We got people who is depressed, grown men, when we have a place where they can go for help? Not just tablets proper help.’

- What's making my health bad at the moment (to tell you the truth) is other Travellers, there's a family on my site who shouldn't be allowed next to decent people. The council need to sort them out but don't seem to do nothing even though they know they are breaking the rules. People need to know the problem of drugs, councils should threaten to ban people from sites if they are selling drugs.' (resident on council site)

**4.2.12 Housed Gypsies** For Gypsy/Travellers, living in a house is often associated with long-term illness, poorer health and anxiety, as found by Parry & others (2004). Our survey found 4 people who moved into housing because of health reasons (three because of children with health problems, one because of their own severe disability). Of those housed, 35% reported ill-health amongst family members (sometimes multiple health conditions), 15% having a disabled child or sibling resident in the household. A number of housed Gypsies and Travellers reported that they would prefer to live on a site, but family health needs made this not feasible. This suggests gains to be made from supporting disabled or ill Gypsies/Travellers to continue living on sites or within their communities, perhaps through community (or group) housing.

**4.2.13 Access to health care services** Outreach health services to marginalised communities can narrow the health gap, with significant implications for local authority Gypsy/Traveller policy, where repeated eviction and lack of sites limits access to medical and social care. Recent public health policy repeatedly draws on the language of social inclusion, community access, and equality agendas, which applies to policy initiatives on Gypsy/Traveller issues through the CRE, the Social Exclusion Unit, and local/health authority partnerships.

4.2.14 Parry & others (2004) found fewer services used by the community in spite of its greater health needs. Barriers to health care access included reluctance of GPs to register Gypsies/Travellers or visit sites, practical problems of access whilst travelling, mismatch of expectations with health staff, and inappropriate use of hospital A&E facilities as a way of obtaining medical services. Women might be reluctant to attend at a doctor's surgery or a hospital without the support of a female relative or friend. Preventative health care work (eg cervical cytology screening, immunisation for children) is at risk, other than on an *ad hoc* basis. Our survey found 11% of all respondents not registered with a GP, but 60% of roadside respondents, and 24% of those on unauthorised private sites. District variations were found: residents on unauthorised sites in South Cambridgeshire were less likely to report being registered with a doctor than any group other than roadside Gypsies and Travellers. Typical comments were: 'no address so can't register' or 'go to hospital'. Residents of unauthorised sites may report being refused registration with local GPs whilst planning disputes are on-going, or may have failed to register with health services because of anecdotal concerns over refusal. It is noticeable (although perhaps self-evident) that there is a direct correlation between level of GP registration and longer-established, stable authorised sites. Better communication between Gypsies/Travellers and health workers, and more outreach preventative work, may over time lessen the health inequalities found between Travellers and members of the settled population. We consider it important that local health services emphasise to Gypsies/Travellers that they can use services regardless of the legal status of their accommodation.

4.2.15 Comments about health care access included:

- 'I'd be better off with one of them flu injections but I don't know where to get it done. I can't ask my doctor I asked him for something that me sister got in another town and he made me feel like a *divvy* (fool) for askin.'
- 'My husband has never had a check up in his life and his brother died last year from a heart attack like his cousin, it's worrying.'
- 'Why don't they ask people about health problems amongst Travellers? My family has a lot of heart problems, my husband's has a lot of sugar diabetes, some people have a lot bad with their nerves.'
- 'We need a doctor that understands Travellers, my husband's sister has one near Newark who all the Travellers goes to he's a gentleman.'
- 'I'm scared to death what's going to happen to my old mother if she gets worse, I won't know how to look after her.'
- 'There's nothing being done for old Travellers like there is for old *gaujes*, no get togethers or anything like that.'
- 'Check-ups for women can be very embarrassing if it's a man doctor, a woman is better.'
- 'Doctors should check you before winter when you get back from being away'
- 'I worry about my boys, I can't talk to them about illnesses and diseases and their dad don't know about them so someone needs to educate them about things. Is there a doctor or someone for younger people, boys especially?'
- 'We don't get any information the same as other people on health because those who can read have stopped buying the papers 'cos there's too much bad stuff in it about Travellers.'

4.2.16 Culturally sensitive out-reach work can is necessary to engage with Gypsies/Travellers in health care access, and our survey found positive experiences of some health professionals, where seen as culturally well-informed and sympathetic, as presented in Figure 17.

**Figure 17: Services found helpful**

Source: survey data (76 responses)

Service	No of Responses
Health Visitor	54
GP surgery	14
Site Warden	7
TES/individual worker	5
Ormiston Trust	3
District Nurse	3
Midwife	3
'other' e.g social worker	3

**4.2.17 Physical improvements.** Grants for disabled access have recently been extended to those on caravan sites. Of respondents on sites 11% reported some difficulties with physical arrangements or access, and seven asked for help with disabled facilities. Lack of disabled access was a criticism of several council sites (eg Norwood Lane, Peterborough). Elderly or disabled respondents wanted better arrangements for showers, utility blocks or a carer. Some residents on private authorised and unauthorised sites mentioned elderly or disabled residents being precluded from erecting ‘a shed to keep her warm when she’s doing the cooking’ or ‘somewhere to put the washing machine – she don’t want to be having to take it to the launderette at her age but we have to have it [services] connected and the council say we can’t ‘til the case is decided’.

4.2.18 Several respondents commented on fire risks on some sites, with fire points overgrown, limited (or non-existent) fire hoses and residents unaware of the location of the nearest hydrants. Elderly people living alone in such conditions, and perhaps dependent upon cylinder gas heaters for warmth, are at particular risk should a fire break out, and we would recommend that fire safety checks are provided on a regular basis for elderly and other vulnerable residents.

### 4.3 Education

4.3.1 Other research consistently shows Gypsy/Traveller children seriously disadvantaged in the education system, with poor school attendance (at secondary level 20% or less). The Parekh Report (2000) noted the ‘generally low educational attainment’ of Gypsy/Traveller children, moving from school to school according to patterns of seasonal mobility and eviction patterns. Ofsted’s ‘Provision and Support for Traveller pupils’ (2003) states:

‘the vast majority of Traveller pupils linger on the periphery of the education system. The situation has persisted for too long and the alarm bells rung in earlier reports have yet to be heeded’.

4.3.2 In producing this section we acknowledge help from the Cambridgeshire Team for Traveller Education (TTE). They are to be commended for good practice in employing Gypsy and Traveller staff to work with the community across a range of educational situations, both within school and out of school providing basic skills training. With data for Suffolk and Norfolk not disaggregated into districts, our analysis focuses mainly on Cambridgeshire.

**4.3.3 The Cambridgeshire situation (TTE data).** While a total of 1,152 statutory school age children (reception class to KS4) were known to the TTE at the time of the 2003/4 benchmarking exercise, 150 of these children were visiting fair children attending the Cambridge Midsummer Fair and not habitually resident within the Education Authority area. Similarly, 20 circus children are recorded as being known to the TTE/TES over the benchmarking period. This section therefore refers to the 982 children residing in or resorting to the locality throughout the benchmarking period. Of these 982 children, 664 (68%) were in education within a school setting, slightly above the national average for Gypsy/Traveller school attendance, but still significantly below that of the general population, or many other Black and Minority Ethnic (BME)

communities. In this section we have drawn upon benchmarking exercises for 2002/3 and 2003/4.

- 4.3.4 The 2003/4 LEA benchmarking exercise records 271 children known to the Team for Traveller Education in the age bands to be preparing for KS2 assessments (7-11 years of age). Of this cohort, 230 children (85% of Gypsy and Traveller children known to the authority) were listed as being in education, slightly higher than the national attendance rate for Gypsy/Traveller pupils recorded by Ofsted in their 2003 publication 'Provision and Support for Traveller Pupils'.
- 4.3.5 At the end of KS2 (aged 11) children usually transfer to secondary education. The 2002/3 data from Cambridge demonstrates that only 65% of Gypsy/ Traveller children on school rolls were present during SAT examination periods, and between 4% and 7% (depending on subject) were 'disapplied' from sitting these national exams.
- 4.3.6 The 2003/4 benchmarking exercise shows 53 children in Cambridgeshire 'eligible for transfer' to secondary school, of which 41 (77%) children (recorded as accruing a minimum of 1 day attendance at KS3) actually made the transition. (Ofsted in 2003 noted that nationally 'just over 60%' of Gypsy/Traveller children transfer to secondary school.) Cambridgeshire is known for their good practice towards Gypsy/Traveller children, and compares well with other TES services in the region. We find evidence, however, from the 2002/3 benchmarking exercise of a decrease in attendance, from 55 children on the school roll in the academic year leading up to KS2 SATS, to 49 children 'eligible for transfer', and 35 children actually making the transition to secondary school. Only 64% of Gypsy/Traveller children on school rolls in the academic year 2002/3 *prior* to SATS were still in education in the academic year following.
- 4.3.7 We examined the academic achievement of Gypsy and Traveller children still attending school in the year before commencing GCSE study (eg eligible to sit KS3 assessments at age 14) during the academic year 2002/3. Cambridgeshire data shows 31 Gypsy and Traveller children on school rolls prior to SATS tests, declining during SATS to 26 (84% of eligible children). Thus this key stage may represent an 'exit' point from education (Ofsted 2003 reports a steep decline in school attendance at KS3 nationally), where families consider that a child has attained enough to discontinue schooling. Alternative forms of education (such as Increased Flexibility Programmes where young people attend college part-time for vocational training) may be more popular for Gypsy/Travellers.
- 4.3.8 The data suggests a 25-35% decline in potentially eligible young people attending school at the age of 16. Of 17 considered, 14 (82%) sat GCSEs, of whom 12 (86%) obtained at least one GCSE at grade A-G. The rest (14%) obtained 5 A-C grade GCSEs, the standard achieved nationally by 54% of children in 2003, thus confirming the relatively poor achievement level of Gypsy/Traveller children.
- 4.3.9 TTE/TES statistics for academic year 2003/4 show 106 young people 'involved in education' at Key Stage 3 (54% of the KS3 cohort of young Gypsies and Travellers in formal education that academic year). By KS4, the percentage had declined to 49 children (28% of Gypsy/Traveller children between 14 and 16).

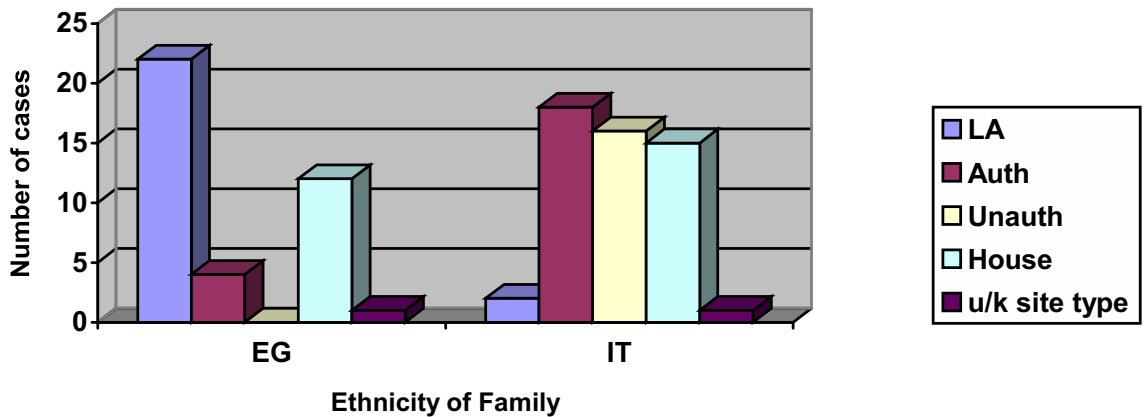
- 4.3.10 Cambridgeshire LEA reports a low percentage of these young people remaining in the education system. In academic year 2002/3 (for which collated data for the entire Eastern Region exists) it performed worse than other regional LEAs with similar sized cohorts of Gypsy/Traveller pupils sitting post-16 exams (Cambridgeshire 14%, Norfolk 36%, Suffolk 50%). In academic year 2003/4 Cambridgeshire had only 7% (1/15 students) obtaining 5+ A\*-C grade GCSEs, and 80% (12/15) 5+ A\*-G grades, while between 2002/3 and 2003/4 the average points score for GCSEs achieved by Gypsy and Traveller pupils in Cambridgeshire improved by 1.8%.
- 4.3.11 The Eastern Region Traveller Education benchmarking exercise 2002/3 reveals a concerning picture, although not abnormal in the national context. Ofsted found that only around 50% of Gypsy and Traveller pupils attained 5+ Grade A\*-G GCSEs compared with 90.9% of children nationally. Regionally, only 66% of Gypsy/Traveller children took KS4 public examinations, of whom 24% got 5+ A\*-C GCSEs, the rest 1+ A-G. Thus within the Eastern Region in 2003 only 18 Gypsy/Traveller pupils (16% of their age cohort) left school with 5+ GCSEs. Given the relatively large proportion of young people in the population, this must be a matter of serious concern.

#### **4.4 Survey Data on School Attendance by site type**

- 4.4.1 Cambridgeshire TTE/TES records indicate about a thousand children of school age, divided between those in housing, on council sites, unauthorised, fair and circus and highly mobile. With statistics being disaggregated by district, our survey identified about 20% of the eligible number of Gypsy/Traveller children attending school in Cambridgeshire, although 26% of survey respondents declined to answer questions about school attendance. We have constructed a theoretical sample, based upon respondents between 21 and 45 who provided information on numbers of children, analysing data relating to 139 families.
- 4.4.2 We found 50% of English Gypsy and 45% of Irish Traveller children from the theoretical sample attending school at the time of interview. Attendance at secondary school were lower, only 6% of the children reported by our theoretical sample, much lower than the percentage recorded by the TTE. Of our survey population, the largest percentage of children remaining in school were those in housing. Of children from local authority sites, only 15% of those eligible were reported as attending school. Of those on private sites, 45% of Irish Traveller children were in school, and 5% of English Gypsy children. We tentatively suggest that larger Irish private sites allow a concentration of children at a particular school, enabling both parents and children to feel willing and supported to remain in education. No 'roadside' children of any ethnicity receive a formal education according to our survey respondents.

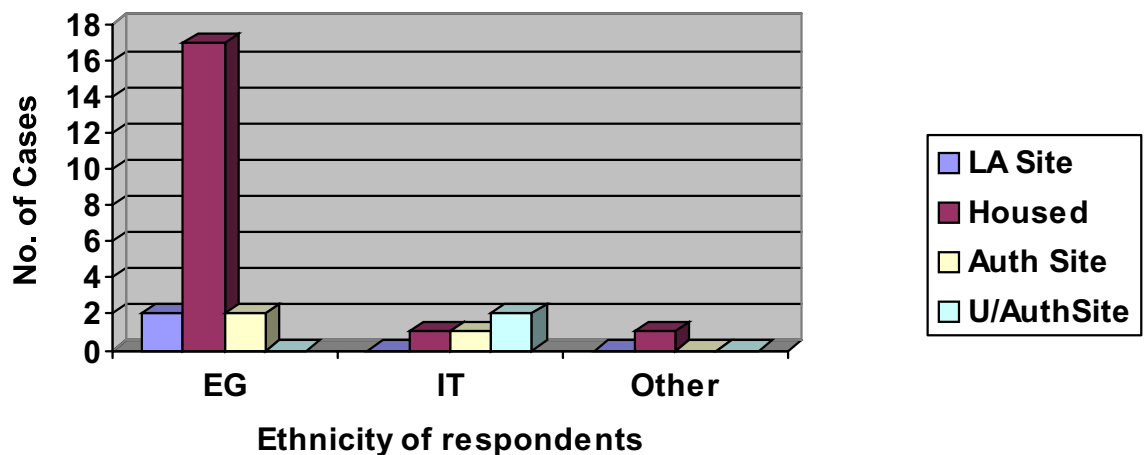


**Figure 18: Children Attending Primary School by ethnicity of parent and accommodation type**



Source: survey data

**Figure 19: Children Attending Secondary School by Ethnicity of Parents and Accommodation Type**



Source: survey data

**4.4.3 Attitudes to school** Many Gypsies and Travellers are well motivated to ensure that their children attend at school, being concerned how to equip their children for dealing with an increasingly bureaucratised and literate society. Responses to our survey included:

- 'People know they need education if they settled, we have to praise the young people who stick at their education;'
- 'Gypsy people need education more than anyone these days.'
- 'My favourite lesson at school is PE football, I'm good at it, I'm the best on my site and of all the Travellers in houses near us. When I score goals at school I get respect.'
- 'I like English, my Granddad was a storyteller and I like writing stories as well, I'd like to write a book about what Gypsies are really like.'

There is also a lack of motivation and interest in formal education, attributable to various factors:

- a) **General alienation.** Children valuing employment opportunities and skills more important than much of the syllabus at settled schools. Some comments:
  - 'Schools don't like Travellers, I think they's happy when they don't go to tell you the truth'
  - 'Nobody ever talks good about Travellers at school, there's none of them in books or plays'
  - 'A lot of settled people don't want to go to school because there's nothing there for them. Not everybody wants to go to university do they? Lots wants to run their own firms, why don't they teach them how to work for yourself?'
  - 'I can't go to school, my Dad needs me to help 'cos he's not well'
- b) **Accommodation problems.** No roadside survey respondents reported having children attending school, and other research found children without access to secure sites least likely to receive a regular education, as their schooling was frequently disrupted by enforced movement. Of the 18% of respondents reporting problems with their own education, most commonly cited reasons were non-attendance, being moved on, and transport/practical difficulties.
- c) **Negative experiences.** Our survey respondents spoke often of bullying by other pupils and racist behaviour, cultural misunderstandings from teaching and support staff, and disregard of the learning needs of Traveller children:
  - 'The minute anyone sees your address as a caravan site they treat your children different. A teacher said to me she could read the school letters and rules for me when I went up to see them. I'm a good reader and writer she must have thought that all Travellers can't read. They need to tell schools that some Travellers can read and write some are very well educated.'
- d) **Parental concerns over the educational curriculum.** There was a fear that daughters (in particular) will be exposed to sex education, bad language and drug abuse in secondary schools. Some comments:
  - 'I want my girl to have an education, but I don't want her hanging around with thirteen and fourteen year old girls who is having boyfriends and doin' what they is doing with them.'
  - 'Sex education should be done at home by mothers. Schools have to understand that it's the way we was all brung up. Gorgias (non Gypsies) could learn from Gypsy people on things like that.'
  - 'They should get some Gypsy people who are educated to go to the schools and speak to the teachers and the children.'
  - 'Travellers like to be shown what to do, not told what to do, that's how we've always learned.'
- e) **Cultural practices** Travellers may be willing to condone absences from school for cultural or social reasons connected with parental employment opportunities, or attendance at weddings, funerals and Christenings over periods of several days. Traditional seasonal travelling patterns may coincide with summer examination, and school attendance may decline.

**4.4.4 Support** Where good education support exists, a child is more likely to stay within the education system. Cambridgeshire is known for its supportive policies

towards Gypsy/Traveller children, and good practice in educational provision. Gypsies/Travellers will tend to send their children to a school where other Gypsy/Traveller children attend, strengthening the supportive role of the school and giving a sense of social inclusion. The benefits of establishing mutual trust between the settled population and Gypsies/Travellers through education together should be self-evident, both for the individual children and for wider inter-community relations, countering the low self-esteem associated with Traveller children's generally poor educational attainment. We explored with respondents which agencies they had found helpful with educational problems. Whilst non-response was high, the Cambridgeshire TTE was highly praised ('the TES were brilliant!'), as was the Ormiston Children and Families Trust, with some individual teachers and TTE staff also being named. Two respondents referred to the fact that their site warden had helped with educational/literacy matters.

- 4.4.5 Further education** Gypsies/Travellers often feel excluded from mainstream opportunities ('if I learnt to read, no one would give me a job anyway because I'm a Traveller'), have little interest in joining mainstream opportunities that require formal education, and lack awareness of mainstream life and work opportunities. With many dissatisfied with their increasingly disadvantaged lifestyles, they could be made more aware of training opportunities, especially if these were made more culturally appropriate and staff seen as welcoming Gypsies/Travellers. Some Gypsies/Travellers say that they would be motivated to pursue further education if they felt it mattered to their business. Literacy and educational take-up rates also improve where site security exists. Of survey respondents 27% wanted further training, but only 12% had received any. Schools and the TES could facilitate access to post-compulsory education for Travellers (as is provided by TTE staff in the Wisbech area).
- 'There's supposed to be a scheme in Wisbech somewhere that trains young people and gives them £40 a week, I've never had any proper information on that' (the e2e scheme)

- 4.4.6 Specific skills/training** By far the most common request (mentioned by 63% of respondents) was for help with the written driving test, because of the literacy requirements and the importance of driving to the travelling way of life. 'Basic skills/literacy/reading' and 'computing' were each noted by 33% of respondents. Vocational training relevant to their lifestyles was valued: blacksmithing, 'something practical', paving, roofing, brick-laying, chain saw licence. Responses by women included:
- 'A lot of women would love to learn how to nurse older people on their sites, why can't the council train them and pay them'
  - 'I want to do hairdressing and nails for Travelling girls, so I want to learn that, but I don't want to be the only Traveller doing it'
  - 'I'd like to do bookkeeping and business accounts to help my husband.'
  - 'Everybody needs to know about computers, they can teach people on the sites first then at college, we want a website for our business'
  - 'My sister works in a bank, I'd like to do that as well or a Travel Agents'
  - 'Why can't they have a young Travelling girl at colleges looking after the chavvies (children) so we can do courses and don't have to worry'.

## 4.5 Other services

4.5.1 We found little evidence of other council services being used. Improved library services (particularly a travelling service to sites) would assist in improving Gypsy/Traveller literacy and educational participation. Some respondents wanted more awareness of Gypsy/Traveller cultural heritage in service provision, and several private Gypsy/Romany museums exist in the region, without public funding support. Council staff were often seen as culturally insensitive, and some specific support was asked for by some newly housed Gypsies and Travellers to assist them in settling into housing. We would recommend further investigation of the potential role of Supporting People services to help families in 'bricks and mortar' accommodation.

4.5.2 **Community relations** Our survey found abundant evidence of low-grade discrimination: name-calling; refusal of entry or service in shops, leisure centres, hair and beauty salons, and laundrettes; horn-blowing by drivers passing unauthorised sites at night. Those at Cottenham, South Cambridgeshire felt especially persecuted. Typical comments on experience of discrimination include:

- 'every day' (a common response).
- 'from the day I was born'
- 'pulled the boys out of school because of name-calling, now home-educated'
- 'We feel unsafe because people think they can take the law into their own hands'

4.5.3 **Police** Attitudes to the police were generally (although not unanimously) negative. Respondents expressed reluctance to report incidents to the police, believing that they would not be interested:

- 'it isn't worth it'
- 'what could or would they do'
- 'when they know you're a Traveller, they don't want to know'.
- 'we've had problems in the village but you have to expect it. We reported it to the police and school but nothing happened. Nothing too out of hand but the police said nothing could be done because it was our word against theirs'

Respondents volunteered stories of police racism towards them at evictions, or petty harassment (being required to account for all of their work tools and belongings whenever seen off site in a working vehicle). Respondents believed that the police assumed that Gypsies are the main criminal element in the area, and so the Gypsy site is first to be raided over any robbery or serious criminal incident. Police helicopters hovered low over sites, terrifying the children ('screaming all hours of the night'). Comments included:

- 'don't want us kind of people around'
- 'need to know Traveller ways'
- 'some civil, some not'
- 'don't take our emergency calls seriously'
- 'Gypsy people don't trust the police'
- 'they should treat us like the settled community'.

4.5.4 **Media** Attitudes towards the media were even more negative, especially from those at Cottenham in South Cambridgeshire. The general effect was to put off those who were literate from reading the newspapers, with the result that they became less well-informed and missed opportunities, for example for education. Comments included:

- 'Travelling people are always put down, and made out to be the worst in the world. If only people could see us individually and get to know our way of life, we are not all bad. There's good and bad in all of us'
- 'They never give us traveling people a fair view'
- 'I don't like the way they make us travelling people to be all bad'
- 'bad news for the travelling people'
- 'we have no privacy and the media made the situation a whole lot worse'
- 'disaster, disturbing – no peace, no privacy'
- 'you can't class us all the same - a load of lies was put in the paper'
- 'they torture you'
- 'very bad: how can us Travellers get on with our life – everyone hates us because of what the Sun says about us'
- 'Disgusting stuff in the papers: they don't let up'

#### 4.6 Recommendations

- 4.6.1 Promote understanding of Gypsy culture through libraries, museums and material for schools. Heritage and library services are key local government services with a role to play in educating the wider public about the contribution of Gypsy communities.
- 4.6.2 Provide Gypsies/Travellers with better advice on local services (addresses and phone numbers)
- 4.6.3 Improve training for public authority staff on needs and cultural factors. Race Equality Schemes should be reviewed to acknowledge the place of Gypsies as the largest ethnic minority group in most of the sub-region, (excluding Peterborough City).

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## APPENDIX A:

### GYPSY & TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION ASSESSMENT CAMBRIDGESHIRE SUB-REGION

#### TECHNICAL SUMMARY

1. **Introduction** The research project involved mixed and experimental methodologies. The main innovative feature was the involvement of English Gypsies and Irish Travellers in the design and delivery of the survey. This represents an advance in community involvement, and should facilitate better community relations in the future. Community members are stake-holders in the project; and capacity is enhanced amongst a generally socially excluded community. The result is (as far as is known) the largest and most comprehensive survey of Gypsy/Traveller accommodation and service needs and attitudes yet undertaken in England. The methodology is ground-breaking and is hoped will become a model to inform future local accommodation needs assessments for Gypsies/Travellers (a statutory requirement since the Housing Act 2004).
2. **Aims** The project aimed to assess the service and accommodation needs of Gypsies/Travellers in nine districts in and adjacent to the Cambridge sub-region. Particular relevant statutory responsibilities were:
  - a) Housing Act 2004 requirement for specific local housing/accommodation needs assessments for Gypsies/Travellers,
  - b) Obligation upon public bodies to promote good relationships between persons of different racial groups (Race Relations Act 1976, as amended, s71),
  - c) Planning Act 2004 requirements for community involvement.
3. **Background research** for the study included a literature review, analysis of the six-monthly official caravan count data, and a baseline study supplied by the client. The lead researchers were well-networked into the community, and able to bring legal, planning and social policy experience to the project, responding to its various and complex elements.
4. **Household size, pitches and caravans.** For the purposes of census and housing needs assessments, a 'household response unit' is defined as those who share either a living room or at least one meal a day. Usually a household is in an identifiable physical unit (house, flat etc) behind its own front door, but Gypsies/Travellers are usually found in caravans. One household may comprise three generations living in several caravans, and travelling together. Thus a caravan often does not equate to a household, and the household unit is not usually the unit of occupation. Our survey data produced an average household size of 4.77 persons, varying between site types (eg 3.86 for those in housing) and ethnicity (3.6 for English Gypsies, 6 for Irish Travellers, 4 for New Travellers). Such findings are consistent with other research: 4.5-5 in the Cripps report (1976), 5 in the 1965 census, 4.8 in Scottish Office figures (for 1969, but falling to



3.9 in 1992). The 1965 census recorded an average family size for the study area of 4.2, which suggests that average household size has changed little. The average household size, in common with other BME groups, is considerably greater than that (2.3) for the majority white British population, which has an older age structure and a larger proportion of one-person households (25%). Larger household sizes reflect both higher proportions of children, the extended family structure (often including grand-parents, ie three generations in one household), and probably the effects of accommodation shortage. The survey also found an average of 2.39 persons per caravan (2 on council sites), and 1.65 caravans per household. This differs from figures in some official counts, but we regard our survey results as more reliable, and consistent with other research.

5. **Census data** The decennial population census identifies those living in caravans or 'temporary accommodation' (who are Gypsies/Travellers and others in mobile home parks), but does not identify Gypsies/Travellers as a separate racial group, nor are there separate datasets on births, marriages and deaths. The resulting lack of age-specific fertility and mortality rates makes it difficult to apply normal population and household forecasting methods (eg components of change, household formation rates). Furthermore, the study population is small, mobile and shifting, creating further methodological difficulties.
6. **School roll data** This can, however, function as a proxy for estimating population. The Annual Schools Census for England 2004 records 10,500 children in statutory schooling (aged 5-16) who declared as 'Travellers of Irish heritage' and 'Gypsy/Roma' in ethnic monitoring returns (two thirds of them Gypsy, the rest Irish), and these represent 0.15% of the total school population of 6.8 million. If these Gypsy/Irish Traveller children were in the same proportion to their total population as children in the general population (about 14%), the total Gypsy/Irish Traveller population would be about 75,000. There are, however, important reservations. On the one hand, Gypsies/Irish Travellers have more children than the settled population, which would increase the proportion of school age children to the total population, and thus reduce the derived total figure. The 1965 census found 21% of the survey population were of school age, while the 2005 Leeds study found 28.3% of Gypsy/Travellers of school age, (against 14.2% of the general Leeds population in the 2001 census.) On the other hand, the figures record only those disclosing their ethnicity, and TES data for the Eastern region show that only 40% of Gypsy/Traveller children on their register had done so for the national schools census. Many either do not attend school at all, or fail to attend at secondary level.
7. **Age distribution** The age distribution found in the survey corresponds with that found by other research (1965 census, Adams 1975, and Leeds 2005): a higher proportion of children than the whole population and lower proportions of older people, probably reflecting high birth rates and low life expectancy respectively. The average number of siblings per respondent was 5.2 (5.6 for housed), while older respondents (aged over 50) averaged 4.5 children and 6.2 siblings, which is significantly higher than the whole life fertility rate for the general population. Our survey found the average number of children per respondent (not all living in the household) to be 3.6 (3.25 for English Gypsies and 3.9 for Irish Travellers). It also found 10.9% of respondents aged over 65,

(12.9% for English Gypsies and 5% for Irish Travellers), and a male:female ratio in that age group of 46:54, compared with 43:57 in the Eastern region in the 2001 census). The 1965 census found 3.4% over 65, the 1975 study 2%, the Leeds study (Baker 2005) 2.3% over 60 (compared with 19.9% of the 2001 general population of Leeds, and 16.5% of East Anglia respectively). Thus life expectancy seems to be increasing, although still less than that of the general population.

8. **Housed Gypsies** The brief required a proportion of the interviews to be with Gypsies/Travellers accommodated in conventional housing, who are not included in the six-monthly counts and for whom official records are limited. RSLs do not generally identify the proportion of their tenants who are members of the Gypsy or Traveller community, whether such tenants would prefer to reside on a caravan site if such an option were available to them, and whether (and what) specific support is required for newly housed Gypsies and Travellers. Other research (Niner, 2003) has estimated that up to 50% of Gypsies live in conventional ('bricks-and-mortar') housing, but TES school roll records for the Eastern region (2004) show only 21.3% of total Gypsy/Traveller children in housing. While those figures relate to Gypsies housed for less than two years (because beyond that period they are considered to be 'settled'), in practice those still needing support are kept on the list, certainly in Cambridgeshire, whose records show a slightly higher proportion at 23.2%. The proportions range widely between districts (from 11.8% in Huntingdonshire to 51.9% in East Cambs). Housed Gypsies/Travellers were located for interview by referral from other interviewees, using the modified Andalusian snowball sampling technique.
9. **Gypsy/Traveller involvement** Gypsies/Travellers are often treated in official studies and policy documents as 'hard to reach' and 'socially excluded'. Those surveyed may be reluctant to respond for a study promoted by official agencies who they may believe to be monitoring them for 'hostile' purposes. Having long been subject to persistent discrimination and hostility from sedentary populations, it has been suggested to us that Gypsies and Travellers may feel exploited by researchers and academics, and consider that their views will be misrepresented or ignored. ODPM guidance recommends that they should be stakeholders in accommodation assessments, and the new plan-making system requires statements of community involvement. The project was designed to achieve partnership working, a methodology agreed with the client. An advisory group of nine Gypsies and Travellers was formed, and met four times; all of them were engaged in policy initiatives or activism and had relevant socio-political and cultural experience.
10. **Interviewer selection** From inception the intention was for the majority of interviewers to come from travelling communities, supervised by the senior researchers, in order that community capacity could be developed, and a core created of experienced Gypsy/Traveller interviewers available for future work and hopefully disseminating their training and knowledge. The client also retained a Romany advisor (who is a journalist and activist), to be an independent member of the research team, advising on data interpretation and the format of the report. The interviewers were personally recommended to us, by advisory group members and agencies such as the TES, from the Gypsy and Traveller population. As a matter of policy we recruited both English Gypsies and

Irish Travellers to the project (both on the advisory group and as interviewers), and sought a gender balance, given the highly gendered nature of Gypsy/Traveller society. The team comprised more women than men, which reflected the anticipated and actual composition of respondents, women being more likely to be interviewed than men. The Interviewing teams usually comprised male/female pairs, and both Irish and English Gypsy/Travellers, to encourage inter-ethnic communication. Two interviewer training courses were held, at the Cambridge Professional Development Centre (Trumpington), in January and March 2005, including questionnaire revision. A de-briefing session was held in September to review the survey results, which was particularly useful for exploring the qualitative responses. It took longer than expected to recruit and train advisors and interviewers, and some interviewers were initially lacking in confidence (e.g. reluctant to stop at roadside camps to 'sell' the project), but eventually an adequate quality of data was obtained. Interviewers not able to read from a script had an amanuensis.

11. **Survey design** While the relatively small numbers of the survey population mean in theory that good coverage can be achieved, in practice the target population (being by definition largely nomadic) moves around, and there may be difficulties in physically locating respondents and getting a response. In quantitative social surveys the sample frame is usually drawn from a list of addresses, such as council tax register or postcode address file, but there is no such reliable list for Gypsies/Travellers, especially those on unauthorised and roadside sites. The study therefore used a snowball sampling method, with referrals from respondents on known sites to reach others in 'hard-to-reach' categories (unauthorised and housed). We also used methods from research on Andalusian Gypsies (applying a variety of official and unofficial sources to find respondents), and have labelled our approach the modified Andalusian snowballing technique. The six-monthly official counts (supplemented by schedules of sites in some authorities) provide data on numbers of caravans in different categories, from which a stratified sample can be derived. The sample was segmented by geographical area, site type (including housing) and ethnic category. It proved difficult to achieve the representativeness sought for various reasons. The intention was to structure the sample in approximate proportion to the district proportions of caravans in the three categories in the six-monthly official counts, but in practice a higher proportion of council site occupiers were interviewed because they were easier to contact and more likely to respond (this accounts for the relatively high proportion from Peterborough). Similar surveys have encountered difficulty in locating willing respondents, and even Gypsy/Traveller interviewers found the same problems. Thus the responses are weighted towards more 'settled' respondents, especially those on council sites. The generalisability of the findings is thus reduced.
12. **Questionnaire design** This was informed by the recommended topic list in the ODPM guidance, and designed in consultation with the client authorities, the Cambridgeshire Traveller Implementation Group, and an advisory panel from the Gypsy/Traveller community. It was tested in a pilot survey of 18 households in January/February 2005, and subsequently revised. Although the brief initially required that information on incomes and benefit take-up be sought, following discussions with the advisory group, this was abandoned as unacceptably

intrusive; as expressed by one survey respondent, 'Any one working on this site has nothing to do with you or the council'. The police requested that the survey included questions on discrimination and reporting of victimisation to the police. With equality matters acquiring greater importance since the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, access to local services was investigated. Questions about travel patterns were included, but the quality of response was variable, perhaps reflecting suspicion of the motives for asking.

13. **Survey implementation** Interviews took place mostly in the period April-August 2005 (considered to be the optimal period for reaching both the less and more mobile respondents), by visits to known sites at different times of the day. On completion of their interview respondents are provided with an information leaflet, with brief information about services and asked to refer other potential respondents ('snowball'). The field work was resource intensive, involving much travel, some of it abortive where interviewees were not at home or unwilling to respond. Attempts to set up interviews in advance by telephone had limited success, so in most cases surveyors arrived unannounced. The time needed for the survey was greater than planned, with heavy management demands, and regular email and telephone support for interviewers. The data was analysed using Excel and SPSS software, and the APU Geographical Mapping Unit produced maps and graphics.
14. **Focus groups** The ODPM guidance recommends use of qualitative assessments through focus groups and open interviews as the only feasible way of obtaining information where numbers are small. Four focus group meetings were also held, two each on issues of health and education, in Cambridge and Wisbech, using an experienced focus group facilitator who is a member of the Gypsy/Traveller community.
15. **ODPM accommodation assessment methodology** The ODPM worked example (in para. 80 of the guidance) subdivides this into several categories, some of which we consider overlap, and impose some unnecessary complexity.
16. **Overcrowding** The ODPM methodology includes an overcrowding measure. We are not aware of an official definition of over-crowding where the unit of accommodation is a caravan, but the 1965 study equated a caravan to a room and estimated that 65% of Gypsies were living in over-crowded conditions, more than 2 people per caravan (compared with less than 3% of the settled population in the 1961 census). Caravans may vary in size (and legally since the 1968 Act be up to 1,200 square feet for a twin-unit mobile home), and have more than one room, which would reduce overcrowding. Measuring the dimensions of individual caravans may not be practical, but, even adjusting for the numbers of mobile homes, we take an average figure of 3 persons per caravan as evidence of overcrowding. Overcrowding appears to be as bad as it was forty years ago, over a period when overcrowding in the settled population has continued to fall. Gypsies/Travellers appear to tolerate levels of overcrowding above the official standards.
17. **Transfer from housing** The ODPM methodology includes those 'in housing but with a need for site accommodation' ('identified in the survey, on a waiting list for site accommodation and trends from the ODPM caravan count'). Niner

assumed that, of Gypsies in housing, 1-5% wanted a pitch rather than a house; our survey produced a higher preference rate (from which should be subtracted those in caravans wanting housing), but from a relatively small sample.

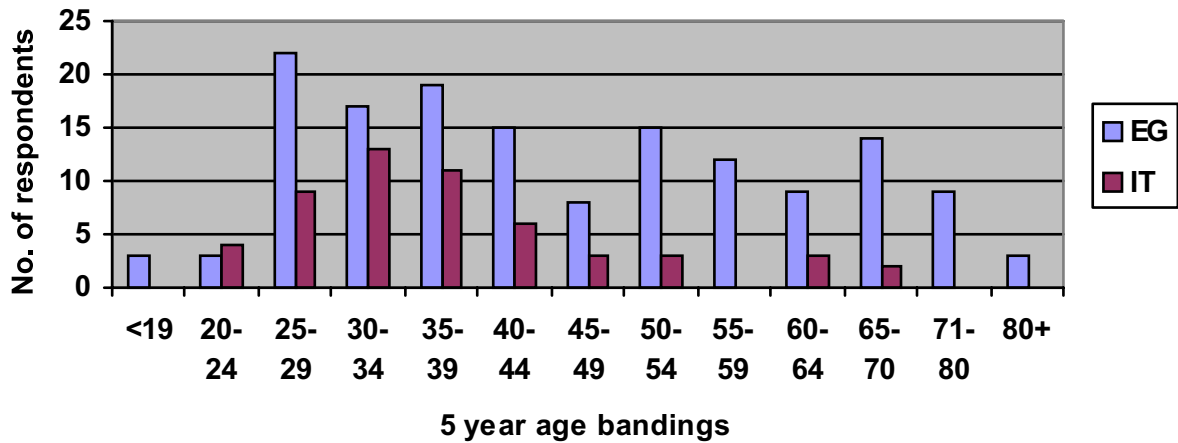
18. **Natural growth** For all households ODPM projections give an actual increase for all households in England of 0.7% for 2001-2002. The Gypsy caravan numbers, however, have grown much faster, an increase of 17.2% in the 7 years 1996-2004 (July), 20.5% in the Eastern region.

### **Note on survey results for Irish Travellers**

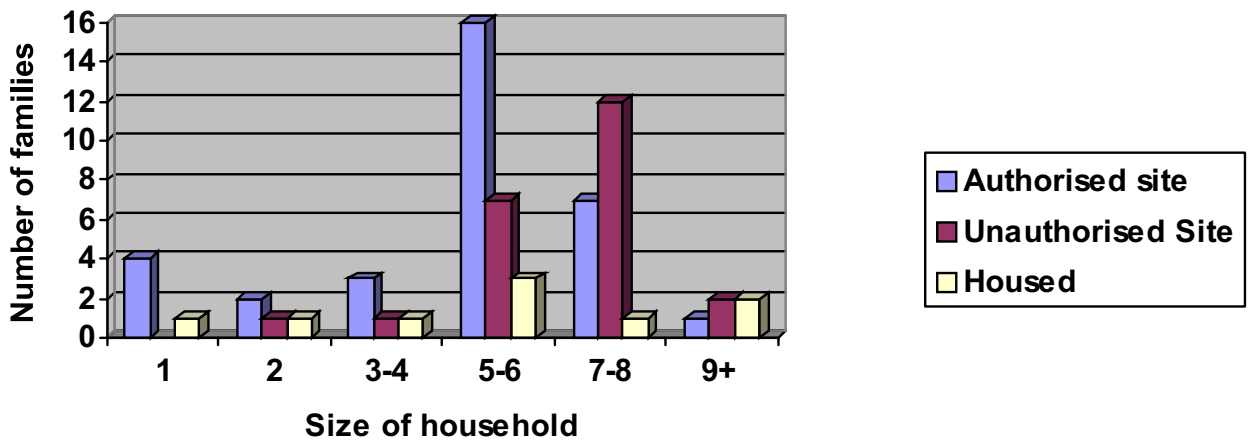
19. Irish Traveller families have resided in and resorted to England for many decades (even centuries), but numbers have apparently increased in recent years. Recent research has identified them as particularly deprived, discriminated against and excluded, even within the Gypsy/Traveller community. They have received especially negative press, partly because they travel in larger groups and have displaced other Gypsies from sites.
20. The survey data obtained from Irish Travellers is (we believe) unique. Our survey found about a quarter of the Gypsy/Traveller population to be 'Travellers of Irish Heritage' (to use the officially preferred term). TES records for the sub-region (including Norfolk and Suffolk totals not disaggregated by district) show that, of statutory school-age Gypsy or Irish Traveller children disclosing ethnicity, 34.1% were 'Travellers of Irish Heritage'. The increase in Irish Travellers in the study area seems to have mainly taken place in the past 6 years, and our survey found Irish Travellers were more often found on unauthorised sites, representing only 7.4% of those on council sites.
21. Their age structure differs from the other main ethnic group (English Gypsies): more children and younger adults, and fewer people over 60. We found only two Irish Traveller respondents aged above 65 (2.8% of the sample), reflecting perhaps lower life expectancy and also the generally shorter period of stay in England and age structure of former in-migrants. The Irish Traveller population surveyed compared with English Gypsies had more in the 30-40 age range, and less above 40. A significant proportion of respondents were heads of household by the age of 25, reflecting probably lower ages of marriage than in the general population. This demographic profile corresponds well with comparable research (especially Irish census data): two-thirds within the age range 25-40, 3.3% over 65. Pavee Point (a non-statutory organization in Ireland) found the Traveller population there to be young and growing, with a median age of 14 (compared with 27 for the general population), and only 4.4% of Travellers over 55 (reflecting lower life expectancy). The 2002 Irish national census found only 3.3% of Irish Travellers aged over 65 and 42.2% below 15. The Leeds Baseline Census (2005) found only 2.5% of Gypsies/Travellers in that city aged over 60, compared to an overall Leeds average life expectancy of 78.2 years.
22. Our survey found an average completed fertility rate (for Irish Traveller women over 45) of 8.2 children. While this may be skewed by several extremely large families in our survey, it nevertheless confirms an impression of larger families among the Irish Traveller population. For younger Irish Traveller women (aged 19-35), the mean number of living children is 2.3, suggesting a falling fertility

rate, consistent with other findings on migrant minority demographics over time. The average number of children born to Irish Traveller respondents (both male and female) is 3.9 children, corresponding well with the 3.5 figure in the Irish 1996 sample census.

**Figure 20: Age structure of English Gypsies and Irish Travellers in study area (excludes 80 EGs and 16 ITs who declined information on age)**



**Figure 21: Irish Traveller household size by site type**



**Figure 22: Distribution of questionnaires by district**

<b>District</b>	<b>Average total caravans 2002-2004</b>	<b>% distribution caravans (rounded)</b>	<b>No. Questionnaires</b>	<b>% distribution (rounded)</b>
Fenland	485	32	79	25
South Cambridgeshire	425	28	72	23
East Cambridgeshire	177	12	29	9
Kings Lynn & W. Norfolk	157	10	15	5
Peterborough	117	8	71	23
Forest Heath	64	4	19	6
Huntingdonshire	57	4	15	5
Cambridge (City)	28	2	9	3
St Edmundsbury	11	1	4	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1519</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>100</b>

Note: Three roadside questionnaires attributed to nearest authority as uncertain data on location

**Figure 23: Travellers by accommodation type and district**

District	Council Site	Private Authorised	Private Unauthorised	Private (no planning status specified)	Housed	Roadside	No data given	Total
Fenland	24	23	4	1	25	1	1	79
South Cambridgeshire	6	29	20	8	-	3	6	72
East Cambridgeshire	21	3	-	-	3	2	-	29
King's Lynn & West Norfolk	4	10	1	-	-	-	-	15
Peterborough	67	-	-	-	-	-	4	71
Forest Heath	4	10	-	-	2	1	2	19
Huntingdonshire	14	-	-	-	-	1	-	15
Cambridge City	-	-	-	-	9	-	-	9
St Edmundsbury	-	1	-	-	1	2	-	4
<b>Study Area</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>313</b>
	44.72%	24.28%	8.30%	2.87%	12.77%	3.19%	4.15%	100%



**Table 24: Respondents requiring extra space, living on sites with waiting lists, and without visitor space**

District	Respondents who do not have enough space	Respondents on sites with waiting lists	Respondents with space for visitors	Respondents without space for visitors	Total Respondents
Fenland	10	13	23	28	56
South Cambridgeshire	18	5	23	35	67
East Cambridgeshire	13	13	7	20	29
King's Lynn & West Norfolk	4	4	4	7	15
Peterborough	35 (49%)	58 (82%)	5	59 (83%)	71
Forest Heath	4	0	2	10	17
Huntingdonshire	3	14 (93%)	10 (67%)	4	15
Cambridge City	-	-	-	-	-
St Edmundsbury	1	0	0	1	3
Study Area	88	107	74	164	273 *
	32%	39%	27%	60%	

\* Excludes those in housing

**Figure 25: Facilities Respondents would like by District and Study Area**

District	Play areas	More space	Parking areas	Working areas	Communal social centre	Land scaping	Laundry facilities	Livestock space and outside fires	Non respondents	Total Respondents
Fenland	13	6	6	2	2	8	9	5	4	56
South Cambridgeshire	54	1	28	6	11	18	16	-	9	67
East Cambridgeshire	20	2	4	1	1	-	1	-	7	29
King's Lynn & West Norfolk	3	-	-	1	-	1	-	7	1	15
Peterborough	38		42	37	29	51	35	-	13	71
Forest Heath	1	1	-	-	-	2	-	2	5	17
Huntingdonshire	11		9	7	-	-	-	-	1	15
Cambridge City	-		1	-	-	-	-	-		0
St Edmundsbury	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3
<b>Study Area</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>273 *</b>
	51%	4%	33%	20%	16%	29%	22%	5%	15%	

\* Excludes those in housing

**Table 26: Respondents reporting missing key services by District**

District	Reliable postal service	Water	Mains electricity	Drainage	Toilet	Mains gas	Playspace	Refuse	Fire prevention	Non-respondents	Total Respondents
Fenland	20	2	8	5	8	55	32	4	8	0	56
South Cambridgeshire	11	5	2	3	14	49	66	4	63	2	67
East Cambridgeshire	6	1	1	2	1	25	24	3	6	4	29
King's Lynn & West Norfolk	2	2	1	2	1	13	7	0	2	2	15
Peterborough	4	1	1	3	27	65	65	25	62	6	71
Forest Heath	4	1	4	5	3	15	4	5	4	2	17
Huntingdonshire	1	0	1	1	0	15	15	0	0	0	15
Cambridge City	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
St Edmundsbury	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	2	3
Study Area	48	12	18	21	54	238	214	41	146	18	273 *
	18%	4%	7%	8%	20%	87%	78%	15%	53%	7%	

\* Excludes those in housing

**Table 27: Respondents without key structures by District**

District	Sheds	Storage/ Containers	Day Rooms	Toilets	Other	Non- responde rs	Total
Fenland	20	44	26	9	44	3	56
South Cambridgeshire	21	63	64	9	61	2	67
East Cambridgeshire	23	29	28	6	18	0	29
King's Lynn & West Norfolk	5	15	8	7	14	0	15
Peterborough	61	65	0	33	65	6	71
Forest Heath	10	14	4	6	12	2	17
Huntingdonshire	2	15	1	0	15	0	15
Cambridge City	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
St Edmundsbury	2	2	2	3	3	0	3
Study Area	144	247	133	73	232	13	273*
	53%	90%	49%	27%	85%	5%	

\* Excludes those in housing

**APPENDIX B - DISTRICT ASSESSMENTS (ALPHABETICAL ORDER)**

## **GYPSY & TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION ASSESSMENT 2005-2010:**

### **ILLUSTRATIVE FICTIONAL WORKED EXAMPLE (using ODPM recommended method)**

#### **52 pitches = Current residential supply**

The assessment assumes that a pitch accommodates a household. The figure of 52 pitches is derived from official counts, and comprises the current supply of both occupied local authority residential site pitches, and occupied authorised privately owned site pitches in the area. To this can be added the following pitches (if any): existing applications for private pitches likely to gain planning permission in year 1, and pitches unused or likely to become vacant in the near future.

#### **85 pitches = Current residential demand**

This is the total of the following four elements:

- 1) 49 pitches = Households on unauthorized development for which planning permission is not expected, and roadside encampments seeking permanent accommodation in the area. The figure is derived from the official counts of unauthorised caravans (converted into households by applying surveyed numbers of caravans per household), from the survey results, and taking regard of site waiting lists.
- 2) 8 pitches = Households currently overcrowded, where there is insufficient space on the pitch or within the existing caravans for the family. A standard measure is applied, based upon survey findings for the study and official measures of overcrowding in housing.
- 3) 9 pitches = Households in housing but with a need for site accommodation (as identified by the survey and other sources). From this would be deducted a figure representing those in caravans who wish to live in housing (as identified in the survey)
- 4) 19 pitches = New family formation within the study period. This applies a compounded annual growth rate over 5 years, based upon trends identified in the local survey and information from other sources. ODPM applies a figure of 3% per annum.

## GYPSY & TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION ASSESSMENT 2005-2010

### CAMBRIDGE CITY

**Introduction** This has the smallest number of Gypsy/Traveller caravans in the study area, reflecting its small land area (4070 hectares, 10,000 acres), intense development pressures and Green Belt constraints.

**Council sites** The council has no public sites (the Blackwell site lies just outside the council boundaries). It has accepted a need to develop a transit site.

**Private authorised caravans** These are near the Chesterton Fen Road area of South Cambridgeshire.

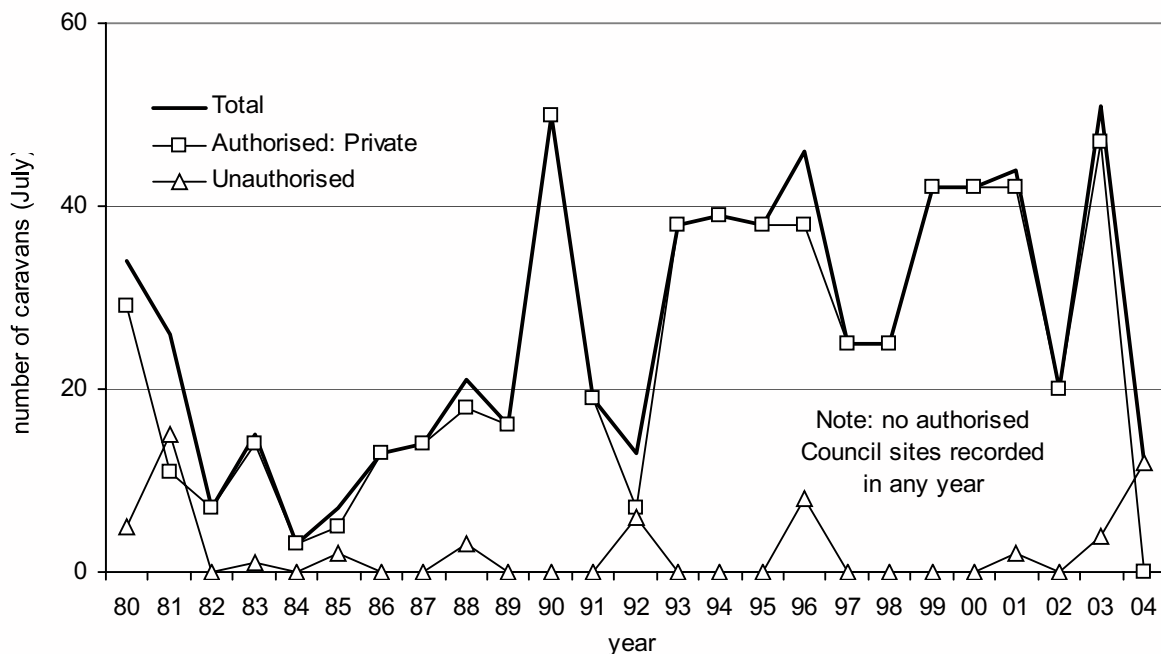
**Unauthorised caravans** Numbers are small, although hundreds of caravans attend the famous Cambridge Midsummer Common annual fair in June/July.

**Housed Gypsies** There is an unknown number of housed Gypsies on council estates, many of them concealing their Gypsy/Traveller back ground, and many of them Irish Travellers. Nine were interviewed.

**Council policy** The Cambridge Local Plan Redeposit Draft (2004) includes a section on Travellers, stating that there is no need for permanent site provision, but may be for an emergency stopping site.

**Accommodation Assessment 2005-2010** Given the small numbers, data limitations, and council site proposal, it was considered inappropriate to calculate a site demand for 2005-2010, but the emergency stopping place proposal is included. Any additional 'windfall' private provision would contribute to meeting need in the wider area. The survey responses from housed Gypsies/Travellers reveal a need for greater support services for this group, including through the statutory Race Equality Scheme.

#### **Cambridge City: Caravan numbers by site type: 1980-2004 (July).**



## GYPSY & TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION ASSESSMENT 2005-2010

### EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT

**Introduction** Total caravan numbers rose from about 80 in the 1980s, and after a fall in 1990-1991 have risen fairly steadily to about 170, apparently the result of various factors (natural growth, improved conditions, and in-migration). In the early 1980s East Cambs followed a policy of granting planning permission for self-occupied private sites for local Gypsies. It opened three council sites, and was designated in 1991.

**Council sites** The district manages these, although the County Council owns Burwell and Earith Bridge (the latter subject of a detailed case study in the Cambridgeshire Travellers Review 1998). According to the council website, 'Priority is given to local Travellers who live in the district or have visited regularly over many years or have close family ties with Travellers already living permanently in the district. Travellers from neighbouring districts are considered if a local Traveller does not require a vacant plot.' Pitches are larger than elsewhere, accommodating typically three caravans (as in Fenland). The survey interviews found a generally stable population on sites, probably reflecting past council policy, with little turnover of pitches.

District	Site location	Pitches	Capacity	Date opened (date upgraded)
East Cambs	Earith Bridge	13	38	1987, 1995 (2001)
East Cambs	Burwell	8	24	1995
East Cambs	Wentworth	8	24	1987 (2001)
<b>Total</b>		<b>29</b>	<b>86</b>	

**Private authorised caravans** The district has about 80-110 Gypsy caravans on private authorised sites, scattered across 12 parishes. These are the result mainly of planning permissions granted during the early 1980s, and some of them have higher than average caravan numbers per pitch, as they accommodate extended families. The district also has the largest numbers in the study area of showmen in winter quarters, mostly at Wilburton.

**Unauthorised caravans** Numbers have grown by over a hundred in recent years, and represent different situations. Most were on Gypsy-owned land without planning permission, usually near Gypsy-owned land that already had planning permission, and had been there for several years. Several had lost authorised accommodation (their own or council), and can be regarded as internally displaced persons, being forced off sites with no secure alternative accommodation being available. Two were on highway verge land, having lost council accommodation, and wished to be re-housed.

**Housed Gypsies** These are relatively a high proportion, with 51.8% of Gypsy/Traveller school-age children (TES data) being in housing, and this probably reflects the earlier policy of Gypsies to settle. The relatively high proportion of housed Gypsies has resulted in higher population forecasts, given the method of calculation.

#### Council policy

- a) The district local plan has a criterion-based policy, and approved supplementary planning guidance in 2001. The council is set to increase its population by 30% between 1991 and 2016, but this does not seem to include the Gypsy/Traveller population. The projected general supply of housing (1999-2006) is about 4000



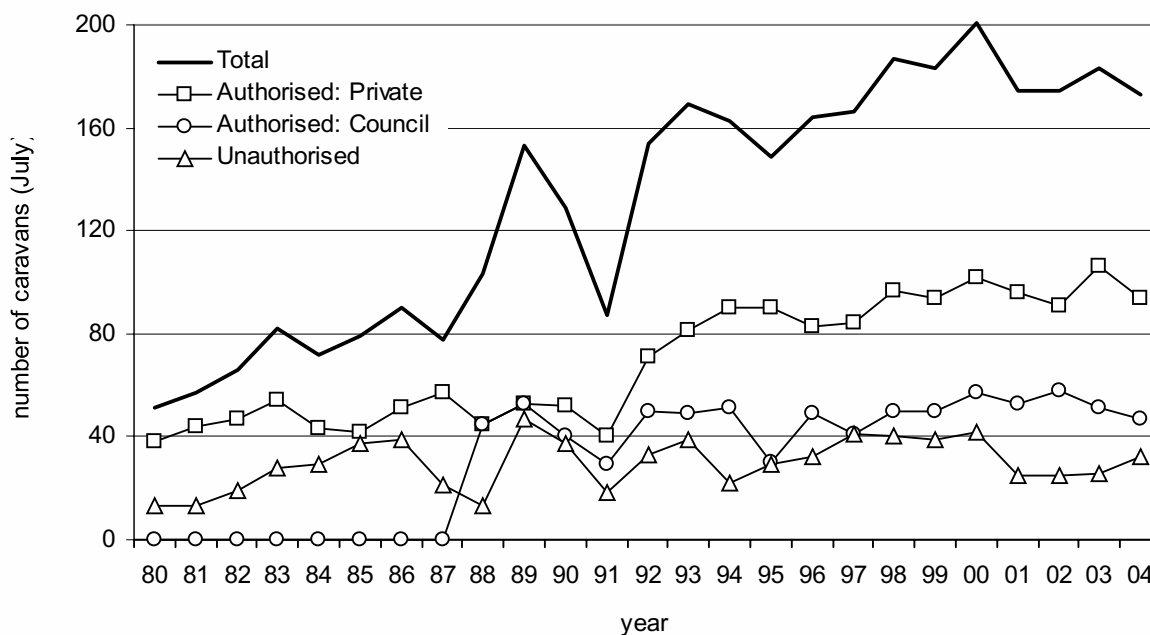
- units, distributed between unimplemented approvals on large sites, allocated land without planning permission and a small site allowance.
- The Housing Strategy refers briefly to Travellers, and presents recent count statistics. The Homelessness Strategy says nothing about Travellers, but the council does keep separate data on them.
  - The Audit Commission Best Value Review of Housing Strategy (2001) made no reference to Gypsies/Travellers. The council web-site includes a page on Travellers, but its Frequently Asked Questions section is all about securing fast removal, offering no advice to Travellers themselves (who may have access to the internet too!).
  - The Local Strategic Partnership strategy (2004) refers to Travellers under Objective E5 ('ensure all black and ethnic minority groups can access services throughout the district', with a target of improving uptake of services by such groups ('eg Travellers'). The linked action is 'Ensure that the needs of Travellers are included in the strategies of partner organisations'.

### Accommodation Assessment 2005-2010

The following table follows the ODPM methodology (as adapted), and details of the assessments are included in the above report at section 3.8. The council's 2001 supplementary guidance included data on caravan, households and demography which differs slightly from our (2005) survey findings, and we have adjusted our figures where justified.

<b>EAST CAMBS</b>	
<b>CURRENT SUPPLY (council and private authorised)</b>	90-120
<b>CURRENT DEMAND</b>	
Unauthorised caravan households	10-15
Overcrowding allowance	5-10
Transfer from housing	1-5
Family formation	10-15
<b>EXTRA PITCH NEED 2005-2010 (rounded)</b>	25-45

### *East Cambs District: Caravan numbers by site type: 1980-2004 (July).*



## GYPSY & TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION ASSESSMENT 2005-2010

### FENLAND DISTRICT

**Introduction** This district has the second highest count figures in the study area, and indeed one of the highest in England. The total Gypsy/Traveller caravan numbers were steady at about 200 until the late 1990s, but since then have risen sharply to around 500. This increase is mostly attributable to a rapid growth in both private and unauthorised caravan numbers, perhaps linked to the opening or upgrading of council sites, but also to the availability of relatively cheap land, an established local Gypsy population, and good road access. The Gypsy/Traveller population comprises mostly farm workers (some seasonal), but that work has declined in recent years because of mechanisation of agriculture, more use of imported and immigrant labour, and other factors.

The survey interviewed 79 Gypsies and Travellers, including 24 on council sites, 23 private authorized, and 25 housed; the findings suggest a more settled, older and housed population than the rest of the study area.

**Council sites** The council has been active in providing sites, starting with that at Newbridge Lane (Wisbech) as early as 1971. Pitches tend to be large (three rather than two caravans per pitch), which can result in caravan count numbers being less than the notional caravan capacity. The site at Parson's Drove seems in need of improvement.

Site location	Pitches	Capacity	Date opened (date upgraded)
Fenland Way, Chatteris	12	24	1987
Newbridge Lane, Wisbech	24	92	1971
Sandbank, Wisbech St. Mary	20	20	1991
Turf Fen Bridge, Parson's Drove	8	24	1982 (transit)
Seadyke Bank, Murrow	12	36	1995
<b>Total</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>196</b>	

**Private authorised caravans** The doubling in private authorised caravan numbers since 1998 reflects mainly grants of planning permission on single-family sites.

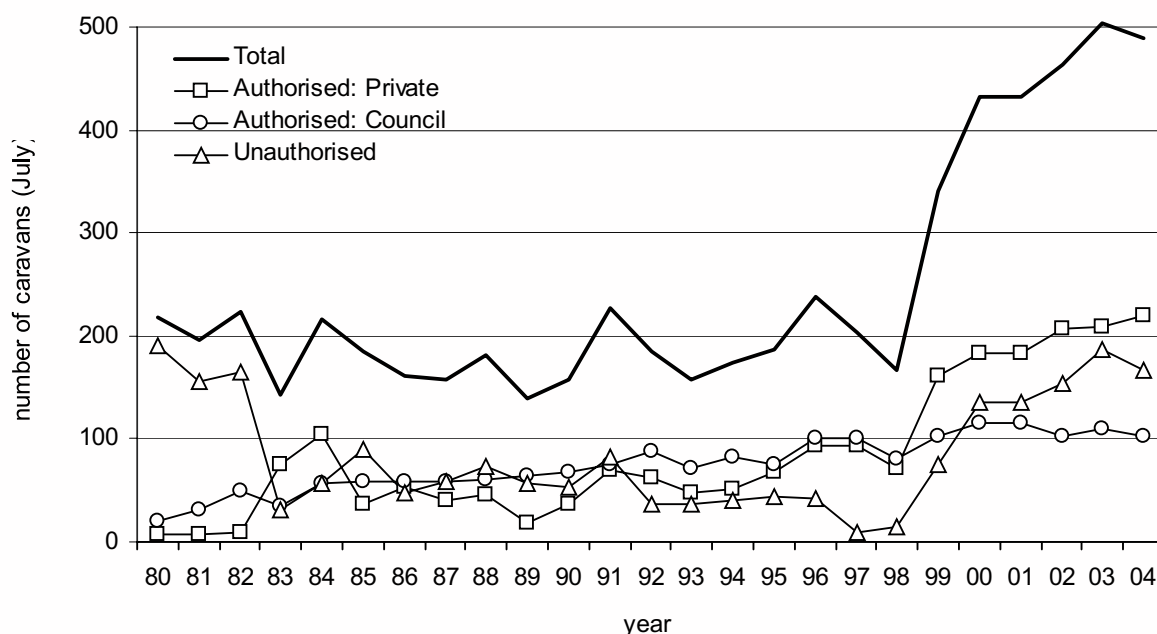
**Unauthorised caravans** Numbers fell with the development of new council sites, but since 1998 have risen sharply. Many are Gypsy-owned sites without planning permission, tolerated by the council (it claims 32 such households/pitches), but ODPM requires them to be classed as unauthorised. The council also has a policy of tolerating seasonal caravans on registered open land and elsewhere. The ratio of 'tolerated' to more mobile (some roadside) caravans is about 2:1, higher than elsewhere in the study area, which suggests limited demand for transit provision.

**Housed Gypsies** School roll datasets show a particularly high proportion of Gypsy/Traveller children in housed accommodation (about 50%), suggesting that the population settled in houses is as large as that in caravans. Based upon our survey and other sources, we estimate that those Gypsies/Travellers settled in housing are more likely to remain settled, and have adjusted the transfer from housing figure accordingly. Also the older than average age of the population is reflected in lower family formation estimates.

**Accommodation Assessment 2005-2010** The following table follows the ODPM methodology (as adapted), and details of the assessments are included in the above report at section 3.8. We have taken particular care with the accommodation assessment figures for this district, because of the high numbers involved, the high proportion of settled Gypsies/Travellers, and the influx since the late 1990s, reflecting largely external pressures which may prove temporary. All of the variables in the assessment have been reviewed, to recognise larger pitch sizes (which reduce the overcrowding measures), the lower. In view of the large numbers already in the district, future provision could be shared with other districts. Some need could be met by granting permission on existing unauthorised Gypsy-owned sites (which would reflect the occupiers' wishes), but further public provision is still desirable, preferably on small sites (about ten pitches). We estimate the extra pitch need 2005-2010 as follows:

<b>FENLAND</b>	
<b>CURRENT SUPPLY (council and private authorised)</b>	165-200
<b>CURRENT DEMAND</b>	
Unauthorised caravan households	90-100
Overcrowding allowance	15-20
Transfer from housing	15
Family formation	40-70
<b>EXTRA PITCH NEED 2005-2010 (rounded)</b>	160-205

***Fenland District: Caravan numbers by site type: 1980-2004 (July).***



## **GYPSY & TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION ASSESSMENT 2005-2010**

### **FOREST HEATH DISTRICT**

**Introduction** The district recorded an increase in caravan numbers in the 1980s, from a low initial base (which may have been an undercount). Caravan numbers in Suffolk are lower than in Cambridgeshire.

**Council sites** Forest Heath has sometimes recorded a site at Beck Row, Mildenhall (35 two-caravan residential pitches, opened 1993, refurbished 2002) as a council site, resulting in some confusion in the count figures in 1997-99. While the site is owned by the council, it is leased on a long-term basis to, and managed by, a private operator. Vacancies arise from time to time, and the site is generally well regarded by its occupiers.

**Private and unauthorised caravans** There are about 25 unauthorised caravans, mainly on a site near the Beck Row site where temporary planning permission expired in January 2006. There is also a long-established site with three caravans near Lakenheath.

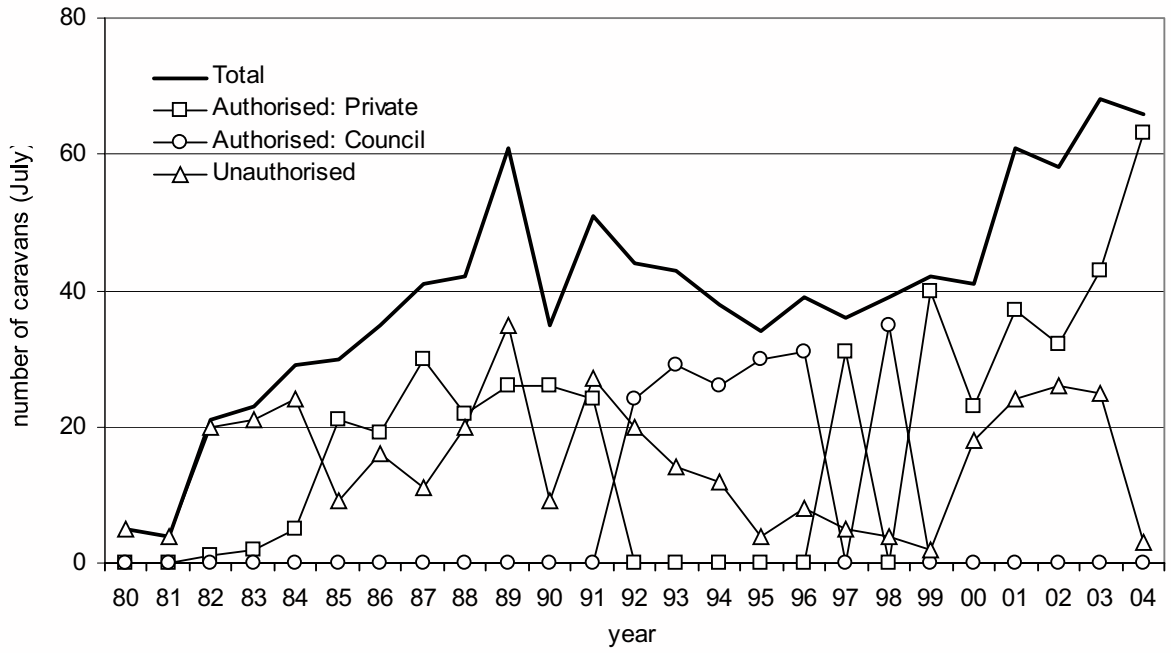
**Housed Gypsies** TES school rolls data for the Suffolk county suggests a lower proportion of Gypsy/Traveller children in housed accommodation (20%) than for Cambridgeshire districts. , and the survey interviews found several occupiers who had failed to settle in housing

**Policy** Sites outside development boundaries are controlled in accordance with the Settlement Policy, with temporary permissions sometimes given on grounds of personal circumstances. Policy 4.30 committed itself to 'ensure that sufficient permanent Gypsy caravan pitches are provided, together with transit sites where required'.

**Accommodation Assessment** The following table follows the ODPM methodology (as adapted), and details of the assessments are included in the above report at section 3.8. The assessment suggests a modest unmet need, and the district could potentially provide more pitches under a policy of redistribution.

<b>FOREST HEATH</b>	
<b>CURRENT SUPPLY (council and private authorised)</b>	35
<b>CURRENT DEMAND</b>	
Unauthorised caravan households	10-15
Overcrowding allowance	5
Transfer from housing	1
Family formation	1
<b>EXTRA PITCH NEED 2005-2010 (rounded)</b>	15-20

**Forest Heath District: Caravan numbers by site type: 1980-2004 (July)**



## GYPSY & TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION ASSESSMENT 2005-2010

### HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT

**Introduction** The district was designated in 1985 as having provided sufficient accommodation, and the count statistics have not changed significantly since abolition of designation in 1994.

**Council sites** A site on County Council owned land was opened at St. Neots (20 pitches, 36 caravans) in 1983 (upgraded 1999), which is now managed by a Registered Social Landlord following a stock transfer exercise from the district council.

**Private sites** The numbers have fluctuated.

**Unauthorised caravans** The numbers have fluctuated significantly, but always at a relatively low number (below 40) relative to the study area. The ratio of roadside to private unauthorised caravans (usually Gypsy-owned land), derived from school roll data, seems higher than the study area average at about 2:1.

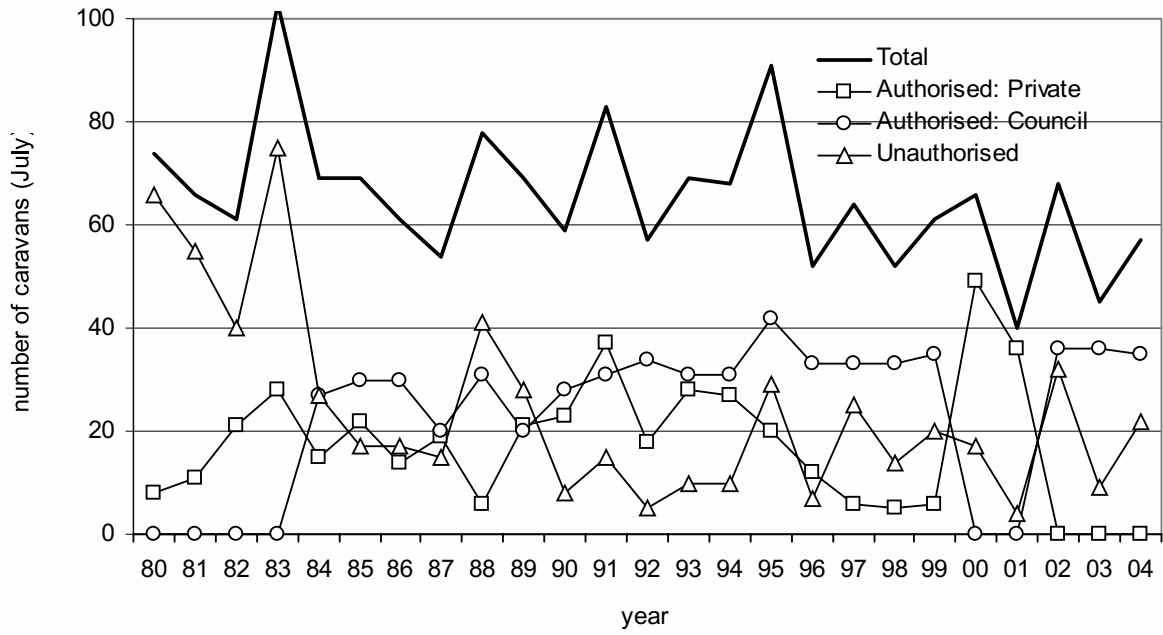
**Housing** TES data suggests that about 12% of the Gypsy/Traveller population are housed, a lower proportion than in other districts.

**Council policy** The current development plan (1996) Policy 4.30 committed the council to 'ensure that sufficient permanent Gypsy caravan pitches are provided, together with transit sites where required'. There is a criterion-based policy. Temporary permissions are sometimes given for residential caravans where exceptional personal circumstances dictate (eg accommodation for an elderly relative).

**Accommodation Assessment 2005-2010** The following table follows the ODPM methodology (as adapted), and details of the assessments are included in the above report at section 3.8. This assessment produces a demand figure which is third lowest of the nine study area districts, and reflects relatively low baseline data and possibly the impact of past designation status (the district is one of only two in the study area to have fewer caravans now than when counts began). Huntingdonshire could contribute proportionately more to the overall need identified in the study area.

<b>HUNTINGDONSHIRE</b>	
<b>CURRENT SUPPLY (council and private authorised)</b>	20
<b>CURRENT DEMAND</b>	
Unauthorised caravan households	10-15
Overcrowding allowance	5
Transfer from housing	1
Family formation	1-5
<b>EXTRA PITCH NEED 2005-2010 (rounded)</b>	15-25

**Huntingdonshire District: Caravan numbers by site type: 1980-2004 (July).**



## GYPSY & TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION ASSESSMENT 2005-2010

### KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK DISTRICT

**Introduction** The district has less fluctuation in numbers than other districts in the study area, and is one of the few where numbers have declined overall in the past 25 years. The total caravan numbers in the district were about 300 (all unauthorised) in the early 1980s, fell after the Criminal Justice Act 1994, which criminalised unauthorised encampment, and have risen in recent years, partly reflecting caravans displaced from other areas. King's Lynn is a large, mainly rural district with seasonal demand for farm workers, and in recent years has met this need with imported gangs of foreign workers (as in the adjoining districts of Lincolnshire).

**Council sites** Norfolk's failure to provide a council site in the district led to the County Council being found guilty by an Ombudsman investigation in 1985 of maladministration. Subsequently a site at Saddlebow, outside King's Lynn, was opened in 1991.

District	Site location	Pitches	Capacity	Date opened (date upgraded)
King's Lynn & West Norfolk	Saddlebow	27	50	1991 (1996)

**Private authorised caravans** The numbers of private authorised sites have risen following several successful appeal decisions, and clusters of private sites have developed, particularly at Hay Green and Marshland St. James, in a mixture of plots with and without planning permission. The ratio of council:private authorised sites is relatively low, suggesting potential for further council provision.

**Unauthorised caravans** Unauthorised caravan numbers have fallen since the authorization of more council and private sites, and have stabilised at around 40-60 since 2000, mostly caravans near approved sites and occupied by relatives of those occupiers. The council generally applies a policy of toleration. Our survey (checked against TES county data) suggests a somewhat higher than average ratio of roadside to private unauthorised (Gypsy-owned) sites of 60:40, which would suggest a need for more transit provision.

**Housed Gypsies** TES data suggests that about 20% of the Gypsy/Traveller population are in housing, which has been applied to estimate numbers, and the housing transfer figure.

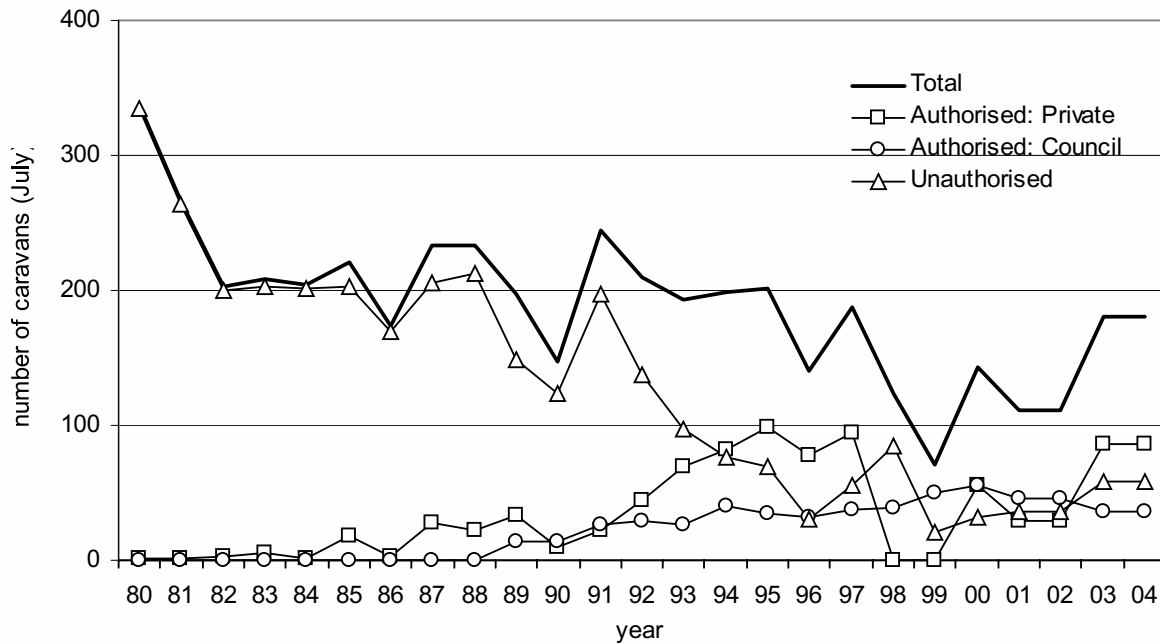
**Policy** The local Plan new housing provision (1993-2006) was for 9,810 dwellings, of which 3,470 are in villages.



**Accommodation Assessment 2005-2010** The following table follows the ODPM methodology (as adapted), and details of the assessments are included in the above report at section 3.8.

<b>KING'S LYNN &amp; WEST NORFOLK</b>	
<b>CURRENT SUPPLY (council and private authorised)</b>	80-90
<b>CURRENT DEMAND</b>	
Unauthorised caravan households	30-35
Overcrowding allowance	10-12
Transfer from housing	1-2
Family formation	5-10
<b>EXTRA PITCH NEED 2005-2010 (rounded)</b>	45-60

**King's Lynn and West Norfolk District: Caravan numbers by site type: 1980-2004 (July).**



## GYPSY & TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION ASSESSMENT 2005-2010

### PETERBOROUGH DISTRICT

**Introduction** Peterborough district has a distinctive pattern of caravan numbers (reflecting high existing council provision), significant numbers of Irish Travellers on council sites, and strong associations with the East Midlands (including the large Gypsy/Traveller community of Newark). The survey interviews (71) were mostly on council sites, and represented 39% of the estimated Gypsy/Traveller population in the district.

**Council sites** Peterborough opened one council site at Oxney Road in 1978, and a second at Paston Ridings (now Norwood Lane) in 1985. It was designated by the Secretary of State in 1986 for having made sufficient provision. The Norwood Lane site combines transit and residential pitches, and at 38 pitches (76 caravan capacity) is the largest council site in the study area (and one of the largest in the country). The survey interviews found that site much criticised by its occupants, the commonest objections being fly-tipping (89% of responses), vermin (73%), police activity (52%), and neighbours (51%).

District	Site location	Pitches	Capacity	Date opened (date upgraded)
Peterborough	Oxney Road	24	48	1978
Peterborough	Norwood Lane (Paston Ridings)	38	76	1985 (1988)
<b>Total</b>		<b>62</b>	<b>124</b>	

**Private authorised caravans** The district has a small number of such sites, the result mostly of successful appeals.

**Unauthorised caravans** A tough policy on unauthorised encampment since designation in 1986 seems to have kept the number of unauthorised caravans low.

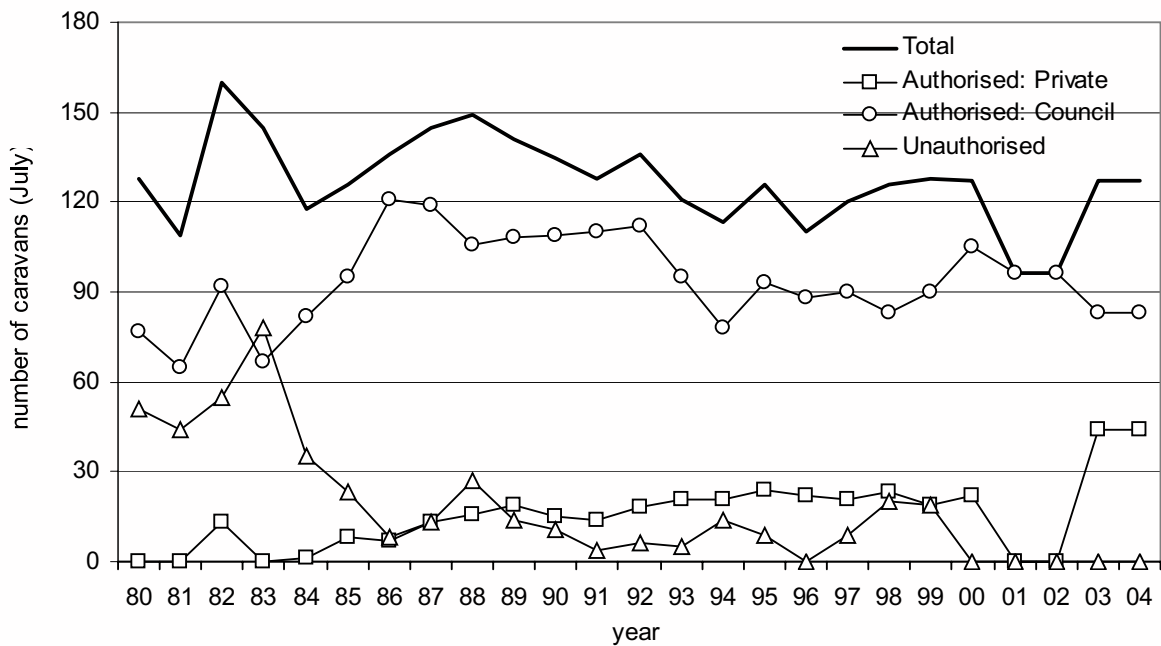
**Housed Gypsies** Data on this was weak, but suggests relatively low numbers.

**Council policy** The Local Plan First Replacement (adopted in 2005) has a criterion-based policy, and 'encourages' private site provision, although there are flood risk constraints. The plan commits the council to redeveloping the Norwood Lane (or Paston Ridings) site for conventional housing, but no replacement has been found. The Sub-Regional Housing Strategy does not mention Gypsies/Travellers, even in the section on ethnic minorities (although it states that 'the diversity of the city is one of its main strengths').

**Accommodation Assessment 2005-2010** The following table follows the ODPM methodology (as adapted), and details of the assessments are included in the above report at section 3.8. The council has made substantial provision on two large council sites, but these have severe management problems, need major upgrading, and could be broken up into smaller, better designed sites. The picture is complicated by the council's stated wish to redevelop one of its sites. Our interviews found a number who wished to move off council sites to private sites, but frustrated by planning and financial constraints.

<b>PETERBOROUGH</b>	
<b>CURRENT SUPPLY (council and private authorised)</b>	75-90
<b>CURRENT DEMAND</b>	
Unauthorised caravan households	1
Overcrowding allowance	7-10
Transfer from housing	1-2
Family formation	1-2
<b>EXTRA PITCH NEED 2005-2010 (rounded)</b>	10-15

*Peterborough: Caravan numbers by site type: 1980-2004 (July).*



## GYPSY & TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION ASSESSMENT 2005-2010

### SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT

**Introduction** The district has recorded more Gypsy caravans (over 400 in recent years) than any other district in England, and only seven counties (let alone districts) have comparable numbers. Total caravan numbers (perhaps under-counted) were below 100 until 1985, rose to over 300 by 1991 (with the rapid growth in the Chesterton area), fell in 1993-99, and then rose to about 500 by 2004. The five-fold rise in total caravan numbers in about twenty years may be attributed to various factors:

- a) Planning permissions in the Fen Road (Chesterton) area. One site alone (New Fields) accounts for about 100 caravans (32 pitches with three caravans permitted per pitch), and this area of Milton parish now provides authorised accommodation for over 200 caravans.
- b) Increased attractiveness of the Cambridge area to Gypsies/Travellers because of its relative prosperity and availability of work, and the existence of the annual fair at Midsummer Common, bringing large numbers of Gypsies/Travellers to the area (some of whom may stay).
- c) The impact of the Criminal Justice Act 1994, which criminalised unauthorised encampment. The number of caravans in the district fell immediately after the Act (250 in January 1995), and the subsequent increase reflects a general tendency for Gypsies/Travellers to group together in response to the pressures placed upon them. In those areas where private authorised accommodation existed, pitch occupancy levels rose, and unauthorised caravans also tended to cluster on land around authorised private sites.

The interview survey (72 completed) represented 388 individuals, including 221 children (51 in school), is estimated to cover a quarter of the Gypsy/Traveller population in the district. The average household size was higher than the study area average, reflecting the proportion of Irish Travellers (the highest found in our study area), who tend to have larger families. The average number of persons per trailer was 3.5, and caravans per household 1.6, higher and lower respectively than the study area average, probably reflecting pressure on accommodation in the area).

**Council sites** When the official counts started in 1979, there were no official Gypsy caravan sites in the district, but subsequently the county built four, of which two remain, as follows:

District	Site location	Pitches	Capacity	Date opened (date upgraded)
South Cambs	Blackwell, Milton	15	30	1996 (15 transit 1988)
South Cambs	New Farm, Whaddon	14	28	1986 (refurbished 1999)
<b>Total</b>		<b>29</b>	<b>58</b>	

The management of the Blackwell site was transferred from Cambridge City Council in 1996; it began as an emergency stopping place, become a transit site (15 pitches) in 1988, and was refurbished in 2004 as a residential site. The site is close to Cambridge city, but separated from it by the A14 raised dual carriageway. Interviews with occupiers

showed dissatisfaction ('nothing good about being here'), particularly with traffic noise ('driving us all mad'), isolation and poor play provision.

The Whaddon site, near Royston, seems to function satisfactorily, but is poorly located according to government criteria, in a village which the council's own local plan indicates has 'a low level of facilities'. The counts show the site with fewer caravans than its apparent capacity.

The number of caravans on council sites fell from 75 in 1994 to 38 in 2004, reflecting site closures, caused by management problems, vandalism and local resident opposition (at Willingham and Meldreth).

The district has a particularly high ratio of private authorised to council accommodation (only 12% on council sites), reflecting council site closures and the grant of permission to several large sites, but this does not address the needs of those Gypsies/Travellers who lack the resources to buy their own land.

**Private authorised caravans** The district has 280-350 caravans on private authorised sites, mostly concentrated in the Chesterton Fen Road area of Milton parish (about 200 caravans) and around Cottenham (about 60), with small sites in five other parishes.

**Unauthorised caravans** Numbers have grown by over a hundred in recent years, and represent different situations:

- a) Most were on Gypsy-owned land without planning permission, usually near Gypsy-owned land that already had planning permission (at Smithy Fen, Cottenham, Fen Road and Willingham), and had been there for several years. Several had lost authorised accommodation (their own or council), and can be regarded as internally displaced persons, forced from sites with no secure alternative accommodation being available.
- b) A few were on highway verge land, having lost council accommodation, and wishing to be re-housed.
- c) A few were Gypsies/Travellers passing through but only short-stay; these included a small encampment of 'new travellers' (the only such encountered in the survey).

Asked how long they had been at their present location, a third of respondents said less than a year (12% up to six months, including one New Traveller on the roadside, and one showman, and 20% less than a year), and 50% 1-3 years.

### **Council policy**

- a) The district local plan has a criterion-based policy, but this excludes the Green Belt, where many of the caravans (authorised and unauthorised) are located. However at Chesterton Fen a site within the greenbelt is identified as a special area in the Local Plan, which allows that permission 'may be granted for private Gypsy sites to meet local needs so long as they are properly landscaped and drained'.
- b) The Homelessness Review (2003) identifies Gypsies/Travellers as the largest ethnic minority group in the district. 1-2% of total homelessness acceptances were from a traveller background, for reasons identified as eviction from sites, medical problems, and relationship breakdown (domestic violence). Travellers placed in temporary or even permanent housing often left with no forwarding

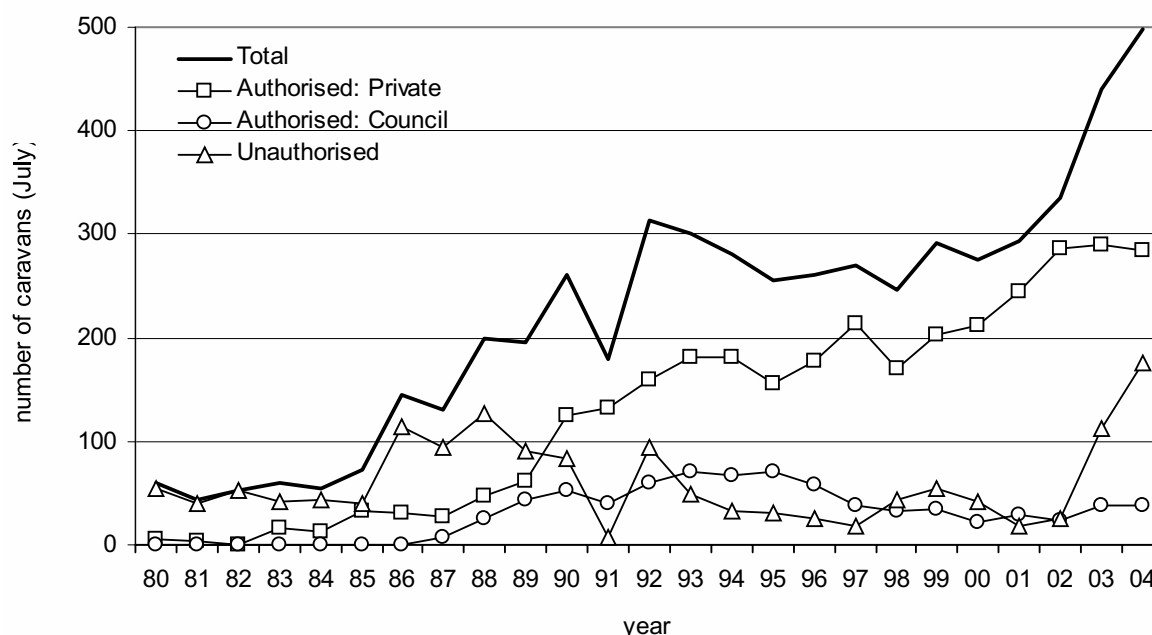
address, suggesting that they had rejected the change to conventional housing accommodation.

- c) To put Gypsy/Traveller accommodation needs in context, the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Structure Plan requires the district to provide 20,000 new dwellings over the period 1999-2016, (Policy P5/1).

**Accommodation assessment 2005- 2010** The following table follows the ODPM methodology (as adapted), and details of the assessments are included in the above report at section 3.8. If future provision is to be shared with other districts (which we regard as appropriate but outside our brief), the numbers would be less. Much of the need could be provided by granting permission on existing unauthorised Gypsy-owned sites (which would reflect the occupiers' wishes), but further public provision is still desirable, preferably on small sites (of about ten pitches), which would compensate in part for the loss of council sites in recent years.

<b>SOUTH CAMBS</b>	
<b>CURRENT SUPPLY (council and private authorised)</b>	210-220
<b>CURRENT DEMAND</b>	
Unauthorised caravan households	55-65
Overcrowding allowance	25-30
Transfer from housing	5
Family formation	25-30
<b>EXTRA PITCH NEED 2005-2010 (rounded)</b>	110-130

**South Cambs District: Caravan numbers by site type: 1980-2004 (July).**



## **GYPSY & TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION ASSESSMENT 2005-2010**

### **ST. EDMUNDSBURY DISTRICT**

**Introduction** The Borough has the lowest numbers of Gypsy caravans in the study area. These numbers have fluctuated, but around a lower total than other districts in the study area (about 30).

**Council sites** This is one of only two districts in the study area with no council site (the other being Cambridge City, which has a much smaller geographical area). A council site (initially 15, later 28 pitches) at Romany Way, Rougham was closed by Suffolk County Council in 1999 following management problems and damage to facilities which led to under occupation. The authors interviewed personally six survey respondents who had been displaced from that site to other study area districts (Forest Heath, King's Lynn and South Cambs); four of those were on unauthorised sites.

**Private authorised caravans** are few. The ODPM caravan counts show between two and five since 2000.

**Unauthorised caravans** fell from a peak of over 50 in the mid-1980s to less than 10 in recent years. There is, however, an unauthorised encampment on Gypsy-owned land at Woolpit (just outside the Borough boundary).

**Housed Gypsies** There are no Travellers Education Service school roll records for this district, but the Suffolk County data suggest a lower proportion of Gypsy/Traveller children in housed accommodation - about 20% compared to around 25% to 50% for Cambridgeshire districts.

**Council policy** The local plan contains a paragraph on Gypsies/Travellers (5.26), but no specific policy, while the Housing Strategy does not mention Gypsies/Travellers. The modest accommodation needs of Gypsies/Travellers compare with the Suffolk Structure Plan allocation of 8,800 housing units for the general population to be built between 1996 and 2016

**Accommodation assessment 2005-2010** The methodology for estimating district assessments is difficult to apply to St Edmundsbury, because of the small number of caravans recorded and correspondingly small number of interviews. Therefore the following approach has been taken based on ODPM guidance as far as possible:

- Number of additional pitches required in St Edmundsbury to 2010 based on existing Travellers = 6
- Additional pitches needed based on those families who previously lived in the Borough who were interviewed in other districts and living on unauthorized sites = 12 to 26 pitches.
- **Recommended total pitches needed = 10 to 20 pitches**

Details of calculations are given in Table 1

Table 1 – Details of calculations and sources

	<b>Source/calculation</b>	<b>Number</b>
	<b>Current Households</b>	
(a)	Interviews completed, each interview representing a either a household or a caravan	4
(b)	Caravans in the Borough (average ODPM caravan count 2002 – 2004 rounded down)	10
(c)	Households in caravans – (b)/1.7 rounded down (survey shows average 1.7 caravans per household)	5
...	Of which - households on unauthorized sites (caravan count suggests 50% to 80% of total at any one time, 60% used)	3
(d)	Households in housing (Study area TES shows housed = 20% to 50% of the number of families in caravans)	2
(e)	Current total households (c + d)	7
	<b>Calculation of pitches needed excluding Rougham</b>	
(f)	Demographic increase in households 2005 – 2010 (3% increase in households per year as identified in the survey and other accepted sources, e.g. Niner).	1
(g)	Households who need accommodation based on standard ODPM approach (households on unauthorized sites = 3 + households wishing to move from houses = 0 + demographic increase = 1)	4
(h)	Extra pitches to house households in need of accommodation – (g) x 1.6 (survey shows around 1.6 pitches per household)	6
	<b>Households displaced from Rougham</b>	
(i)	People interviewed displaced from Rougham site	6
(j)	Of the 6 interviewed from Rougham, those households on unauthorized sites (therefore in need of accommodation)	4
(k)	Estimate of number of households from Rougham – Minimum = (j) x 100/30 = 13.3 (the survey interviewed 30.2% of all households in caravans in the study area) Maximum = (j) x 100/22 = 18.18 (the survey interviewed 21.7% of all households in caravans or houses in the study area)	13 – 18
(l)	Estimated extra pitches to house households from Rougham = (k) x 1.6 (lowest estimate used and rounded down)	20
(m)	Alternative estimate of extra pitches for Rougham households - (j) x 1.6	6
	<b>Total pitches needed</b>	
(n)	Lower range of pitches needed = (h) + (m)	12
(o)	Higher range of pitches needed = (h) + ((k) x 1.6) = 6 + (13 x 1.6) = 6 + 20 Note the lower figure from (k) is used.	26



Other points.

The survey is the largest survey of Travellers undertaken in the UK to date. The figures derived from the survey are therefore more robust than most other sources.

The survey and caravan counts demonstrate that there is considerable need for extra pitches in the ODPM Cambridgeshire housing sub-region. The number of extra pitches recommended for St Edmundsbury is a very modest proportion of that wider need.

Consideration would need to be given to the ownership and management, and the number of sites – Gypsies often prefer smaller sites. Alternatives include council, private and RSL-managed sites.

***St. Edmundsbury Borough: Caravan numbers by site type: 1980-2004 (July).***

