

HDC Local Planning Executive Advisory Panel
Wednesday 10th April 2013

Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Gypsy and Traveller Needs
Assessment Refresh

Introduction

Harborough District Council, alongside seven other Leicester and Leicestershire Local Authorities, commissioned De Montfort University to undertake a refresh of the Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs in their area. Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council and Rutland County Council had previously undertaken their own accommodation assessment refreshes, and so are not included in this study, although officers from both did take part in meetings.

This report is simply a 'refresh' of the 2007 GTAA study, undertaken by Birmingham University. It does not attempt to replace the data in the original GTAA, instead it seeks to update the findings on accommodation need in light of primary and secondary data collected from September to early December 2012. It sets out the progress made on site provision since 2007 and highlights any changes in the key issues facing Gypsies and Travellers whilst also considering the key facilitators and barriers to site provision.

Definitions of Gypsies and Travellers are outlined in the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites document (CLG 2012), published as guidance to go alongside the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Furthermore, residential pitches are have a split definition, a 'pitch' means a pitch on a gypsy and traveller site, while a 'plot' refers to a pitch on a travelling showpeople site so to differentiate the two as 'plots' often incorporate some storage use for equipment. .

Key Points

- The refresh updates pitch requirements and provides qualitative findings on accommodation preference with some findings too on health and education based on a robust study of 87 surveys; however the study does not build on the employment and income findings of the original 2007 study. Surveys, focus group and stakeholder interviews were undertaken in the months of September, October and November, with writing-up achieved in early December, while secondary data was gathered with the aid of the Multi Agency Traveller Unit and the Local Authorities. Of the 87 surveys undertaken, 11 (12.6%) were undertaken in Harborough District.
- Harborough has overprovided permanent residential pitches and showpeople plots since the 2007 GTAA. Harborough has provided 32 residential pitches, with 30 required in total through to 2017 and 25 showpeople plots have been provided against a need of 24 to 2011. An

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under provision of 6 transit pitches has also been identified against the 2007 study.

- The 2007 study made a recommendation that 25% of all provision should be for social sites. Since then no social provision has been provided across the County. However, through HCA funding, Harborough District Council has been awarded funding for 5 social pitches. Discussions around the planning application for this provision are on going and an application is expected in the near future.
- Estimated total Gypsy and Traveller population figures (across the study area only) are shown below;

Authority	Social Rented ₃	Private Sites ₄	Unauthorised Developments ₅	Housing ₆	Long Term Encampments ₇	All
Blaby	20	102	0	6	0	128
Charnwood	0	0	0	6	0	6
Harborough	0	70	7	18	4	99
Leicester	21	0	0	137	3	161
Melton	0	2	0	6	3	11
NW Leics	1	33	11	18	0	63
Oadby & Wigston	0	0	0	0	0	0
Study Area	42	207	18	191	10	468

- Total new need for sites is based on population increase (3% compound growth for Gypsies and Travellers, 1.5% compound growth for travelling showpeople) and also the number of unauthorised encampments. In Harborough District, unauthorised encampments total 37 since 2006, outnumbering the total amount of permissions (32). Further information of the type of site preference in terms of size, location and tenure is provided in the study and gathered through the surveys and interviews.
- The study has produced a refreshed residential pitch requirement through to March 2017. This overlaps with the 2007 GTAA (to 2016) and is based on current need as identified by the 2012 surveys, and has increased due to new household formation (12), net movement from housing to sites (2), unauthorised development (7) and unauthorised encampments (6) resulting in a greater need for the District. **The study has identified a need for 27 additional permanent residential pitches to be provided by 31 March 2017.** This need is recommended to be a 50%/50% split between private and social pitches.

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- The refresh for future years is set out in 5yr tranches to 2026, and a 4yr tranche to 2013. The refresh has assumed;
 - that the base (total number of pitches) as at November 2012 was 70 pitches
 - that the requirement of 27 additional pitches (shown above) by 31 March 2017 is met. This reflects 'need where it arises'.
- Total residential pitch requirements are shown below;

	April 2012 – March 2017	April 2017 – March 2022	April 2022 – March 2027	April 2027 – March 2031
Baseline information				
Housed	18	18	19	21
Pitches	70	97	113	132
Additional Households formed				
From housed families	Not applicable	3	3	4
From families on sites	Not applicable	15	17	20
Additional pitch requirements				
From housed families (50%)	Not applicable	1	2	2
From families on sites	Not applicable	15	17	16
Total Pitch Requirement	Not applicable	15	19	18
Of which				
Private pitches		8	9	9
Social pitches		7	10	9
Net pitches added	27(as above)	16	19	18
Total Pitches	97	113	132	150

- In addition to the permanent residential pitches as above, the following Travelling Showpeople plots requirements have been calculated as below;

Base	Backlog	Newly arising need from household growth		
	April 2012 – March 2017	April 2017 – March 2022	April 2022 – March 2027	April 2027 – March 2031
89	2	7	8	8

- With regards to Transit sites, the 2007 GTAA identified a need of up to 10 sites to be provided by March 2011. 4 transit sites have been provided and a site was approved for 10 transit caravans in 2009 (Lutterworth Road, North Kilworth), however this permission has expired and the site was not developed.
- **No further transit provision has been identified as being needed in Harborough District over and above the outstanding capacity for the 10 transit caravans.**
- **Leicester City Council have concerns over the report due to a calculated high need in their area, which Officers do not believe can be met.** This is likely to form a duty to cooperate discussion between all Leicestershire Authorities regarding the total gypsy and traveller need across the county, and how and where this need can be met. At present, the report has not been published due to Leicester City's concerns, however officers of all other partnership Authorities do accept their own figures.

As with the Harborough Housing Requirements Study, the GTAA is part of the evidence base to help form future land use policy on gypsy and traveller sites. It does not form Council policy at present but its conclusions are an important stepping stone in helping to identify how many additional pitches will be needed in the District by 2031.

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