



**London Borough of Hackney
Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople
Accommodation Assessment**

Executive Summary

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Executive Summary

Introduction and Methodology

- 1.1 The primary objective of this Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) is to provide a robust updated assessment of current and future need for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation in the London Borough of Hackney (the Council).
- 1.2 As well as updating the previous GTAA, there are 2 principal reasons for completing the update.
- 1.3 The first was the publication of a revised version of Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) in August 2015. This included a change to the definition of Travellers for planning purposes. The key change that was made was the removal of the term *persons...who have ceased to travel permanently*, meaning that those households who have ceased to travel permanently will not now fall under the planning definition of a Traveller for the purposes of assessing accommodation need in a GTAA.
- 1.4 The second is the new Draft London Plan (December 2017) which is programmed for Examination in Public commencing in January 2019. This includes a new draft policy (H16 – Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation) on assessing accommodation need for Gypsies and Travellers. This policy includes a different planning definition of Gypsies and Travellers than is included in the PPTS (2015). This is essentially the Housing Definition that was repealed by the Housing and Planning Act (2016). This is a far less stringent definition as it includes households with a cultural tradition of nomadism or living in a caravan; households currently living in a caravan; households with a cultural preference not to live bricks and mortar; and households that have ceased to travel temporarily and permanently. Whilst the Draft London Plan has not yet been examined or adopted, an assessment of need has been completed using the alternative planning definition to provide an indication of the potential increased levels of need that may have to be addressed.
- 1.5 The GTAA provides a credible evidence base which can be used to aid the preparation and implementation of Local Plan Policies and the provision of new Gypsy and Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots for the period 2018-2033. However, the baseline date for the assessment of need is 2016 in line with the LP33 Plan Period, with need netted to zero for 2016-2017 as no new pitches have been delivered following the outcomes of the 2015 GTAA.
- 1.6 The GTAA has sought to understand the accommodation needs of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population in Hackney through a combination of desk-based research and engagement with members of the Travelling Community living on all known sites. A total of 24 interviews were completed with Gypsies and Travellers living on the 3 public sites in Hackney and this represents a 100% response rate. No Travelling Showpeople were identified in Hackney. In addition, interviews were completed with a total of 19 households living in bricks and mortar in Hackney.

The Planning Definition of a Traveller

- 1.7 The PPTS (2015) introduced a revised definition of a Traveller for planning purposes. To meet the revised definition, households need to demonstrate that household members travel for work purposes, or for seeking work, and stay away from their usual place of residence when doing so, or that family members have travelled for work in the past and have stopped travelling temporarily due to education, ill health or old age. As a result, there are 3 categories of Travellers identified and assessed in this GTAA in relation to the PPTS (2015) planning definition:
- » Households where an interview was completed who met the planning definition.
 - » Undetermined households where an interview was unable to be completed who may meet the planning definition.
 - » Households where an interview was completed who did not meet the planning definition.
- 1.8 The Draft London Plan (2017) is proposing a more far reaching definition of a Traveller for planning purposes. This will include:
- » All households living on sites and yards including those who have ceased travelling temporarily and permanently
 - » Households living in bricks and mortar whose existing accommodation is unsuitable for them by virtue of their cultural preference not to live in bricks and mortar accommodation.
- 1.9 It is likely that the application of the Draft London Plan planning definition will significantly increase levels of need arising from Gypsies and Travellers living in Hackney.

Key Findings

Additional Pitch Needs – Gypsies and Travellers (PPTS Planning Definition)

- 1.10 Overall, the additional pitch needs for Gypsies and Travellers from 2016-2033 are set out below. These needs are based on the PPTS (2015) definition of a Traveller for planning purposes. Additional needs are set out for those households that met the planning definition of a Gypsy or Traveller; for those unknown households where an interview was not able to be completed who may meet the planning definition; and for those households that did not meet the planning definition (even though this is no longer a requirement for a GTAA). Only the need from those households who met the planning definition should be considered as need arising from the GTAA under the PPTS planning definition.
- 1.11 The need arising from households that met the PPTS planning definition should be addressed through site allocation/intensification/expansion Local Plan Policies.
- 1.12 The Council will need to carefully consider how to address any need associated with undetermined households as it is unlikely that all of this need will need to be addressed through the provision of

conditioned¹ Gypsy or Traveller pitches. In terms of Local Plan Policies, the Council should consider the use of a criteria-based policy (as suggested in PPTS) for any undetermined households – including any from in-migration - that do provide evidence that they meet the planning definition.

- 1.13 In general terms, the need for those households who did not meet the planning definition will be addressed as part of general housing need and through separate Local Plan Policies (including those authorities that have adopted plans, as all Travellers will have been included as part of the overall Objectively Assessed Need - OAN).
- 1.14 This approach is specifically referenced in the revised National Planning Policy Framework (July 2018). Paragraph 60 of the NPPF sets out that in determining the minimum number of homes needed, strategic plans should be based upon a local housing need assessment conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance. Paragraph 61 then states that (emphasis added) *‘Within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, **travellers**, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes’*. The footnote to this section states that *‘Planning Policy for Traveller Sites sets out how travellers’ housing needs should be assessed for those covered by the definition in Annex 1 of that document.’*
- 1.15 This essentially sets out that the needs of households that meet the planning definition should be assessed under the PPTS and that the needs of households that are not found to meet the planning definition should be assessed as part of the wider housing needs of an area.
- 1.16 As things currently stand the proposed London Plan definition of a Traveller for planning purposes has not yet been taken forward so the Council only need to formally consider the need identified under the PPTS (2015) definition. However, an assessment using the proposed London Plan definition has been completed give an indication of potential increased levels of need that the Council may need to consider should the London Plan definition be adopted.
- 1.17 There were 3 Gypsy or Traveller households identified in Hackney that met the planning definition – 1 living on a site and 2 living in bricks and mortar; no undetermined households that may meet the planning definition; and 38 households that did not meet the planning definition – 23 living on sites and 15 living in bricks and mortar².
- 1.18 The GTAA identifies a need for **8 additional pitches** for households that met the planning definition. This is made up of 2 concealed or doubled-up households or adults living on public sites; 2 teenagers living on sites who will be in need of a pitch of their own in the next 5 years; 2 households in bricks and mortar who want to move to a public site; and 2 from new household formation derived from the site demographics – 1 from a household living on a public site and 1 from a household living in bricks and mortar.

¹ Pitches with planning conditions restricting occupation to Gypsies and Travellers.

² Whilst 19 interviews were completed with households living in bricks and mortar, 2 did not want to move to a site so only 17 have been included in the assessment of need.

- 1.19 The GTAA identifies a need for **no additional pitches** for undetermined households as interviews were completed with all households living on all pitches on the 3 public sites.
- 1.20 Whilst no longer a requirement to include in a GTAA, there is a need for **84 additional pitches** for households that did not meet the planning definition. This is made up of 19 concealed or doubled-up households or adults living on public sites; 13 teenage children living on public sites who will be in need of a pitch of their own in the next 5 years; 9 teenage children living in bricks and mortar who will be in need of a pitch of their own in the next 5 years; 1 from in-migration from a household forced to leave one of the public sites as a result of over-crowding; 15 households in bricks and mortar who want to move to a public site; and 27 from new household formation using a formation rate of 1.50% for households living on sites and a rate of 2.70% for households living in bricks and mortar – both derived from the household demographics.

Figure 1 – Additional need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Hackney 2016-2033

Status	Total
Meet Planning Definition	8
Unknown	0
Do not meet Planning Definition	84
TOTAL	92

Figure 2 – Breakdown of need for households that meet the PPTS Planning Definition

Years	0-0	0-5	6-10	11-15	Total
	2016-18	2018-23	2023-28	2028-33	
	0	6	0	2	8

Figure 3 – Breakdown of need for households that do not meet the PPTS Planning Definition

Years	0-0	0-5	6-10	11-15	Total
	2016-17	2018-23	2023-28	2028-33	
	0	64	9	11	84

Additional Pitch Needs – Gypsies and Travellers (London Plan Planning Definition)

- 1.21 The Draft London Plan (December 2017) is proposing to introduce a different definition of a Traveller for planning purposes. Should this definition be adopted it is likely that the vast majority of Traveller households would meet it and overall need to be addressed through specific Local Plan Policies will increase considerably.
- 1.22 The table below shows a comparison between the overall level of need under the PPTS planning definition and the overall level of need under the proposed Draft London Plan planning definition. This shows that overall need increases by 84 pitches from 8 to 92 when the proposed London Plan definition is applied, plus any additional need arising from households living in bricks and mortar.

Figure 4 – Comparison of overall need for Gypsies and Travellers 2016-2033

Local Authority	PPTS (2015) Need	Proposed London Plan Need	Difference
Hackney	8	92	+84

Additional Plot Needs - Travelling Showpeople

- 1.23 There were no Travelling Showpeople identified in Hackney so there is no current or future need for additional plots.

Transit Recommendations

- 1.24 There is evidence to suggest that there have been a very small number of encampments in Hackney in recent years, but that these are short-term and transient. As such it is not recommended that there is a need for any transit provision in Hackney at this time.
- 1.25 It is also recommended that the situation relating to levels of unauthorised encampments should continue to be monitored whilst any potential changes associated with PPTS (2015) develop. This will establish whether there is a need for investment in new transit sites or emergency stopping places.
- 1.26 As well as information on the size and duration of the encampments, this monitoring should also seek to gather information from residents on the reasons for their stay in the local area; whether they have a permanent base or where they have travelled from; whether they have any need or preference to settle permanently in the local area; and whether their travelling is a result of changes to PPTS (2015). This information could be collected as part of a Welfare Assessment (or similar).
- 1.27 A review of the evidence base relating to unauthorised encampments, including the monitoring referred to above, should be undertaken once there is a robust evidence base following the changes to PPTS in 2015. This will establish whether there is a need for investment in any new transit provision or emergency stopping places, or whether a managed approach is preferable.
- 1.28 In the short-term the Council should consider the use of management-based approaches to dealing with unauthorised encampments such as negotiated stopping agreements.