



## Final Report

# Devon-wide Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment

November 2006

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### Commissioned by:

Plymouth City Council's Safer Communities Department on behalf of  
Devon Local Authorities

### Researched by:

Dr Rebekah Southern, Dr Zoë James, Melanie Strickland, John Sreeton,  
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### With Advice and Support from:

Dr Robert Home & Dr Margaret Greenfields

## Acknowledgements

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## Executive Summary

### Section One: Introduction

- ❖ In February 2006 the Social Research & Regeneration Unit (SRRU) was commissioned, in conjunction with Dr Zoë James from the University of Plymouth, to conduct a Needs Assessment of Gypsies & Travellers in Devon. The study area includes the Districts of East Devon, Exeter, Mid Devon, North Devon, South Hams, Teignbridge, Torridge and West Devon as well as the Unitary Authorities of Plymouth and Torbay.
- ❖ The research was commissioned by Plymouth City Council's Safer Communities Department on behalf of the Local Authorities in Devon and was managed by a multi-agency Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Steering Group. It was also supported by a team of experts drawn from both within and outside the University – including from the Gypsy and Traveller communities.
- ❖ The overarching aim of the project is to assess the housing and accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers within the County. However, it is intended that the information gathered will also be used more generally to inform strategies and plans to ensure the inclusion of Gypsy and Traveller communities, and to close the gaps in the outcomes that persist in: education, employment, health, safety, accommodation (including accessing support to allow people to maintain their chosen accommodation) and the environment.
- ❖ The following definition of Gypsies and Travellers has been adopted for the purpose of the present study:

*'Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, and all other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or caravan dwelling' (ODPM, 2006:9).*

## Section Two: Methodology & Methods

- ❖ The Devon-wide Needs Assessment is based on a pluralistic methodology that incorporates both quantitative and qualitative methods, utilising primary and secondary data sources.
- ❖ The secondary research includes an examination of literature and policy guidance in order to contextualise the study and provide information on best practice in assessing the needs of Gypsies and Travellers. An examination of recognised national, regional and local data sources that estimate the Gypsy and Traveller population was also undertaken. This was supplemented by data and information held locally by relevant service providers on the numbers and ethnic groupings of Gypsies and Travellers within their area, including the location of temporary stopping places (whether currently used or not). Legally there is only a distinction between 'authorised' and 'unauthorised' Gypsy and Traveller sites. Authorised sites are those that have planning permission that are either publicly or privately owned. Unauthorised sites are any sites that do not have planning permission wherever they are. In practice however, there tends to be a distinction between more settled sites and those used as a 'temporary stop' on the 'roadside'. This is partly due to the government policy of toleration of unauthorised encampments. Additionally, the research team reviewed the regional and local strategies within which the Devon-wide Needs Assessment is situated, and examined the structural organisation of Gypsy and Traveller remits within the relevant Local Authorities.
- ❖ The core component of the Needs Assessment is the Gypsy and Traveller Survey. It broadly follows the Cambridgeshire study which was identified by the (then) Office of the Deputy Prime Minister as a model of good practice and the research team has benefited from the support and expert advice of those responsible for the Cambridgeshire Study throughout the process. It essentially follows the innovative practice of training members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities to administer a Needs Assessment Survey – the core component of the study - with the quality control and analysis functions being undertaken by the academic team. Six Gypsies and Travellers were recruited and trained and they administered the survey between April and June 2006 using a snowball approach in that interviewers were each given a set of known sites (comprising authorised and unauthorised settlements including temporary stopping places) in the first instance, and asked to use the contacts generated in order to access other Gypsies and Travellers.

- ❖ Data generated through the survey was coded and entered into the standard software, the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) and analysed by the core research team.
- ❖ The Gypsy and Traveller Survey was followed by a period of qualitative fieldwork over the summer of 2006 in which the research team conducted a limited number of additional meetings with Gypsies and Travellers, individually and/or in family groups, to explore in more depth particular themes to have emerged from the survey. In-depth interviews were also held with some of the hardest to reach Gypsies and Travellers as part of this phase of research. This included people living at the roadside, people living in '*bricks and mortar*' accommodation as well as children and young people.
- ❖ All partners of the Needs Assessment Steering Group were also invited to be interviewed in their capacity as representatives of the key stakeholder agencies or groups relevant to the study within Devon. The vast majority of partners agreed to take part and the interviews largely focused on service provision and stakeholder perceptions of Gypsy and Traveller uptake of and outcomes from local services as well as examples of collaborative working.
- ❖ The culmination of the research is presented within this final report by way of a series of recommendations for meeting the current and future needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Devon. The recommendations have been developed as part of a consultative process in order to ensure that conclusions are aligned with existing plans and capacities. A series of dissemination events are scheduled for early 2007.

### **Section Three: Secondary Research**

- ❖ The needs of Gypsies and Travellers have been addressed in numerous fashions over the past 50 years. Legislation and central government policy have driven changes in local provision for Gypsies and Travellers since the closure of the commons via the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960. In 1968, a duty was placed on Local Authorities to provide sites for Gypsies and Travellers, but this duty was repealed by the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 (CJPOA), which also limited the ability of Gypsies and Travellers to stop on any land that they did not own and have planning permission to reside on. Following the CJPOA, Gypsies and Travellers increasingly found themselves living outside the law – residing on land illegally and increasingly moving and living in large groups due to the lack of sites to stop and/or stay on (Bucke and James, 1998). Those

Gypsies and Travellers who could afford to buy land to live on to resolve their search for legitimate sites have experienced great difficulty in attaining the required planning permission to stay on that land (Jones et al, 2004).

- ❖ The number of official sites for Gypsies and Travellers provided by Local Authorities or via private landlords have also diminished over the years (Niner, 2003). This has meant that Gypsies and Travellers are evicted from their stopping places regularly by Local Authorities and Police. Such eviction has been estimated to cost the public purse at least £6 million a year according to Morris and Clements in 2002 or up to £18 million a year in legal costs alone according to the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) in 2006. The social cost of the lack of available sites for Gypsies and Travellers and regular eviction exceeds the fiscal costs, however.
- ❖ As provision of sites has diminished, there has been a direct rise in health and welfare problems for Gypsies and Travellers. A variety of studies show that there are high levels of infant mortality and low life expectancy rates for Gypsies and Travellers (Hawes, 1997, Hajioff and McKee, 2000, and Parry et al, 2004). Gypsies and Travellers have also attained poorly in schooling and are perceived as the most '*at risk*' group in education (Ofsted, 1996, 1999). Thus, the accommodation situation of Gypsies and Travellers might be described as '*in crisis*' in contemporary Britain, and Gypsies and Travellers are consequently experiencing poor health and welfare as a result.
- ❖ Recent government legislation and policy have been created to resolve the problems briefly highlighted above. The Housing Act 2004 requires Local Authorities to carry out accommodation assessments and develop accommodation strategies for all residents of their areas. It requires Gypsies and Travellers needs to be addressed within this strategy and assessment. Alongside this legislated requirement has been the creation of ODPM Circular 1/2006 that provides new guidance for Local Authorities on planning in relation to Gypsies and Travellers and guidance on the completion of needs assessments. This guidance requires councils to recognise their shared commitment to Gypsies and Travellers across areas, and to ensure all stakeholders are engaged in the process of evaluation to ensure effective action can be taken to provide for Gypsies and Travellers in the future in order to minimise the social and fiscal costs of unauthorised encampments in the past.
- ❖ In terms of numbers, the DCLG estimated that Gypsies & Travellers represent approximately 0.6% of the population (DCLG, 2006:8). Local Authorities have a duty under the '*Caravan Count*', which was introduced in

1979, to make bi-annual returns on the number of Gypsy caravans in their area. The purpose of the Count is to estimate the size of the Gypsy population. However, it should be noted that the data suffers from a number of problems which raise concerns about its accuracy (see Niner 2004).

- ❖ It is estimated that caravan numbers have increased by 7% and unauthorised encampments by 14% since July 2002 in the South West (South West Housing strategy 2005). According to the January 2006 Caravan Count data there were 2,079 caravans (including those on authorised and unauthorised sites) in the South West of England, 229 of which were within the County of Devon, with a further 21 in the Unitary Authority of Plymouth (Department for Communities and Local Government, January 2006). Fluctuations can be seen in the number of caravans in Devon (including Plymouth) across the different counts between 2004 and 2006 with slightly more (250) in January 2006 than in January 2004 (247). At the same time there has been a drop in the number of legally provided pitches through either Local Authority or private provision.
- ❖ Other local sources of data include the Traveller Education Service (TES) annual reports. The annual report for the academic year 2004/5 indicates that there was a total of 580 children aged 0-16 who had been contacted by TES or who were known to be in the county. Of these 454 were in Devon, 120 were in Plymouth, 48 were in Torbay and a further six were unspecified (please note that some children appear in two or more areas, hence the geographical breakdown totals to more than 580). This is interesting because due to the methodological differences in data collection there are some anomalies between this data and that gathered through the Caravan Count. For example, the TES data clearly shows Gypsy and Traveller children in Torbay which the Count does not.
- ❖ All Local Authorities and the Police were also contacted during the preparatory phase of the Needs Assessment and asked to provide data on the numbers and ethnic groupings of Gypsies and Travellers within their area, including the location of temporary stopping places (whether currently used or not). The purpose of this was to start building a profile of Gypsies and Travellers within Devon for use as an initial sampling frame from which further contacts could be '*snowballed*'. The nature and quality of the information varied between the District and Unitary Authorities, highlighting inconsistencies in approach within the County. However, this was a highly valuable resource for the Needs Assessment and it is of note

that, collectively, the Local Authorities have a good overview of the location of Gypsies and Travellers within the county. Very few *'hidden pockets'* of Gypsies and Travellers were found during the Needs Assessment Study.

- ❖ This data and information has also been contextualised with reference to relevant policy and strategy documents. The draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) (2006) is the key document for planning, monitoring and managing future development in the South West. Section Six of the RSS sets out *'transitional arrangements'* for the provision for Gypsies and Travellers within the region. Although the Regional Planning Body did not consider there to be sufficiently robust information on which to establish the required pitch numbers at District level at the time of writing (i.e. until the Needs Assessments have been completed) it summarises the regional context as follows:
  - ❖ The extent of existing provision in the region is approximately 550 pitches (based on Caravan Count data for January 2005);
  - ❖ Based on the average number of unauthorised encampments per Strategic Planning Authority (between 2003 and 2005) South Gloucestershire, the city of Bristol and North Somerset Unitary Authority areas have relatively high numbers of unauthorised sites, along with parts of Devon, Gloucestershire and Dorset counties;
  - ❖ An interim estimate of the additional pitch requirements at regional level is around 1,100 pitches.
- ❖ The ODPM planning circular 01/2006 clearly outlines how the RSS must be developed into Development Plan Documents (DPD) that form part of the Local Development Framework (LDF). Within DPDs there must be specific site allocations made for Gypsies and Travellers, based on the original Needs Assessment of Gypsies and Travellers that have been fed into and evaluated by the RSS. The circular states that it is important for Local Authorities to recognise that DPDs must include provision for all those in need of sites in their area, rather than only those defined within planning law as Gypsies and Travellers.
- ❖ Closely linked to the RSS is the Regional Housing Strategy (RHS) (2005 – 16). Prepared by the South West Housing Body, this strategy identifies the priorities for housing in the South West and makes recommendations to Ministers on the allocation of capital investment and it also sets housing issues within the wider strategic context of planning and economic growth. The Regional Housing Pot allocation for the South West stands at £158m for

2006-07, and £203m for 2007-08 and Ministers specifically require regions to consider, amongst other things, the needs of Gypsies and Travellers in their investment plans. The strategy also states that the ODPM (as was) will be providing an additional resource in the South West to help facilitate the delivery of new sites, initially to be based at Government of the South West (GOSW).

- ❖ Beneath the overarching Regional Strategies, the needs of Gypsies and Travellers also feature in a number of county-wide as well as local plans and policies. These provide an important contextual backdrop to the study and are particularly instructive in terms of the treatment of, and importance attached to, Gypsies and Traveller issues in more localised arenas. What is noticeable at this level is that specific mention of Gypsies and Travellers within plans and policies varies considerably. Also, and of particular relevance for the Needs Assessment, an examination of the plans and policies reveals that the majority of District Councils and Unitary Authorities within Devon have assessed that there is currently no need for the allocation of new sites for Gypsies and Travellers within their geographical boundaries.
- ❖ It is also of note that some District Councils and Unitary Authorities have adopted their own practice guidelines for dealing with Gypsies and Travellers residing within their geographical area, including in one case a contingency plan for preventing/managing mass gatherings. A Devon-wide protocol for unauthorised encampments has recently been finalised, although the extent to which those localised plans will be superseded by the emerging Devon protocol is unclear. The protocol nevertheless provides an example of good practice in multi-agency working at County level.
- ❖ More locally, the research found that considerable variations exist regarding the manner in which Local Authorities across Devon co-ordinate provision for Gypsies and Travellers. Key Local Authority departments involved in this area range from Community Services, through to Environmental Health and one authority has a number of different departments with specific Gypsy and Traveller remits including Housing, Planning, Environmental Health, Legal, Finance and Client Services. It is also of note that not all Local Authorities report having dedicated Gypsy and Traveller Officers and/or Link Officers and in one case only – Plymouth Unitary Authority – are there both. Whilst the configuration of Gypsy and Traveller remits is clearly at the discretion of each Local Authority and needs to be workable for the individual Authority in question, it nevertheless seems likely that the

different approaches adopted could lead to confusion about who is doing what and, importantly, who is responsible for what within each area. It is suggested that Councils should be very clear internally about where Gypsy and Traveller matters are dealt with and ensure that this information is widely shared externally to ensure that appropriate staff can be identified by all those involved.

#### **Section Four: Gypsy and Traveller Survey Findings**

- ❖ The Devon-wide Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment survey was completed in mid-June 2006. The research team completed 128 interviews with Gypsies and Travellers.
- ❖ Of those people surveyed, 70.3% lived on settled encampments and 29.7% were on the roadside. Interviews were completed with people living in every authority of the Devon-wide study area including with people living on all the Local Authority provided sites.
- ❖ The research team visited settled sites of a range of sizes, the smallest holding only one vehicle and the largest holding 40 caravans. A large proportion of the sample had been on their site for over a year, with 23.4% of respondents having been on their site for more than five years. Those people who had been on their site for a very short time, of less than two weeks, constituted 19.5% of the sample.
- ❖ The majority of respondents showed an affiliation to Devon over a period of time as 43.8% of respondents had been on another site in Devon prior to their current site and a further 14.8% had previously been in the South West. 40.6% of respondents said that they had come to their current site due to the proximity of family and friends. Also, when asked what attracted them to the Devon area more generally, a large majority said that it was because of friends and family being there.
- ❖ The Gypsy and Traveller respondents to the survey represented a diverse range of people including English Gypsy/Travellers (63.3%), Irish Travellers (4.7%), Welsh Travellers (0.8%), New Travellers (12.5%), Showmen (1.6%) and 'Other (13.3%)'. On looking in more depth at the data on people in the 'other' category, it became apparent that the majority of people in this category were also New Travellers, swelling their numbers to approximately 25.8% of the sample surveyed. The research team completed interviews with 70 women, 46 men and 12 couples. The age of the respondents ranged from 18 to 83.

- ❖ The majority of respondents (68%) had children. The average was 2.6 children per family, slightly higher than the national average of the settled population, although the averages fluctuated according to the type of Traveller interviewed. Using a family formation rate of 3% per annum there will be 45 additional Gypsy and Traveller 'households' in Devon between 2006 and 2011.
- ❖ A high proportion of respondents answered the survey questions on their employment (81%). Of those people who responded 43.3% said that they were in some sort of paid work. A further 28.8% said that they were a homemaker and 10.6% were retired. Only 3.8% of the respondents were receiving benefits (including disability). Analysis of the nature of the 'paid work' carried out by Gypsies and Travellers in Devon has shown that this work is commonly ad hoc, outside work of a manual nature including 'odd jobs', landscaping, gardening, tarmac, mechanics and roofing. There is very little evidence of the Gypsies and Travellers in the Devon-wide Needs Assessment having been employed in seasonal work. When asked if their current lifestyle had affected their ability to obtain work 21.1% of respondents said that it had.
- ❖ Only 9% of respondents to the survey said that they had received advice on possible benefits that they may be entitled to. When asked if they would like advice on benefits available to them 20.8% of respondents said 'yes' and most of those people were living on unauthorised, tolerated sites.
- ❖ The research found that 27% of respondents had been evicted in the past five years, the majority of whom were still living in unauthorised places: the roadside (59.9%) or 'tolerated' sites (19.9%). However, whilst eviction is experienced by a number of people, it is only a minority who are evicted regularly. Also of note, only a minority of the evictions recorded occurred in Devon (22.9%). In addition to those 27% of respondents who said that they had been evicted in the last five years, 17.4% of respondents said that they had moved on in order to avoid eviction, most of whom were in Devon or the South West at the time of moving on.
- ❖ In terms of future plans, 42.2% of respondents said that they had no current plans to move on and a further 6.1% said that they only intended to move within fifty miles of their current location.
- ❖ The reasons why Gypsies and Travellers travel can provide us with some explanation as to their accommodation needs. The survey respondents travelled for a combination of reasons: because of their culture, work and to

visit friends and family. Traditional Gypsies and Travellers are more likely than New Travellers to go out of the county on their travels. This is possibly due to work, family and cultural commitments in other areas such as at traditional horse fairs held around the country, weddings, christenings and funerals. The importance of familial ties in traditional Traveller communities and the rituals associated with these ties, such as the need to attend family births, deaths and marriages (Clark and Greenfields, 2006) means that movement away from an area may be common, but there is a subsequent need to return to a settled base where children are schooled and families are based. The research shows that of those respondents who lived on settled sites, only 52.2% of them were able to keep their pitch if they went travelling. This may mean that even more Gypsies and Travellers would express their cultural desire to travel were they to have security of tenure on site. On average the research shows that Gypsies and Travellers travel with three vehicles, most commonly including at least one caravan and one car.

- ❖ When asked specifically if respondents were looking for alternative accommodation in Devon 28.1% of respondents said that they were. The majority of these respondents (52.7%) said that they wanted to own their own land to live on. Five Gypsies and Travellers said that they were seeking alternative accommodation in some sort of housing, either privately or council owned.
- ❖ The research shows that there is distinct movement of Gypsies and Travellers through Devon, particularly via the A38, A30 and M5 corridor. The prevalence of roadside sites in the survey as 29.7% of the overall sample and the evident movement of people through the county implies a need for some sort of transit provision.
- ❖ When we consider where people usually stop when travelling, the survey results show that people living on the roadside usually stop on unauthorised or roadside sites (71.1%) and only a minority usually stop on an authorised site (21.1%). It seems likely that this statistic simply highlights the lack of authorised sites available. When asked specifically why respondents do not stop on official council sites the large majority (87.5%) said that there was insufficient space to do so. The rest of the respondents gave varying reasons for not stopping on official council sites, including their view that such sites were '*dirty*' or overcrowded.
- ❖ A large majority of the respondents to the survey (92.2%) said that there were not enough long term pitches in Devon. Respondents most commonly (40%) said that between six and ten *sites* were necessary. Otherwise

between one and five sites were considered sufficient by 24% of respondents and between eleven and twenty by 29% of respondents. The number of *itches* per *site* was most commonly held to be relatively small as 23.3% of respondents said that six to ten pitches per site was sufficient and 17.8% of respondents said that between eleven and fifteen pitches per sites was appropriate. It was unusual for respondents to suggest that more than 20 pitches should be on a site (5.6%) and more common for very small pitch numbers to be preferred (10%).

- ❖ The respondents to the survey commonly said that they wanted permanent, long term sites '*everywhere*' (21.1%) in places that were '*rural*' or '*semi-rural*' (22.1%) in Devon with close amenities (11.6%). Many Gypsies and Travellers stated a desire to be sited in places that would not engender local dispute to their presence. Additionally, some respondents said that they did not want to be placed on inappropriate, unclean spaces such as near rubbish dumps.
- ❖ When asked about the type of stopping places needed, 68.8% of respondents said that permanent residential pitches were required and 78.1% of respondents said that either transit or '*halting*' pitches were necessary. This finding in the research again emphasises the general desire of Gypsies and Travellers to have permanent bases from which to travel via transit sites. Interestingly 21.9% of respondents said that they wanted to be able to stop on green lanes, that were traditionally used by Gypsies and Travellers in the past. When asked whether it would be appropriate to combine permanent residential pitches with transit provision only 35.9% of respondents said that this was a good idea.
- ❖ Gypsies and Travellers said that the minimum number of vehicles needed on a permanent site was four. The Needs Assessment has found that the average number of people per pitch in Devon is 2.79, which is higher than the average settled household size of 2.29 in Devon.<sup>1</sup> Given the finding that respondents to this study commonly have at least two children living with them and a vehicle is considered overcrowded if it contains more than three people within it, it seems reasonable that pitches should allow for at least two caravans or a large twin unit, a car and an additional vehicle space for accommodating a transport vehicle, a work vehicle or a visitor.

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<sup>1</sup> For comparison to other areas it should be noted that in the Cambridge Sub-Region Traveller Needs Assessment the average household size was 4.77, reflecting the high numbers of traditional Gypsies and Travellers in the area and in Dorset it was 2.8 where there were more New Travellers.

- ❖ The accommodation of visitors on sites is vital to the continued cultural expression of Gypsies and Travellers nomadism. Although 14.1% of respondents to the survey said that they could accommodate visitors on site, the majority of those who said so lived either on a tolerated settled unauthorised site or on the roadside. Generous pitch provision could allow space for visitors on authorised sites without having to 'mix' permanent and transit sites.
- ❖ Gypsies and Travellers recognise the problem of overcrowding, 24.4% of respondents said that their site was overcrowded and 68.2% of those respondents referred to having to 'double up' within pitch spaces. Niner (2003) has stated that the national average of overcrowding on authorised Local Authority sites is approximately 10%. In Devon this figure rises to 11.8% on Local Authority sites, but those people who own their own land have a greater overcrowding problem with 12.5% of those who have planning permission being overcrowded and 16.7% of those without planning permission being overcrowded, perhaps due to restrictive planning permission meaning that they would be in breach if they brought on more trailers. Respondents living on the roadside are the most overcrowded however, with 21.9% of people being technically overcrowded.
- ❖ Alongside the issue of overcrowding of Gypsy and Traveller sites in Devon is the issue of any growth. As stated above respondents to the survey had an average of two children living with them and 38.9% of respondents said that they would need to increase the size of their accommodation in the next five years, largely due to the need to accommodate family/the household.
- ❖ Based on the data supplied locally to the research team on Gypsy and Travellers encampments, along with the data generated through the survey about personal/family circumstances the research team has identified that the County has a current shortfall of 181 pitches (155 from families on unauthorised sites and 26 from overcrowding). Using the family formation rates of 3% per annum forecasts have been generated for the next five years – i.e. 2006 – 2011, which show a county-wide shortfall of 226 pitches and predictions from 2011-2016 estimate that there will be an extra 53 households through family formation over that period. It should be noted that the shortfall identified is for permanent pitches in order to accommodate the current 'homeless' or overcrowded Gypsy and Traveller population. The research team strongly suggest that a two-stage process is adopted to address Gypsies and Travellers' accommodation needs with

permanent (as opposed to transit) pitches provided in the first instance. Importantly, the shortfall of pitches is a County-wide problem that requires a co-ordinated County-wide response.

- ❖ The survey findings showed that facilities currently provided on sites are varied according to the type of site that is occupied. Gypsies and Travellers living on official Local Authority owned sites had access to toilets, bathrooms, sheds, utility blocks and laundry facilities. People who owned the site that they lived on had day rooms, and commonly had toilets, bathrooms, laundry facilities and play space. The people with these facilities were most likely to be English Gypsies, largely because they are more likely to occupy authorised Local Authority sites or self owned land with some sort of authorisation.
- ❖ Of those people who do not have facilities on their site the most commonly desired structures are a laundry, play space, toilets, a dayroom and bathrooms, in order of preference. Showmen were most likely to want a shed, toilets, bathroom, laundry facilities and utility block on site, whereas English Gypsies were most keen to have a day room and utility block and play space and Irish Travellers likewise said that they would like a play space.
- ❖ In terms of services provided to sites, those respondents living on official Local Authority sites had water, electricity and/or gas, refuse collection, recycling and drainage provided either individually or communally, as did most of those who lived on self owned sites with planning permission. This again means that English Gypsies have the most services provided to them. The postal service appears to be the most comprehensive provision to Gypsies and Travellers who received post commonly on all types of settled site to all types of Gypsy and Traveller. Those people living on tolerated sites were most likely to receive their post communally. They were also the most likely to have refuse collection occur communally, including recycling.
- ❖ In terms of fire safety, people who owned their own land were most likely to have some sort of fire protection on site, either individually or communally. Overall levels of fire protection are low on all types of site for all types of Gypsy and Traveller. It is perhaps unsurprising then that the most commonly desired service on site was fire protection both communally and individually.
- ❖ There is evidence in the research that some sites have access to a bus stop, but this is by no means comprehensive. The respondents to the survey

stated that they would like bus services within reach of their site. The service most desired by respondents to the survey who did not already have it, was access to a communal water supply. The research shows that New Travellers were least likely to make requests for particular facilities and services on sites which reflects the *'low-impact'* nature of many New Traveller lifestyles (Earle et al, 1994).

- ❖ When defining site need, services and space it is important to consider the management of such sites. The research found that 39% of respondents said that their site was *'managed'* in some sense, either by a private company for the Local Authority, by the Local Authority itself, or by the Gypsies and Travellers themselves. A substantial minority (40%) of those respondents whose sites were managed said that the management was unsatisfactory and 92.8% of dissatisfied respondents were living on official Local Authority sites and were most commonly managed by a private company. Of all the people living on settled sites that were not managed, 89.1% said that they did *not* want the site managed by anyone.
- ❖ With regard to the conditions of sites, the majority of respondents to the survey who lived on settled sites said that the condition of their site was either *'very good'* or *'good'* (63.3%). However, a significant minority (22.2%) felt that their site's condition was *'poor'* or *'very poor'*. Those who were more negative about their site were more likely to live on an official Local Authority site. People living on settled sites particularly reported problems with vermin on site (50%) and this was particularly found to be problematic on authorised Local Authority sites and on unauthorised tolerated sites. Settled respondents also reported a distinct problem with *'fly tipping'* (25%), where members of the public dump rubbish on Gypsy and Traveller sites.
- ❖ Both settled and roadside respondents to the survey commonly said that they had had problems with neighbours or local people (30.5%). Despite the fact that the respondents to the survey clearly stated a range of problems that they had experienced on their sites, the research found that they were very unlikely to report them to either the Local Authority or the Police.
- ❖ In terms of their health, the majority of respondents to this Needs Assessment stated that their health was *'very good'* (42.2%), with only 8.6% of respondents having said that their health was *'very poor'*. When asked about the health status of family members 21.1% of the sample said that they had family members with either *'poor'* or *'very poor'* health. A reasonable number of people, just over half of respondents, responded to a question on disability. Of those people who responded, 10% said that they did have a

*'disability'* (although that might not necessarily be a diagnosed disability) and the majority of these were among the people who had rated their health as *'poor'* or *'very poor'*. Of the people who answered questions about disability in the family, 11% said that they had a family member with a disability. Despite these findings on disability, only 2.3% of all respondents said that they had help at home, and only 2.7% of all respondents said that they would like help which may be an area for some further research. Interestingly, 18.8% of respondents said that they would be likely to need help provided in the home within the next five years which may be something that Supporting People could explore in more depth.

- ❖ When feeling unwell Gypsies and Travellers in Devon utilised a range of services. Principally respondents called on a doctor (83.6%) or the Accident and Emergency (A&E) department of a hospital (64.1%). Some respondents had used their local health visitor (14.8%). New Travellers were most likely to have used an alternative therapist (8.6%). Of note was the fact that Gypsies and Travellers living on the roadside were relatively likely to talk to Traveller Education Services about health matters. Only 41.4% of respondents used a dentist. This finding may simply reflect the national difficulty of attaining National Health dental care.
- ❖ Respondents living on roadside sites were asked about their ability to attain *'follow-on'* appointments for health care. The majority said that they would arrange their movements around such appointments to ensure they could attend and therefore this was not viewed as particularly problematic.
- ❖ Respondents were asked about their positive and negative experiences with health and social care professionals. The results show that 10.9% of respondents said that they had had poor experiences, most commonly with the doctor or the dentist. Of note is the finding that the most common reason given for poor experience by respondents was the evidence of prejudice by the health professional. However, alongside the occasional complaint of poor health practice is a more positive response from respondents. Overall 42.2% of respondents said that they had had a good experience of people in the health services.
- ❖ In terms of education, respondents to the survey had largely been educated to secondary level, with 87.7% of respondents having received a primary education and 76.4% of respondents having received a secondary education. Within these findings though analysis shows that all those people who have described themselves as New Travellers have received secondary education, whereas only 66.7% of traditional Gypsies and Travellers have done so. The

majority of respondents who had attained an education post age 16 were New Travellers, with those respondents commonly also attending University. Importantly, the study found that respondents with school aged children were more likely to have sent their children to school (87.2%) than to have been to school themselves.

- ❖ Respondents also reported having attained a range of skills through informal learning, including reading and writing skills (63.2%), training for work (20.8%) and training for life (18.9%) which commonly came from family relationships. Although the research has shown above that respondents' children are more likely to have gone to school than their parents, informal learning was found in the survey to continue to support formal learning environments, as 42.6% of parents said that their children had learned '*from example*' from within the family home.
- ❖ A significant minority (26.6%) of respondents to the survey (i.e. adults rather than children) said that they would like to receive further education or training. The majority of these would like to attain some sort of manual or craft training (26.5%), however a desire was also shown for literacy and numeracy training (11.8%), further or higher education (8.8%), professional or existing skills development (11.7%) and training in some area of health (5.9%).
- ❖ Policing and crime were also discussed during the survey. Just over half of respondents said that they had had some contact with the Police (52.3%). Of those people the majority said that their experience of contact with the Police had either been '*OK*', '*good*' or '*very good*' (41.8%). However, 29.9% said that their experience of contact with the Police was '*very poor*' as opposed to 17.9% who had said it was '*very good*'. Also, when previously asked about any problems on site, 15% of respondents said they experienced problems with '*police activities*'.
- ❖ One of the most negative outcomes of poor relations between the Police and Gypsies and Travellers is the unwillingness of Gypsies and Travellers to report crime committed against them. When asked about their experience of victimisation 23.4% of respondents said that they had been a victim of crime, however, only 53% of those respondents who had been victims had reported the crime to the Police. When crimes had been reported, a third of respondents said that they had not been acted upon by the Police. The main reason given by respondents for not reporting crimes was that they did not trust the Police. Additionally, half of respondents said that they had experienced racism and most of those who said this were traditional

Gypsies and Travellers as opposed to New Travellers. The reporting rate for this type of crime, at 17.2%, was much lower than for other offences. Only limited information was provided by Gypsies and Travellers on what had happened in these cases, but it is clear that action was taken by the Police in some cases and was not in others. Of those people who did not report racist offending 36.4% said that this was because they did not trust the Police.

- ❖ In terms of the media, 33.6% of respondents to this research said that they had had a *'very poor'* experience of the media. Only 17.1% of respondents said that their experience of the media had been *'good'* or *'very good'*. The key reasons for the poor experiences of Gypsies and Travellers were that there was *'inaccurate reporting'* (34.3%), *'bad image presented'* (27.1%) and *'hostility from the media'* (10%).
- ❖ The survey lastly covered *'other services'*. When asked whether they used other Local Authority services 50.8% of the Gypsy and Traveller respondents to the survey said they did. The most commonly used facilities were, sports facilities (81.5%), libraries (50.8%), museums (27.7%) and leisure facilities (26.2%). Of those people who used sports facilities, 39.6% said that they used the sports facilities for their showers and these respondents were most commonly roadside Gypsies and Travellers. 21.2% of respondents who said they used libraries did so to gain access to a computer as opposed to 15.2% who went to the library to use books.
- ❖ The people who did not use Local Authority services said this was because they either had no need of them (29.8%) or are not interested in them (22.8%), perhaps suggesting the need for Local Authorities to engage in consultation with Gypsies and Travellers to find out what services they would be interested in.
- ❖ A significant minority of respondents (36.7%) said that they had been discriminated against in the provision of services generally. However, on analysing these findings it is clear that respondents are referring to a range of services, both provided by Local Authorities and private business. Respondents had been refused use of the library (19.1%), turned away from swimming pools (12.8%), turned away from launderettes (19.1%), declined insurance (12.8%), declined catalogue shopping (8.5%) and declined banking services (4.3%). Of most note was the fact that a very high proportion of respondents had been turned away from public houses (61.7%) which explicitly breaches the Race Relations Act.

## Section Five: Qualitative Interviews with Gypsies and Travellers

- ❖ The research team met with groups, both from settled sites and at the roadside in order to explore some of the survey themes in more depth. This phase of research also included interviews with some of the *'harder to reach'* groups including Gypsies and Travellers in bricks and mortar accommodation as well as children and young people.
- ❖ The interviews found that in terms of site preferences, although both Sowton and the Ride have a mix of English and Irish Travellers with no obvious issues arising from that, there is a lack of enthusiasm for sites that mix different types of Gypsy and Traveller together. Although not a unanimous view it was suggested that the sharing of sites between different groups had been a problem in the past, and was something to be avoided in the future. In the interviews Gypsies and Travellers clearly expressed their kinship ties and desire to travel with their family and friendship groups. Their cultural expression and way of living may be very different to other types of Gypsy and Traveller, with New Travellers tending to prefer low impact lifestyles that are not formally organised and traditional Gypsies and Travellers having strict rules regarding family behaviour and cleanliness which may explain these findings.
- ❖ Despite the differences between types of Gypsy and Traveller outlined above, the qualitative research found some common needs and wants in terms of site provision. Consistent with the main survey findings, there was a general preference for small sites. The interviews revealed that larger sites were disliked in general as being difficult to manage and often infested with vermin. Further, the root cause of the problems on sites was seen as poor site management. The New Travellers also talked about *'responsible'* and *'irresponsible'* behaviour regarding the use and maintenance of sites and the people who used them.
- ❖ The overall consensus was that sites needed hard standing and taps, and should also be designed in a way that fitted in with a nomadic lifestyle, which may include allowing the use of outside fires and a supply of wood, and also allowing people to carry out their work from the site. Another identified need was for secure postal addresses. As highlighted in the main survey findings the lack of a postal address can cause problems accessing certain services, claiming benefits and having a bank account. It was pointed out that a lack of postal address can mean that some vehicles *'disappear'* off the DVLA database and cannot therefore be insured, which makes them illegal.

- ❖ The qualitative research found a willingness among some Gypsies and Travellers to pay for services and rent for pitches, but it should be noted that this carries with it the danger of falling into a situation where they may not be able to afford to pay any rent or charges as they cannot guarantee earning regular income the whole year round.
- ❖ All the Gypsies and Travellers interviewed reported incidents of harassment and discrimination which ranged from threats and physical violence to verbal abuse. And reports of violence, threatening behaviour and bullying in school were not confined to those living on sites, but were also reported by those in housing.
- ❖ The most significant problem identified throughout the qualitative research in relation to health care is access to a dentist. As mentioned in the survey findings, such difficulty of access to dental services may simply reflect the wider societal problems of gaining dental care. Some other problems were also highlighted in accessing more general health services, including not being registered with a general practitioner which meant that when a problem with health arose, the nearest accident and emergency unit was the usual first point of contact. As noted in the main survey findings, there were also a few reported instances of individuals in the health sector discriminating against Gypsies and Travellers. However, in contrast, there were also a number of reported cases where people were full of praise for the health care they had received.
- ❖ Low levels of literacy were reported among a few of the traditional Gypsies who were interviewed, with moving between schools and bullying within the school being cited as the main reasons for this. The qualitative interviews also revealed what was described as '*moral*' issues for many Gypsy families in sending their children (particularly girls) to secondary schools where sex education and the influence of boys may be seen as culturally inappropriate. Notwithstanding these issues, the main survey findings show that educational attainment has increased amongst the younger generation and the qualitative interviews also reflected that education is seen by parents to be important, with some interviewees, including from traditional Gypsy and Traveller and Showmen families, talking very proudly about the GCSEs, for example, that their children had attained.
- ❖ Consistent with the Gypsy and Traveller Survey findings, most of the interviewees, especially the older generations, reported that they were not informed about what benefits they may be entitled to.

- ❖ In terms of the housed Gypsies and Travellers interviewed, the research found that the reasons for moving into housed accommodation varied considerably as did the type of tenure occupied and the experience of being in bricks and mortar accommodation. One factor that was consistently seen as a positive benefit was the stability that housing offered which enabled children to attend the same school on a regular basis. Less positively, the loss of openness and sense of space that is found when on the road was mentioned by all those who had moved into housed accommodation. Some mentioned how confined and restricted they felt, even after a number of years.
- ❖ The interviews with children focussed on a number of issues relating to schooling as well as attempting to gather some general views that concerned living nomadically. When asked where they wanted to live, among the Gypsies and Traveller children there was an overall preference for the outdoors '*A nice big field*' and '*A field with a horse*' were typical answers, while others said that having space around them was very important. Only one of these children expressed a preference for a house.
- ❖ All types of Gypsy and Traveller children reported that in some instances name calling and bullying were problems for them at school. Further, in some cases it can be seen that name calling and bullying are problems that can lead to children withdrawing from education, however, this is by no means applicable to all the children that were interviewed.
- ❖ The interviews with children found that aspirations for their future were by and large moulded by their cultural experience of living nomadically, which in itself is unsurprising. When asked what they would like to do when older, there was a tendency to mention the acquisition of skills that could be of use in a travelling life. Although some children simply said they wanted to travel, among the girls there was a preference for becoming hairdressers, but there was no comparable obvious choice amongst the boys.

## **Section Six: Stakeholder Interviews**

- ❖ In addition to interviewing Gypsies and Travellers, it was important for this study to ascertain the views of relevant service providers. All partners of the Multi-Agency Needs Assessment Steering Group were invited to be interviewed in their capacity as representatives of the key stakeholder agencies or groups relevant to the study within Devon and the vast majority of partners agreed to take part.

- ❖ Steering Group partners revealed a number of issues surrounding the uptake of and outcomes from services for Gypsies and Travellers. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the key theme to emerge from the interviews was the underlying problem of the lack of accommodation in the form of authorised permanent and transit sites, which Gypsies and Travellers who cannot afford to buy land or who have purchased land without receiving planning permission depend upon to avoid experiencing eviction and/or being '*moved on*'. The inter-relationship between accommodation and service provision was also highlighted during the interviews, resulting in access to services such as education and health care as well as to appropriate benefits being problematic.
- ❖ More generally, from the service provider viewpoint, corresponding effectively with Gypsies and Travellers is difficult due to their changing residential locations. And vice versa, it was felt that for Gypsies and Travellers, knowing where to find relevant contact details in order to access services is problematic when moving to locations where provision of services fall under different local councils.
- ❖ Further underlying issues identified involve the social and political exclusion of Gypsies and Travellers, which is spurred by a lack of cultural understanding by settled populations. In particular it was pointed out that most people perceive Gypsies and Travellers to be a homogenous social group which is inaccurate and potentially unhelpful. It was suggested that lack of public dialogue regarding the needs of and provision for these distinct groups perpetuates cultural misunderstandings between resident and nomadic populations. Further, it is the considered view of the Needs Assessment team that such cultural misunderstandings were evident on the part of some of the service providers who were contacted during the course of the study.
- ❖ Interviewees were also asked what they saw as the main strengths and weaknesses of current provision for Gypsies and Travellers in Devon and many respondents were unsure. There was a consensus among Steering Group members that the Housing Needs Assessment is the first step in understanding what is required. Hence, in many cases judgement was reserved on this issue. However, a limited number of strengths and weaknesses were highlighted during the interviews. In terms of strengths, it was pointed out that Devon's topography provides numerous locations in which permanent and transit sites could be located. In terms of weaknesses, as already mentioned, there is a clear lack of accommodation for Gypsies

and Travellers in Devon – the interviews revealed that this lack of accommodation is a problem in and of itself but that it can also lead to a lack of trust between different parties, preventing long-term relationships developing between local councils and Gypsies and Travellers, which in effect thwarts suitable policy formation. The perception was that barriers are being broken down through engagement in local forums such as the Dartbridge Collective which brings Gypsies and Travellers and service providers together. Notwithstanding these positive developments, however, it was pointed out that difficulties continue to exist and are compounded by the fact that for many service providers, work with Gypsies and Travellers tends to be simply reactive to circumstances that arise. This was identified as a clear weakness and it was suggested that better consultation with Gypsies and Travellers about what they want from service provision would be beneficial.

- ❖ Some collaboration is evident between agencies in the provision of services for Gypsies and Travellers and some examples of good practice have been identified. However, the majority of interviewees claimed that much more could be done in this respect. Poor internal and external communications were highlighted as particular areas of concerns. The perception expressed was that barriers to effective collaboration stem from an insufficient understanding of what currently exists in terms of Gypsy and Traveller provision. And linked to this the interviews identified that a further detrimental effect upon collaboration can be the uncertainty surrounding the exact nature of individual service provider remits.
- ❖ Overall the Needs Assessment was seen as a key stage in the process of improving collaboration between Devon-wide organisations through increasing agency knowledge of current issues. This was viewed as part of a process that will establish a unified common agenda regarding Gypsies and Travellers. These issues are highlighted in the conclusions and recommendations that follow.

## **Section Seven: Conclusions and Recommendations**

- ❖ The overarching aim of the Needs Assessment is to assess the housing and accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers within the Devon-wide area. Subsidiary aims are to identify need within the Gypsy and Traveller communities for learning, health services and other services provided by Local Authorities and their partner organisations; to better understand

current levels of access to services, and any barriers experienced; as well as to increase understanding of how services might best be provided to meet Gypsies and Travellers needs. The findings from each of these aspects of the research have been presented in detail within this report. In terms of housing and accommodation, the study has identified the need for a **minimum of 226 permanent extra pitches** within the County over the period 2006 – 2011 with a further 53 between 2011 and 2016. The inter-relationship between accommodation and wider services has also been highlighted.

- ❖ The drafting of recommendations for addressing these issues has been a consultative process and having conferred with the Housing Needs Assessment Steering Group in their role as representatives of the wider service providers and Local Authorities within the County, the concluding section of the report sets out the research team's final recommendations for addressing these issues, although it will be important to recognise the need for local prioritisation. They fall within three broad headings: pitch provision, service provision and general information sharing and communication.
- ❖ Recommendations for pitch provision:
  - ❖ **Recommendation One:** Local Authorities should Work Together to Distribute New Pitch Provision Appropriately.
  - ❖ **Recommendation Two:** Adopt a Two-Stage Approach to Site Provision which Initially Concentrates on Permanent Pitches.
  - ❖ **Recommendation Three:** Ensure that the Location and Configuration of Sites is Adequate and Appropriate.
  - ❖ **Recommendation Four:** Ensure Flexibility in the Provision of Extra Pitches and Consult with Gypsies and Travellers Regarding Provision for Specific Areas.
  - ❖ **Recommendation Five:** Ensure Diversity and Choice in Provision Where Possible.
  - ❖ **Recommendation Six:** Ensure that Sites are Properly Managed and Looked After.
  - ❖ **Recommendation Seven:** Facilitate Gypsy and Traveller Movement.
  - ❖ **Recommendation Eight:** Make Certain that Accommodation Plans are Handled Sensitively by Local Authorities Regarding the Media.

- ❖ Recommendations for service provision:
  - ❖ **Recommendation Nine:** Improve Access to Health Provision along with Non-Discriminatory Practices.
  - ❖ **Recommendation Ten:** Ensure that Educational Provision is Appropriate to Gypsy and Travellers Needs and Aspirations.
  - ❖ **Recommendation Eleven:** Develop Better Relationships between Gypsies and Travellers and the Police.
  - ❖ **Recommendation Twelve:** Tackle the Denial of Gypsies and Travellers Access to Public Houses.
- ❖ Recommendations for better communication and information sharing:
  - ❖ **Recommendation Thirteen:** Improve Communication Within and Between Service Providers.
  - ❖ **Recommendation Fourteen:** Improve Communication Between Services Providers and Gypsy and Traveller Communities.

## Contents Page

	<i>page</i>
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Research Aims and Objectives	1
1.2 Definitions	2
1.3 Overview of the Report	3
<b>2. Methodology and Methods</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1 Secondary Research	5
2.2 Primary Research	6
2.2.1 The Gypsy and Traveller Survey	6
2.2.2 Qualitative Fieldwork	8
2.2.3 Stakeholder Interviews	8
2.2.4 Development of Recommendations	8
<b>3. Secondary Research</b>	<b>9</b>
3.1 Literature, Legislation and Policy Guidance	9
3.2 National Estimates of Numbers	12
3.3 Regional and Local Estimates of Numbers	13
3.4 The Regional Policy Context	17
3.5 County-wide and Local Plans and Policies	19
3.5.1 Devon	19
3.5.2 District and Unitary Authority Plans	23
3.6 Co-ordination of Gypsy and Traveller Issues within District and Unitary Authorities	23
<b>4. Gypsy and Traveller Survey Findings</b>	<b>27</b>
4.1 Demographics	27
4.2 Income Generation	29
4.3 Site Information	31
4.3.1 Sites Occupied	32
4.3.2 Eviction and Moving on	33
4.3.3 Future Plans	35
4.3.4 Reasons for Travelling	35
4.3.5 Alternative Accommodation	37
4.3.6 Where People Stop when Travelling and Views on Pitch Provision in Devon	38
4.3.7 Site Facilities and Services Provided to Sites	42
4.3.8 Management of Sites and Conditions	45
4.4 Future Pitch Requirements for the County	48
4.5 Health	51
4.6 Education	54
4.7 Policing and Crime	57
4.8 The Media	58
4.9 Other Services	59

<b>5.</b>	<b>Qualitative Interviews with Gypsies and Travellers</b>	<i>page</i> <b>62</b>
5.1	Site Preferences	62
5.2	Discrimination	66
5.3	Benefits	67
5.4	Health Care	67
5.5	Education	68
5.6	Housed Gypsies and Travellers	69
5.7	Interviews with Children	70
<b>6.</b>	<b>Stakeholder Interviews</b>	<b>73</b>
6.1	Views on Gypsy and Traveller Uptake of and Outcomes from Services	73
6.2	Strengths and weaknesses of Current Provision	75
6.3	Collaboration in Service Delivery	76
<b>7.</b>	<b>Conclusion and Recommendations</b>	<b>79</b>
7.1	Pitch Provision	80
7.2	Service Provision	87
7.3	General Information Sharing and Communication	89
<b>8.</b>	<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>Appendices</b>		<b>100</b>
Appendix One	Gypsy and Traveller Interview Schedules	101
Appendix Two	Stakeholder Interview Schedules	149
Appendix Three	District and Unitary Authority Plans	150
Appendix Four	Calculations used for District/Unitary Authority Future Pitch Requirements	161
~ ~ ~ o O o ~ ~ ~		
<b>Index of Tables</b>		
Table One	Count of Gypsy Caravans in Devon: 19th January 2006, last five Counts	14
Table Two	TES Known Children	15
Table Three	Number and Type of Sites throughout Devon	17
Table Four	Local Co-ordination of Gypsy and Traveller Remits	25
Table Five	Self Defined Ethnicity	27
Table Six	What Respondents Do	29
Table Seven	Type of Site Occupied (excluding roadside)	32
Table Eight	Number of Evictions	34
Table Nine	Reasons for Travelling	35
Table Ten	Preferred Number of Pitches	39
Table Eleven	Preferred Type of Pitch	41
Table Twelve	Condition of Sites	46
Table Thirteen	Future Pitch Requirements for Devon	50
Table Fourteen	Health Ratings of Respondents	51

Table Fifteen	Health Services Used by Respondents	<i>page</i> 53
Table Sixteen	Type of Education	55
Table Seventeen	Experiences with the Media	59

~ ~ ~ o O o ~ ~ ~

**Index of Charts**

Chart One	Facilities Provided to the Gypsy and Traveller Community – by Type of Site	43
Chart Two	Services Provided to the Gypsy and Traveller Community – by Type of Site	44
Chart Three	Problems Experienced on Settled Sites	47
Chart Four	Use of Other Local Authority Services	60

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# Final Report

## Devon-wide Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment

### 1. Introduction

In February 2006 the Social Research & Regeneration Unit (SRRU) was commissioned, in conjunction with Dr Zoë James from the University of Plymouth, to conduct a Needs Assessment of Gypsies and Travellers in Devon. The study area includes the Districts of East Devon, Exeter, Mid Devon, North Devon, South Hams, Teignbridge, Torridge and West Devon as well as the Unitary Authorities of Plymouth and Torbay.

The research was commissioned by Plymouth City Council's Safer Communities Department on behalf of the Local Authorities in Devon and was managed by a multi-agency Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Steering Group.<sup>2</sup> It was also supported by a team of experts drawn from both within and outside the University<sup>3</sup> – including from the Gypsy and Traveller communities. The study responds to the statutory duty that has been placed on Local Authorities to assess Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs and to develop strategies to meet those needs. This report presents the key findings from the Needs Assessment.

#### 1.1 Research Aims and Objectives

The overarching aim of the project is to assess the housing needs of Gypsies and Travellers within the County. Housing now refers to any type of accommodation that someone refers to as a '*home*' (Housing Act 2004) which is why Housing Authorities are responsible for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation as well.

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<sup>2</sup> This consists of Plymouth City Council, Devon County Council, Torbay Borough Council, South Hams District Council, West Devon Borough Council, Mid Devon District Council, East Devon District Council, North Devon District Council, Torridge District Council, and Exeter City Council, as well as eight PCT areas, Dartmoor National Park Authority, Devon & Cornwall Constabulary and Devon Racial Equality Council.

<sup>3</sup> This includes Dr Robert Home from Anglia Ruskin University and Dr Margaret Greenfields from Buckingham Chilterns University, who were responsible for, amongst others, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough needs assessment.

It is intended that the information gathered will also be used more generally to inform strategies and plans to ensure the inclusion of Gypsy and Traveller communities, and to close the gaps in the outcomes that persist in: education, employment, health, safety, accommodation (including accessing support to allow people to maintain their chosen accommodation) and the environment. As such the Needs Assessment encompasses the following five objectives:

- ❖ To understand the demographic profile of the Gypsy and Traveller Community in Devon, household formation within it, accommodation and housing needs and routes into accommodation and housing;
- ❖ To assess the current and potential future need within the Gypsy and Traveller communities in Devon for learning, health services and other services provided by Local Authorities and their partner organisations;
- ❖ To increase understanding of how services might best be provided to meet Gypsies and Travellers needs, such as how to make services and accommodation accessible to Gypsies and Travellers;
- ❖ To understand current levels of access to services, and identify barriers to access (including specific exclusion via eligibility criterias);
- ❖ To understand the housing support needs of the Gypsy and Traveller Community in Devon.

## 1.2 Definitions

Romany Gypsies (English, Scottish, Welsh), Irish Travellers, New Travellers and Showmen all constitute people who, *'have been or will be associated with a potentially nomadic way of life'* (Morris and Clements, 2002). However, disagreement has surrounded any attempt to provide an official definition of who is a Gypsy or Traveller. Legal definitions focus on different aspects of Gypsies and Travellers lives, depending on the context for the required definition. Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers are recognised as racial groups and as such are protected under race relations legislation. However, within planning and trespass law and policy guidance a Gypsy or Traveller is defined as, *'persons of*

*nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin'* thus including New Travellers within the general grouping of Gypsies and Travellers. Showmen are again treated differently within planning and enforcement legislation. Similarly, it is impossible to define those Gypsies and Travellers who have moved into housing as defined by any laws relating to sites, planning or nomadism overall.

The (former) Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) guidance on carrying out accommodation assessments recognises the difficulties of definition. It notes the requirement for comprehensive evaluations of need and therefore uses a broad definition of Gypsies and Travellers in order to ensure that all people are captured, including Gypsies and Travellers that have moved into housing.

The ODPM definition of Gypsies and Travellers that has been followed for the purpose of the present study, but which does not affect their definition in relation to planning or enforcement law is:

*'Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, and all other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or caravan dwelling' (ODPM, 2006:9).*

### **1.3 Overview of the Report**

This draft report sets out the Needs Assessment findings and recommendations. It forms part of a consultative process which will result in the production of a final report, scheduled for late November 2006.

Section Two of the report outlines the methodology and methods that were used and Section Three takes the reader through the relevant secondary research which contextualises the Needs Assessment findings. Section Four presents the Gypsy and Traveller Survey data – the core component of the Needs Assessment - which includes the demographics of the Gypsy and Traveller population in Devon and predicted growth levels, Gypsy and Traveller work patterns and income generation, sites and site matters, leading into the future pitch requirements for the County along with the research findings on health and education, policing and crime, the media and *'other'* services. This is followed in Section Five by an analysis of the qualitative fieldwork that followed.

Section Six presents the findings from the service provider (stakeholder) interviews and Section Seven concludes the report with an overall summary of the Needs Assessment findings for Devon, along with recommendations relating to each of the key research objectives.

## 2. Methodology and Methods

The Devon-wide Needs Assessment is based on a pluralistic methodology that incorporates both quantitative and qualitative methods, utilising primary and secondary data sources. It broadly follows the Cambridgeshire study which was identified by the (then) Office of the Deputy Prime Minister as a model of good practice and the research team has benefited from the support and expert advice of those responsible for the Cambridgeshire Study throughout the process. It essentially follows the innovative practice of training members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities to administer a Needs Assessment Survey – the core component of the study - with the quality control and analysis functions being undertaken by the academic team. This model of good practice allows capacity to be built amongst Gypsies and Travellers and is thought to promote ‘*stakeholding*’ in the finished project.

This section of the report details the key stages of the research process and the specific methods that have been used.

### 2.1 Secondary Research

The secondary research conducted for the Devon-wide Needs Assessment includes an examination of literature and policy guidance in order to contextualise the study and provide information on best practice in assessing the needs of Gypsies and Travellers. It makes reference to books, legal reports and research papers from a variety of sources including academia, government, the NHS and bodies such as the Commission for Racial Equality, OFSTED and the Council of Europe as well as reports of completed needs assessments from elsewhere in the country. This phase of the research was used to inform the design of the questionnaire used in the survey and to facilitate the analysis of the primary data within a wide, comparative context.

An examination of recognised national, regional and local data sources that estimate the Gypsy and Traveller population was also undertaken. This was supplemented by data and information held locally by relevant service providers on the numbers and ethnic groupings of Gypsies and Travellers within their area, including the location of temporary

stopping places (whether currently used or not).<sup>4</sup> The purpose of this was to start building a profile of Gypsies and Travellers within Devon and effectively '*map*' them for use as an initial sampling frame from which further contacts could be '*snowballed*'. This data provided a highly valuable resource for the research team in the preparatory phases of the Needs Assessment and formed the basis of future projections for the area.

Additionally, the research team reviewed the regional and local strategies within which the Devon-wide Needs Assessment is situated, and examined the structural organisation of Gypsy and Traveller remits within the relevant Local Authorities. This review has informed the research team as to how councils configure their management of Gypsies and Travellers and has provided some evidence of practice within individual Districts.

## 2.2 Primary Research

### 2.2.1 The Gypsy and Traveller Survey

The core component of the Needs Assessment was a Gypsy and Traveller Survey. Based on the good practice identified through the secondary research, including from the Cambridgeshire study, the research team chose to develop two different interview schedules for the Needs Assessment (each using a structured questionnaire style format) – one for '*settled*' Gypsies & Travellers and one for those at the roadside.<sup>5</sup> This was important because the circumstances of those in different settings may vary considerably and this approach enabled the questions to be tailored more appropriately to reflect their situations. The interview schedules underwent several revisions prior to finalisation, incorporating feedback from members of the Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Steering Group as well as, importantly, from the

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<sup>4</sup> Legally there is only a distinction between '*authorised*' and '*unauthorised*' Gypsy and Traveller sites. Authorised sites are those that have planning permission that are either publicly or privately owned. Unauthorised sites are any sites that do not have planning permission wherever they are. In practice however, there tends to be a distinction between more settled sites and those used as a '*temporary stop*' on the '*roadside*'. This is partly due to the government policy of toleration of unauthorised encampments.

<sup>5</sup> A comparable interview schedule was also developed for use with those in '*bricks and mortar*' accommodation which formed part of the subsequent phase of the research.

interviewers that were recruited to administer the survey. The final versions are included at Appendix One.

Six Gypsies and Travellers were recruited and trained to administer the survey. Of these, one was local to Devon and the rest came from elsewhere in the Country including neighbouring Cornwall, Hampshire and Kent. A mixed group in terms of gender, age and ethnicity were recruited (including Gypsies, Irish Travellers and New Travellers) thus enabling the research team to exercise the utmost sensitivity in matching interviewers with communities and respondents when administering the survey.

A training day was held for the interviewers at the University of Plymouth in March 2006. As well as providing the interviewers with an introduction to the Needs Assessment and basic training in interview techniques, part of the training day involved a discussion of the interview schedules both in terms of the appropriateness of the questions and ease of use of the forms. This was invaluable to the research team, providing unique insight into the issues at hand.

The survey itself was administered between April and June 2006 using a snowball approach in that interviewers were each given a set of known sites (comprising authorised and unauthorised settlements including temporary stopping places) in the first instance, and asked to use the contacts generated in order to access other Gypsies and Travellers. The sites allocated to the interviewers were selected, to the extent that it was possible, as a representative sample of the known Gypsy and Traveller population, based on the mapping exercise that had previously been undertaken.

The vast majority of interviews were conducted by the Gypsy and Traveller interviewers. However, in some instances a member of the SRRU research team accompanied one of the interviewers to a site and on a limited number of occasions a member of the SRRU team conducted the actual interview itself. All interviewers were provided with information packs developed by the Devon Racial Equality Council to give to Gypsies and Travellers requiring additional information and/or support as a result of issues raised during the interview. This proved to be an excellent resource for the Needs Assessment.

Data generated through the survey was coded and entered into the standard software, the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS).

### **2.2.2 Qualitative Fieldwork**

The Gypsy and Traveller Survey was followed by a period of qualitative fieldwork over the summer of 2006 in which the research team conducted a limited number of additional meetings with Gypsies and Travellers, individually and/or in family groups, to explore in more depth particular themes to have emerged from the survey. In-depth interviews were also held with some of the hardest to reach Gypsies and Travellers as part of this phase of research. This included people living at the roadside, people living in *'bricks and mortar'* accommodation as well as children and young people, with a particular focus on their needs and aspirations for education. This latter element was facilitated through Traveller Education Services (TES) who made introductions to a number of families with children, and who also enabled members of the research team to access families through the Barnstable Fair.

### **2.2.3 Stakeholder Interviews**

All partners of the Steering Group were invited to be interviewed in their capacity as representatives of the key stakeholder agencies or groups relevant to the study within Devon. The vast majority of partners agreed to take part and the interviews were conducted either face-to-face or by telephone, and were based upon a standard interview schedule which can be found at Appendix Two. The interviews largely focused on service provision and stakeholder perceptions of Gypsy and Traveller uptake of and outcomes from local services as well as examples of collaborative working.

### **2.2.4 Development of Recommendations**

The culmination of the research is presented within this draft report by way of a series of recommendations for meeting the current and future needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Devon. This final aspect of the research is part of a consultative process in order to ensure that conclusions are aligned with existing plans and capacities, and it will ultimately result in the production of a final report along with a series of dissemination events, scheduled for late Autumn 2006.

### 3. Secondary Research

This section of the report provides a brief overview of the literature, legislation and policy guidance that contextualises the Needs Assessment and it also examines the relevant national, regional and local data sources that estimate the Gypsy and Traveller population. It then goes on to review the regional and local strategies within which the Devon-wide Needs Assessment is situated, and discusses the structural organisation of Gypsy and Traveller remits within the relevant Local Authorities. This secondary research is important in and of itself but it has also enabled the research team to develop a survey that effectively engages with Gypsies and Travellers within the county.

#### 3.1 Literature, Legislation and Policy Guidance

A number of studies have been carried out that describe the cultures of Gypsies and Travellers and which inform our general understanding of their needs as communities (Okely, 1983, Fraser, 1995). There is an extensive history of economic nomadism within Romany Gypsy and Irish Traveller communities. This nomadic experience has resulted in a rich cultural expression that places great importance on family ties, community living, strict cleanliness rules and a general aversion to *'bricks and mortar'* dwelling. Despite this aversion many traditional Gypsies and Travellers do now live in housing for a number of reasons including ill health and the need to access services. It has also been argued that over the past 50 years government legislation and policy has resulted in Gypsies and Travellers feeling compelled to move into housing due to the closure of sites and poor conditions when living on the road (Clark and Greenfields, 2006). Showmen similarly have an history of economic nomadism supported by ancient charters for fairs, that has resulted in them having developed their own unique culture. New Travellers are a more contemporary nomad whose travelling was borne of the music festival culture of the 1970s and was inspired by the traditions of Gypsies and other traditional Travellers. Previously they have been referred to as *'New Age'* Travellers, associated with the hippy movement and *'New Age'* ideals of the 1970s. Such a label inappropriately defines the New Travellers who live nomadically today who represent a broad range of people from varying backgrounds (Webster and Millar, 2001). Despite the significant differences between these groups of Traveller, there are some persistent commonalities that have drawn them together in the

past decade: their common experience of poor health, welfare and education and a range of laws that have affected their ability to stop on land for any period of time.<sup>6</sup>

The needs of Gypsies and Travellers have been addressed in numerous fashions over the past 50 years. Legislation and central government policy have driven changes in local provision for Gypsies and Travellers since the closure of the commons via the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960. In 1968, a duty was placed on Local Authorities to provide sites for Gypsies and Travellers, but this duty was repealed by the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 (CJPOA), which also limited the ability of Gypsies and Travellers to stop on any land that they did not own and have planning permission to reside on. Following the CJPOA, Gypsies and Travellers increasingly found themselves living outside the law – residing on land illegally and increasingly moving and living in large groups due to the lack of sites to stop and/or stay on (Bucke and James, 1998). Those Gypsies and Travellers who could afford to buy land to live on to resolve their search for legitimate sites have experienced great difficulty in attaining the required planning permission to stay on that land (Jones et al, 2004).

The number of official sites for Gypsies and Travellers provided by Local Authorities or via private landlords have also diminished over the years (Niner, 2003). This has meant that Gypsies and Travellers are evicted from their stopping places regularly by Local Authorities and Police. Such eviction has been estimated to cost the public purse at least £6 million a year according to Morris and Clements in 2002 or up to £18 million a year in legal costs alone according to the Commission for Racial

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<sup>6</sup> For an overview of issues relating to Gypsies and Travellers some particular texts stand out. Morris and Clements (2002) analysis of the application of *'best value'* principles in managing Gypsy and Traveller accommodation provides a rationale for an effective policy of national site provision. Johnson and Willers (Eds) (2004) present a text which comprehensively describes the law relating to Gypsies and Travellers that has been informed by their many years experience acting as lawyers for them. Most recently Clark and Greenfields (2006) have published an overview of the experiences of Gypsies and Travellers that is likely to prove an excellent resource for both the communities themselves and those people working with them. For information on specific Gypsy and Traveller communities a range of texts is also available such as Kenrick's (1993) historical portrait of Gypsy identity, Earle et al's (1994) description of New Traveller culture and Power's (2004) presentation of Irish Travellers in England.

Equality (CRE) in 2006. The social cost of the lack of available sites for Gypsies and Travellers and regular eviction exceeds the fiscal costs, however.

As provision of sites has diminished, there has been a direct rise in health and welfare problems for Gypsies and Travellers. A variety of studies show that there are high levels of infant mortality and low life expectancy rates for Gypsies and Travellers (Hawes, 1997, Hajioff and McKee, 2000, and Parry et al, 2004). Gypsies and Travellers have also attained poorly in schooling and are perceived as the most *'at risk'* group in education (Ofsted, 1996, 1999). Thus, the accommodation situation of Gypsies and Travellers might be described as *'in crisis'* in contemporary Britain, and Gypsies and Travellers are consequently experiencing poor health and welfare as a result. Specifically in Devon, the *'Travellers Wellbeing'* report produced by the Devon Health Forum in 2003 presents how these issues affect Gypsies and Travellers in the Devon-wide area and how multi-agency approaches could tackle them.

The CRE has recently carried out research into the engagement of Local Authorities with Gypsies and Travellers to promote good race relations, while also treating them equally alongside other residents (Commission for Racial Equality, 2006). This research found that nearly half of all councils were insufficiently acting for Gypsies and Travellers, and two thirds of councils said that there were poor relations between Gypsies and Travellers and the settled population. The poor relations between settled and nomadic communities is cited by the CRE as associated with unauthorised encampments and is exacerbated by extremely negative presentations of Gypsies and Travellers by politicians and the media (Richardson, 2006).

Recent government legislation and policy have been created to resolve the problems briefly highlighted above. The Housing Act 2004 requires Local Authorities to carry out accommodation assessments and develop accommodation strategies for all residents of their areas. It requires Gypsies and Travellers needs to be addressed within this strategy and assessment. Alongside this legislated requirement has been the creation of ODPM Circular 1/2006 that provides new guidance for Local Authorities on planning in relation to Gypsies and Travellers and guidance on the completion of needs assessments. This guidance requires councils to recognise their shared commitment to Gypsies and Travellers across areas, and to ensure all stakeholders are engaged in the

process of evaluation to ensure effective action can be taken to provide for Gypsies and Travellers in the future in order to minimise the social and fiscal costs of unauthorised encampments in the past.

A report by the Centre for Urban and Regional Studies at the University of Birmingham for the ODPM (2003) estimated that there was a need for 1,000-2,000 more residential caravan pitches, and 2000-2500 more transit or stopping places, over a five-year period in England. As has been highlighted in the recent Cambridge Sub-region Needs Assessment:

*'The figure of 3000-4500 pitches represents 600-900 per annum, but in the immediately following two-year period (January 2003/January 2005) there was a net gain of authorised over unauthorised caravans of 400, or 200 a year. If caravan numbers are converted to pitches at a rate of 1.5 caravans per pitch, this represents a net gain of 140 pitches per annum, only 15-23% of the numbers required to meet the annual need as identified' (Home, R and Greenfields, M; 2006 p4).*

### **3.2 National Estimates of Numbers**

The ODPM estimates that Gypsies & Travellers represent approximately 0.6% of the population (ODPM, 2006:8). Local Authorities have a duty under the 'Caravan Count', which was introduced in 1979, to make bi-annual returns on the number of Gypsy caravans in their area. The purpose of the Count is to estimate the size of the Gypsy population. However, it should be noted that the data suffers from a number of problems which raise concerns about its accuracy (see Niner 2004). For example:

- ❖ Methods of gathering the data tend to vary between Local Authorities, as does the commitment to the process.
- ❖ The definitions used are inconsistent. In particular, not all Local Authorities include New Travellers within the Count.
- ❖ It does not include Gypsies or Travellers who are housed.
- ❖ Official Counts record caravans, rather than numbers of people, and a caravan can range from a small tourer to a large twin-unit mobile home.
- ❖ There can be difficulties in detecting mobile groups.

- ❖ Lack of inclusion of Gypsies and Travellers in the count process results in mistrust and decreased accuracy.

These issues tend to result in an under-estimation of numbers. Notwithstanding the difficulties, however, the Caravan Count provides a useful starting point and the official Counts currently record 15,746 Gypsy caravans in England (Department for Communities and Local Government, January 2006) which is estimated to represent in excess of 10,000 families, or 40,000 individuals. Overall estimates of the Gypsy and Traveller population, including people living in housing, suggest that there are around 250,000 Gypsies and Travellers living in England (Clark and Greenfields, 2006).

### **3.3 Regional and Local Estimates of Numbers**

It is estimated that caravan numbers have increased by 7% and unauthorised encampments by 14% since July 2002 in the South West (South West Housing strategy 2005).

According to the January 2006 Caravan Count data there were 2,079 caravans (including those on authorised and unauthorised sites) in the South West of England, 229 of which were within the County of Devon, with a further 21 in the Unitary Authority of Plymouth (Department for Communities and Local Government, January 2006).

Table One presents the data for each District and Unitary Authority in Devon for the last five Counts, as at January 2006.

**Table One: Count of Gypsy Caravans in Devon: 19th January 2006, last five Counts**

District	Count	No. of Caravans		No. of Caravans on Sites on Gypsies' own land		No. of Caravans on Sites on land not owned by Gypsies		Total
		Socially rented	Private	'Tolerated'	'Not Tolerated'	'Tolerated'	'Not Tolerated'	
Devon	Jan 2006	19	102	22	14	40	32	229
	July 2005	19	113	25	4	76	40	277
	Jan 2005	19	93	9	5	86	23	235
	July 2004	20	115	0	0	19	100	254
	Jan 2004	22	104	0	0	20	79	225
East Devon	Jan 2006	7	11	14	0	0	0	32
	July 2005	8	12	17	0	2	0	39
	Jan 2005	8	0	0	0	0	18	26
	July 2004	8	3	0	0	0	36	47
	Jan 2004	9	0	0	0	0	10	19
Exeter	Jan 2006	12	0	0	0	0	0	12
	July 2005	11	0	0	0	0	18	29
	Jan 2005	11	0	0	0	0	0	11
	July 2004	12	0	0	0	0	8	20
	Jan 2004	13	0	0	0	0	0	13
Mid Devon	Jan 2006	0	34	0	1	1	0	36
	July 2005	0	30	0	3	1	0	34
	Jan 2005	0	32	3	3	1	0	39
	July 2004	0	30	0	0	0	5	35
	Jan 2004	0	30	0	0	1	0	31
North Devon	Jan 2006	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	July 2005	0	0	0	0	0	3	3
	Jan 2005	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	July 2004	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
	Jan 2004	0	0	0	0	5	0	5
South Hams	Jan 2006	0	0	0	12	0	31	43
	July 2005	0	0	0	0	13	0	13
	Jan 2005	0	0	0	0	20	0	20
	July 2004	0	0	0	0	12	0	12
	Jan 2004	0	12	0	0	12	8	32
Teignbridge	Jan 2006	0	57	8	1	30	0	96
	July 2005	0	71	8	1	60	0	140
	Jan 2005	0	61	6	2	55	0	124
	July 2004	0	82	0	0	5	50	137
	Jan 2004	0	62	0	0	2	60	124
Torrige	Jan 2006	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	July 2005	0	0	0	0	0	10	10
	Jan 2005	0	0	0	0	0	5	5
	July 2004	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Jan 2004	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
West Devon	Jan 2006	0	0	0	0	9	0	9
	July 2005	0	0	0	0	0	9	9
	Jan 2005	0	0	0	0	10	0	10
	July 2004	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Jan 2004	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Plymouth UA	Jan 2006	21	0	0	0	0	0	21
	July 2005	21	0	0	0	0	0	21
	Jan 2005	24	0	0	0	0	0	24
	July 2004	22	0	0	0	0	0	22
	Jan 2004	22	0	0	0	0	0	22
Torbay UA	Jan 2006	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	July 2005	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Jan 2005	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	July 2004	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Jan 2004	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Department for Communities and Local Government, January 2006

It should be noted that from the caravan count figures presented here fluctuations can be seen in the number of caravans in Devon (including Plymouth) across the different counts between 2004 and 2006 with slightly more (250) in January 2006 than in January 2004 (247). At the same time there has been a drop in the number of legally provided pitches through either Local Authority or private provision. As described above the Caravan Count data can be inaccurate, particularly in relation to unauthorised encampments. Therefore, it is the officially recognised caravans that are most likely to be accurately recorded. Hence these figures are of particular concern as legal provision has reduced in the last two years and toleration of unauthorised encampments has increased.

Other local sources of data include the Traveller Education Service (TES) annual reports. The annual report for the academic year 2004/5 indicates that there was a total of 580 children aged 0-16 who had been contacted by TES or who were known to be in the county. Of these 454 were in Devon, 120 were in Plymouth, 48 were in Torbay and a further six were unspecified (please note that some children appear in two or more areas, hence the geographical breakdown totals to more than 580). This is interesting because due to the methodological differences in data collection there are some anomalies between this data and that gathered through the Caravan Count. For example, the TES data clearly shows Gypsy and Traveller children in Torbay which the Count does not.

The TES report also breaks down the data by Traveller groups. Table Two represents the numbers of children who had been contacted by TES or who were known to be in the area by their Traveller group.

**Table Two: TES Known Children**

Traveller Group	No. of children 2004/5	No. of children 2003/4
Gypsy Travellers	274	283
Fairground Travellers	84	79
Circus Travellers	20	23
Irish Travellers	92	85
New Travellers	97	99
European Roma Travellers	13	16
Unspecified	2	0

Source: Devon Consortium Traveller Education Service Annual Report 2006

In addition, all Local Authorities and the Police were contacted during the preparatory phase of the Needs Assessment and asked to provide data on the numbers and ethnic groupings of Gypsies and Travellers within their area, including the location of temporary stopping places (whether currently used or not). The purpose of this was to start building a profile of Gypsies and Travellers within Devon for use as an initial sampling frame from which further contacts could be 'snowballed'. The nature and quality of the information varied between the District and Unitary Authorities, highlighting inconsistencies in approach within the County. For example, some areas had well co-ordinated and tabulated information on the Gypsies and Travellers living in their areas and the status of any planning applications in existence or pending. Mid-Devon, for instance was found to have good recording practice. Those authorities with the most effective recording systems held them within their planning team. However, a range of information was also found to be held in other departments such as environmental health in some cases.

The Police also provided useful information on unauthorised encampments, though this information was rarely formally recorded in any way resulting in rather patchy information that was difficult to accord to specific sites or encampments. The law does not require the Police to record sites, nor does it require records of Police directions to leave land.

Table Three presents a County-wide overview of the data and information provided to the research team. This was a highly valuable resource for the Needs Assessment and it is of note that, collectively, the Local Authorities have a good overview of the location of Gypsies and Travellers within the county. Very few 'hidden pockets' of Gypsies and Travellers were found during the Needs Assessment Study.

Within this overall picture it is of note that over the past 10 years the Dartmoor National Park Authority has been notified on 26 occasions of unauthorised use by Travellers of land within the boundaries of the National Park which covers part of the Districts of West Devon, Teignbridge and South Hams. This has involved some 19 different sites. Some of the sites were on common land covered by the Dartmoor Commons Act where parking overnight of vehicles (including caravans) is illegal under the by-laws. The vast majority of these instances involved transient use and no legal action proved necessary.

**Table Three: Number and Type of Sites throughout Devon**

All Districts		
Type of Site	Number available	Number of families occupying site
Local Authority residential site	3	29
Authorised privately owned site	49	101
Unauthorised site	53	155
Temporary stop	91	
<b>Total sites ( excluding temporary stops)</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>285</b>

Source: data provided by the authorities in Devon for the Needs Assessment

Local authority residential sites and authorised privately owned sites are those sites officially deemed legal through their having planning permission of some sort. Unauthorised sites are those that are settled sites on any land but do not have planning permission. Temporary stops are places that have been occupied, generally on the 'roadside', for only a short period of time while Gypsies and Travellers have been in transit. They are unauthorised sites, but are distinct here due to their temporary nature. This information provides the basis for calculations on additional pitch requirements that are used later in the report. Please note that an assumption has been made from the District data held that one vehicle equals one family, unless otherwise specified, and that there are two adults per family where just the number of people have been given.

### 3.4 The Regional Policy Context

The draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) (2006) is the key document for planning, monitoring and managing future development in the South West. It has been produced by the South West Regional Assembly (SWRA) who were designated the Regional Planning Body for the South West in September 2004. The RSS aims to provide the framework for dealing with population growth and its implications for the region over the next 20 years in the most sustainable way. In 2008 the RSS will replace the Regional Planning Guidance for the South West (RPG10) as well as the county structure plans for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Somerset, Wiltshire and the former Avon area. It will effectively set the regional planning context up to 2026 and also be used to inform the progression of Local Development

Frameworks (LDFs) which are the local planning strategies produced by councils.

Section Six of the RSS sets out '*transitional arrangements*' for the provision for Gypsies and Travellers within the region. Although the Regional Planning Body did not consider there to be sufficiently robust information on which to establish the required pitch numbers at District level at the time of writing (i.e. until the Needs Assessments have been completed) it summarises the regional context as follows:

- ❖ The extent of existing provision in the region is approximately 550 pitches (based on Caravan Count data for January 2005);
- ❖ Based on the average number of unauthorised encampments per Strategic Planning Authority (between 2003 and 2005) South Gloucestershire, the city of Bristol and North Somerset Unitary Authority areas have relatively high numbers of unauthorised sites, along with parts of Devon, Gloucestershire and Dorset counties;
- ❖ An interim estimate of the additional pitch requirements at regional level is around 1,100 pitches. This figure is based on First Detailed proposals from draft Needs Assessments and from Caravan Count data.

The pitch requirements are intended to serve as a monitoring basis until all Needs Assessments have been produced (estimated for 2007) at which time it is anticipated that there will be a single review of the Draft RSS (SWRA 2006 p133). The ODPM planning circular 01/2006 clearly outlines how the RSS must be developed into Development Plan Documents (DPD) that form part of the LDF. Within DPDs there must be specific site allocations made for Gypsies and Travellers, based on the original Needs Assessment of Gypsies and Travellers that have been fed into and evaluated by the RSS. The circular states that it is important for Local Authorities to recognise that DPDs must include provision for all those in need of sites in their area, rather than only those defined within planning law as Gypsies and Travellers. In relation to Devon specifically the circular is particularly useful in providing clear guidance on provision of sites in rural areas and the countryside.

Closely linked to the RSS is the Regional Housing Strategy (RHS) (2005 – 16). Prepared by the South West Housing Body, this strategy identifies

the priorities for housing in the South West and makes recommendations to Ministers on the allocation of capital investment and it also sets housing issues within the wider strategic context of planning and economic growth. The Regional Housing Pot allocation for the South West stands at £158m for 2006-07, and £203m for 2007-08 and Ministers specifically require regions to consider, amongst other things, the needs of Gypsies and Travellers in their investment plans. As such, Gypsies and Travellers feature within the strategy. Of particular note, Action Six states that the Housing Corporation will use allocations from the Regional Housing Pot to provide capital for the provision or refurbishment of additional transit, or settled pitches.

The strategy also states that the ODPM (as was) will be providing an additional resource in the South West to help facilitate the delivery of new sites, initially to be based at Government of the South West (GOSW).

Also of note here in relation to the Needs Assessment is the Planning Policy Guidance on Housing (PPG3) which, in recognition of the difficulties in securing affordable housing, includes '*rural exception*' guidance. This essentially permits exceptions to the usual form of granting permission for the development of affordable housing in certain rural contexts for a defined social purpose.

### **3.5 County-wide and Local Plans and Policies**

Beneath the overarching Regional Strategies, the needs of Gypsies and Travellers also feature in a number of county-wide as well as local plans and policies. These provide an important contextual backdrop to the study and are particularly instructive in terms of the treatment of, and importance attached to, Gypsies and Traveller issues in more localised arenas.

#### **3.5.1 Devon**

Devon County Council's (DCC) Devon Structure Plan First Review 1995-2011 contains two brief policies directly relevant to Gypsies and Travellers; Policy H8 and Policy H9 both of which relate to sites for Gypsies and Travellers. Policy H8 states that:

*'...adequate site provision should be made in Local Plans for Gypsies residing in or resorting to Devon where a clear need can be established'* and Policy H9 states that *'in determining the suitability of sites and locations for Gypsies, regard will be had to:*

- 1. the suitability of the site in terms of access, servicing, privacy, screening and the proximity to dwellings;*
- 2. the availability of local services and facilities (e.g. shops, schools, transport etc); and*
- 3. the impact on the locality, both visually and in terms of noise and disturbance'.*

In 2001, however this policy was superseded by the revised 2001-2006 plan which omits reference to Gypsies and Travellers altogether. DCC are awaiting the recommendations of the Gypsies and Travellers Committee before they set their policy for Gypsy and Traveller communities. The Gypsies and Travellers Committee is setting a new policy framework and the March 2006 Gypsies and Travellers Committee Report acknowledged that there is a lack of authorised sites within Devon which is being addressed as a matter of urgency. It makes reference to the Housing Needs Assessment, amongst other developments, in this regard.

It is of note that a Devon-wide protocol for unauthorised encampments is also in the process of being produced, on the recommendation of the Travellers Health Forum. It responds to the fact that there has been an increase since 2001 in the number of unauthorised encampments – particularly during the summer months – within the countryside and towns as well as on commercially owned property in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay. Further, it explains how experience has shown that there can be difficulties in establishing which agency or landowner should be involved in reacting to specific encampments, thus increasing the potential for inconsistent decisions to be made. The protocol uses the relevant legal provisions and government guidelines, interpreting them for use locally to develop appropriate policy, practice and procedures for the various organisations involved in dealing with unauthorised encampments including a process chart of *'who does what and when'*. The protocol also identifies examples of good practice and outlines the essential cultural features of Gypsy and Traveller life that should be

taken into consideration by all visiting officers and decision makers. It is the understanding of the research team that the protocol has been finalised and it is the responsibility of the Forum to co-ordinate its adoption within the Local Authorities.

At the county level there is also some evidence of current and future collaborative action by Devon County Council (DCC) in terms of service provision for Gypsies and Travellers. The Devon Youth Service Plan (2003 – 2006), for example, highlights support for inclusion work with Complementary Education (full-time education for all permanently excluded pupils), Education Welfare Services and Travellers' Education (through youth work providing outreach work to Traveller communities e.g. on the fringe of Exeter).<sup>7</sup> Inclusive education for Traveller children is also included within the objectives of the DCC *'Excellence for All Children'* plan (2005-2008) in terms of implementing strategies to raise the achievement of various excluded groups of children. It aims by April 2007 to have agreed a plan in conjunction with the Devon-wide Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment Project to raise aspirations and expectations among the Gypsy and Traveller community and within the educational and school system.

Other relevant county-wide policies include:

### **Devon and Cornwall Constabulary Unauthorised Camping Policy**

The Devon and Cornwall Constabulary Unauthorised Camping Policy (2005) provides a framework in which Police Officers and other Police Staff should deal with incidents of unauthorised encampments. It outlines Police powers and specific issues regarding policing tactics. It recommends a co-ordinated and consistent approach throughout the force paying particular attention to striking a balance between the needs of all parties involved as well as taking into consideration the differing needs of the Gypsy and Traveller communities.

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<sup>7</sup> *Travellers Making Connexions: A good practice guide for multi-agency working* (2005) has also been produced through collaboration between Connexions Devon and Cornwall, Devon County Council, Plymouth City Council and Torbay Council. In essence the document provides information (including on legal issues), case studies and good practice guidance on the most useful and appropriate ways of engaging young people from the Traveller community.

Each Basic Command Unit is recommended to have in place a Liaison Group and agreed strategy for the management of unauthorised camping. It further recommends that the strategy should:

- ❖ Be formulated in consultation with all relevant groups including representatives of the Gypsy and Traveller Communities wherever possible.
- ❖ Have due cognisance of the holistic issues surrounding unauthorised camping, including effects on housing policy, education as well as health and welfare provision.
- ❖ Develop protocols for the exchange of information between relevant authorities.

This Policy is supported by the Devon & Cornwall Constabulary's *'Advice for Officers Attending Incidents Involving Gypsies and other Traditional Travellers'* document (undated) which provides information on Traditional Gypsy and Traveller culture and also puts forward suggestions for dealing with the suspicion of authority that may exist towards the Police among Gypsy and Traveller groups. It explains, amongst other things, the necessity for Officers to be sensitive in their dealings with Gypsies and Travellers and mindful of their human rights.

### **Supporting People**

The Devon Supporting People Strategy (2005/6-2009/10) builds upon The *'Shadow'* Supporting People Strategy for the county (2001-2004) which highlights the absence of support workers to deal with social and housing problems faced by the Gypsy and Traveller communities. The 2005/6-2009/10 Strategy states that Devon Supporting People does not currently fund any services that are aimed primarily at Travellers. Evidence of unmet need is identified in that the permanent sites run by Devon County Council contain a high number of elderly people who require support with day-to-day activities such as paying bills and other communications. And it further states that the non-settled Traveller community face major problems in accessing all services (as well as benefits) that are available to them. Their needs will be monitored in tandem with Devon County Council's emerging policy for developing more sites. Supporting People action in the meantime will consist of

appropriate sign-posting as well as communication with the relevant Liaison Officers and suitable floating providers. It concludes that Gypsy and Travellers needs could be met from within the homelessness floating support service provision.

### **3.5.2 District and Unitary Authority Plans**

A detailed overview of the relevant District and Unitary Authority level plans and policies is provided at Appendix Three. What is noticeable at this level is that specific mention of Gypsies and Travellers within plans and policies varies considerably. This ranges from plans simply referring the reader to the county-wide H8 and H9 Policies (see above), to a more detailed discussion about the level of services expected of both transit and longer term sites, as well as the criteria adopted within the District for the establishment of sites where such a need is proven. Also, and of particular relevance for the Needs Assessment, an examination of the plans and policies reveals that the majority of District Councils and Unitary Authorities within Devon have assessed that there is currently no need for the allocation of new sites for Gypsies and Travellers within their geographical boundaries.

It is also of note that some District Councils and Unitary Authorities have adopted their own practice guidelines for dealing with Gypsies and Travellers residing within their geographical area, including in one case a contingency plan for preventing/managing mass gatherings. The extent to which those localised plans will be superseded by the emerging Devon protocol is unclear.

### **3.6 Co-ordination of Gypsy and Traveller Issues within District and Unitary Authorities**

District and Unitary Authorities in Devon were asked to provide the research team with completed organisational flow charts, which illustrated the structural configuration of Gypsy and Traveller remits within their organisation. Table Four amalgamates the information received to illustrate which departments and personnel hold specific Gypsy and Traveller remits, the departments in which existing Gypsy and Traveller Officers and Gypsy Traveller Link Officers sit, as well as any other identified departments within the Local Authorities which have some involvement with Gypsy and Traveller issues. For clarity,

Gypsy Traveller Officers are understood to be positioned in a strategic and subject focused co-ordinating role, whereas the Link Officers are positioned as contacts within a department which peripherally deals with Gypsies and Travellers within their own specific departmental remit. It should also be noted that the table has been produced purely from the information provided by the Steering Group members and it could be possible that departments other than those listed may have specific Gypsy and Traveller involvement that is unknown to the Group. Further, not all Authorities supplied the required information. Hence some are not included within the Table.

**Table Four: Local Co-ordination of Gypsy and Traveller Remits**

Local Authority	Department with GT Remit	GT Officer	GT Link Officer	GT Officer Department	GT Link Officer Department	Other Departments involved with GT
East Devon	Environmental Health	None stated	None stated	N/A	N/A	Legal/ Asset Management, Parks & other land owning departments/ Communications, PR
Dartmoor	Planning and Sustainable Development	None stated	None stated	Forward Planning and Community Unit	N/A	Rangers/ Legal
Plymouth	Community Services	Yes	Yes	Social Inclusion Unit	Housing/ Planning	Environmental Health/ Legal/ Asset Management, Parks & other land owning departments/ Communications, PR
Mid Devon	Environmental Health and Housing	Yes	None stated	Environment/ Planning	N/A	None Stated
South Hams	Strategic (Resources)	None stated – contact at Environmental Health	None Stated	None stated – contact at Environmental Health	N/A	Environmental Health/ Legal/ Asset Management, Parks & other land owning departments/ Communications, PR
Torridge	Community Planning and Development	None stated	Yes	N/A	Housing	Environmental Health/ Legal/ Asset Management, Parks & other land owning departments/ Communications, PR/ Street Scene
West Devon	Housing/ Planning/ Environmental Health/ Legal/ Finance/Client Services	None stated	Yes	N/A	Housing/ Planning/ Environmental Health/ Client Services	No additional Departments identified

Source: SRRU, Devon-wide Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment

The table shows considerable variations regarding the manner in which Local Authorities across Devon co-ordinate provision for Gypsies and Travellers. Key Local Authority departments involved in this area range from Community Services, through to Environmental Health and one authority has a number of different departments with specific Gypsy and Traveller remits including Housing, Planning, Environmental Health, Legal, Finance and Client Services. It is also of note that not all Local Authorities report having dedicated Gypsy and Traveller Officers and/or Link Officers and in one case only – Plymouth Unitary Authority – are there both.

Whilst the configuration of Gypsy and Traveller remits is clearly at the discretion of each Local Authority and needs to be workable for the individual Authority in question, it nevertheless seems likely that the different approaches adopted could lead to confusion about who is doing what and, importantly, who is responsible for what within each area. It is suggested that Councils should be very clear internally about where Gypsy and Traveller matters are dealt with and ensure that this information is widely shared externally to ensure that appropriate staff can be identified by all those involved.

Having contextualised the Needs Assessment with reference to National, Regional and Local issues, the report now turns to the findings from the Gypsy and Traveller Survey.

## 4. Gypsy and Traveller Survey Findings

The Devon-wide Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment survey was completed in mid-June. The research team completed 128 interviews with Gypsies and Travellers who were spread across all the Districts of Devon. A full analysis of the findings of the survey are presented here.

Initially the demographics of the Gypsy and Traveller population in Devon are outlined including predicted growth levels. Details of Gypsy and Traveller work patterns and income generation in Devon are then presented. Sites and site matters are subsequently outlined, leading into the future pitch requirements for the County. This is followed by the research findings on health and education issues. Finally this section of the report presents the findings relating to crime and policing, the media and other services.

### 4.1 Demographics

The Gypsy and Traveller respondents to the survey represented a diverse range of people living in Devon as Table Five shows.

**Table Five: Self Defined Ethnicity**

How would you describe yourself	No of Respondents	% of Respondents (n=128)
English Gypsy/Traveller	81	63.3%
Irish Traveller	6	4.7%
Welsh Traveller	1	0.8%
New Traveller	16	12.5%
Showman	2	1.6%
Other	17	13.3%
No response	5	3.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>100.1%</b>

Source: SRRU, Devon-wide Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment

Clearly the largest group of people were English Gypsies and the second largest group were New Travellers. On looking in more depth at the data on people in the 'other' category, it became apparent that the majority of people in this category were also New Travellers, swelling their numbers to approximately 25.8% of the sample surveyed. Self categorisation meant that New Travellers did not necessarily refer to

themselves as such, but rather used terms such as '*old age traveller*', '*Traveller*' or '*individual*'. This was similarly found in the Cambridge Sub-Region Traveller Needs Assessment.

The research team completed interviews with 70 women, 46 men and 12 couples. The age of the respondents ranged from 18 to 83.

In order to ascertain the size of families within the Gypsy and Traveller communities in Devon, respondents were asked about their children. The majority of respondents had children (68%). On average Gypsies and Travellers had 2.6 children per family, slightly more than the national average of the settled population which is 2.3. When broken down into type of Traveller, the averages fluctuated showing that English Gypsy and Irish Traveller families were larger with averages of 3.11 and 3 children per family respectively. New Travellers had an average of 1.3 children per family. This is likely to reflect the higher number of single people within the New Traveller community, although by no means precludes New Travellers from occasionally having large families – one family surveyed had 10 children, the largest family in the sample. Those people living on council owned authorised sites were found to have more children (3.11) as opposed to people living on the roadside (2.64). As will be seen later in this report, it was most common for English Gypsies to live on official council sites. English Gypsies and Irish Travellers were also more likely to have their children living with them. On average Gypsies and Travellers had 1.92 children living with them, but this figure rose to 2.13 for English Gypsies and 2.25 for Irish Travellers.

The literature shows that family relationships are very important to Gypsies and Travellers, particularly those from traditional backgrounds (Clark and Greenfields, 2006 for example). In order to ascertain the degree to which familial ties in Devon were relevant to Gypsies and Travellers and to address the matter of the size of the population, the survey asked about siblings, their travelling habits and their proximity. The research found that 85.2% of respondents had siblings, 52.3% of whom were travelling and 34.9% of whom lived near each other. Many respondents had family members who lived in housing (49.2%), the most likely being New Travellers (86.7%). However, a significant proportion of English Gypsy, Irish and Welsh Traveller families were also in housing (41.7%). It is worth noting then, that Gypsies and Travellers often have kinship ties to the area, both on sites and in housing.

Having established family sizes it is also possible to estimate family growth over the next five years. Using a family formation rate of 3% per annum, as advocated by Niner (2005) and used within the Cornwall Needs Assessment, there will be 41 additional Gypsy and Traveller 'households' in Devon between 2006 and 2011.

## 4.2 Income Generation

A high proportion of respondents answered the survey questions on their employment (81%). This is a very good response rate given that Gypsy and Traveller Communities are often reluctant to discuss personal behaviours particularly around the sensitive issue of employment out of concern that this information may be inappropriately passed onto agencies and authorities other than those involved in a particular study. This validates the use of Gypsies and Travellers to carry out the fieldwork aspect of this study as it is unlikely that non-Travellers would have elicited such a high response rate.

Of those people who responded, the majority (43.3%) said that they were in some sort of paid work as can be seen in Table Six. A further 28.8% said that they were a homemaker and 10.6% were retired. Only 3.8% of the respondents were receiving benefits (including disability). The highest proportion of paid workers were men (77.3%) and women were most likely to be homemakers (51.8%). Such differences are reflective of broader society's division of labour and represent traditional Gypsy and Traveller expectations (Clark and Greenfields, 2006).

**Table Six: What Respondents Do**

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Paid work	45	43.3%
Homemaker	30	28.8%
Retired	11	10.6%
Student	3	2.9%
Benefits	2	1.9%
Disability	2	1.9%
Nothing	1	1.0%
Self sufficient	1	1.0%
Other	9	8.7%
Total	104	100.0%

Source: SRRU Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment Survey 2006

A high proportion of the people who had answered questions on their employment said that what they do has not changed over the years (61.4%), although 13.8% of the people who had changed occupation said that they had done so as a result of their travelling lifestyle. A further 13.8% had changed occupation due to their health and 13.8% had changed due to having family. Only 7% of respondents who had changed their work had done so because of the nature of their work being seasonal. In fact, there is very little evidence of the Gypsies and Travellers in the Devon-wide Needs Assessment having been employed in seasonal work. The traditional view of Gypsies and Travellers as seasonal workers has clearly diminished in recent years (though there is still some evidence to suggest that such work continues in certain areas, such as daffodil picking in Cornwall, see James 2004; and farm work, see Cornwall Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2006).

When asked if their current lifestyle had affected their ability to obtain work 21.1% of respondents said that it had. The key reason given for this was that the Gypsies and Travellers were experiencing some sort of prejudice (25.9%). This prejudice was most keenly felt by Gypsies and Travellers living on official council sites. A lack of continuity in life was given by many Gypsies and Travellers (18.5%) as their reason for having difficulties attaining work and similarly 18.5% of respondents said that the lack of a fixed address had a negative impact on attaining work. These reasons were most commonly given by Gypsies and Travellers living on the roadside. Lack of an address as a determinant of poor service and provision was raised by many Gypsies and Travellers in this study, and is similarly common in other accommodation assessments, including in Cornwall and the Cambridge Sub-Region. Although previous research has shown that some postal employees can be very supportive of Gypsies and Travellers (James, 2006), it is evident here that the requirement for a fixed address reduces a number of means and services available to Gypsies and Travellers. In order to circumvent this, 44.7% of Gypsies and Travellers living on the roadside used a 'care of' address in order to receive post.

Analysis of the nature of the 'paid work' carried out by Gypsies and Travellers in Devon has shown that this work is commonly ad hoc, outside work of a manual nature including 'odd jobs', landscaping, gardening, tarmac, mechanics and roofing. Due to the diverse nature of paid work carried out by Gypsies and Travellers in Devon and the likelihood of such work being carried out as self-employment (Johnson

and Willers, 2004), the survey asked respondents about their ability to keep work tools and equipment with them on their site. A high proportion of respondents said that they were able to do so (77%). However, those people living on official council sites or unauthorised but tolerated sites were the least likely to be able to keep their work equipment and vehicles on site.

Only 9% of respondents to the survey said that they had received advice on possible benefits that they may be entitled to. This finding may reflect the targeting of such information towards urban areas and from within employment centres. Given the likelihood of Gypsies and Travellers to be self employed and work through ad hoc arrangements, it is unlikely that they would have engaged with such information. Those few respondents who had received advice on benefits had gained it either directly from the Benefits Agency, via health professionals or friends and family. Interestingly, when asked if they would like advice on benefits available to them only 20.8% of respondents said 'yes' and most of those people were living on unauthorised, tolerated sites. The independent nature of Gypsy and Traveller cultures may explain their lack of knowledge and take up of benefits. This runs contrary to the image of Gypsies and Travellers as '*dole scroungers*' as presented in the popular press and coheres with similar findings in other research (Webster and Millar, 2001).

### **4.3 Site Information**

This section of the research analysis describes the sites occupied by survey respondents including the reasons for their site choices; experiences of eviction and moving on; and future plans. It also discusses respondents' stated reasons for travelling and the associated implications for site provision; preferences for alternative provision; as well as stopping habits when travelling and their views on the current pitch provision in Devon. It concludes with a discussion of site facilities and services provided to sites; along with issues of site management and conditions.

### 4.3.1 Sites Occupied

Of those people surveyed in this research, 70.3% lived on settled encampments and 29.7% were on the roadside. Interviews were completed with people living in every authority of the Devon-wide study area including with people living on all the Local Authority provided sites.

As Table Seven shows, of those people living on settled sites, 24.4% of interviews were completed with people living on council provided sites: the three sites of this sort in Devon are, *'The Ride'* in Plymouth, *'Sowton'* in Exeter and *'Elbury Close'* in Broadclyst (a small site that is on National Trust land that cannot have its lease renewed and will close eventually). 32.2% of interviews were conducted with people who said that they owned their own land and had planning permission of some sort. It should be noted that a diverse range of *'types'* of planning permission have been given to Gypsies and Travellers in Devon, including individual permission to the named occupier of the land, temporary permission and part time permission. Respondents who owned their land, but did not have planning permission constituted 15.6% of the sample and respondents who neither owned, nor had planning permission for their site, but were *'tolerated'* by the Local Authority made up 20% of the sample. Tolerated sites are those which are unauthorised, but which the Local Authority has tolerated under government guidance in Circular 18/94 .

**Table Seven: Type of Site Occupied (excluding roadside)**

Type of Site Occupied	Frequency	Percentage
Self owned with planning permission	29	32.2%
Council	22	24.4%
Unauthorised - tolerated	18	20.0%
Self owned without planning permission	14	15.6%
Other private owned with planning permission	5	5.6%
Other private owned without planning permission	2	2.2%
Total	90	100.0%

Source: SRRU Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment Survey 2006

English Gypsies most commonly occupied Local Authority sites and other sites with some sort of authorised status. Irish Travellers did occupy Local Authority sites, but were disproportionately represented

on unauthorised sites, as were all other groups of Gypsy and Traveller. New Travellers were most likely to occupy *'tolerated'* sites.

The research team visited settled sites of a range of sizes, the smallest holding only one vehicle and the largest holding 40 caravans. A large proportion of the sample had been on their site for over a year, with 23.4% of respondents having been on their site for more than five years. Those people who had been on their site for a very short time, of less than two weeks, constituted 19.5% of the sample.

The majority of respondents showed an affiliation to Devon over a period of time as 43.8% of respondents had been on another site in Devon prior to their current site and a further 14.8% had previously been in the South West. Unsurprisingly, given the familial ties already detailed above, 40.6% of respondents said that they had come to their current site due to the proximity of family and friends. Also, when asked what attracted them to the Devon area a large majority said that it was because of friends and family being there. Additionally respondents said that their familiarity to the area attracted them. The sense gained from this data is that Devon was considered *'home'* to the majority of respondents of the survey which is clearly important for planning purposes.

The research shows that there is distinct movement of Gypsies and Travellers through Devon, particularly via the A38, A30 and M5 corridor. Of those people who completed interviews on the roadside 15.8% said that they had a permanent site elsewhere, only one of which was in Devon. All of these people were English Gypsies and they were travelling through Devon for a variety of reasons including visiting family and travelling to a *'summer site'*. The prevalence of roadside sites in the survey as 29.7% of the overall sample and the evident movement of people through the county implies a need for some sort of transit provision.

#### **4.3.2 Eviction and Moving on**

One of the key issues for Gypsies and Travellers nationally is their eviction from unauthorised sites. Eviction procedures have been shown through research to result in poor relations between Gypsies and Travellers and Local Authorities and agencies, as well as with the public. Regular eviction has also been found to correlate with poor health,

education and welfare of Gypsy and Traveller communities (CRE, 2006). In Devon the research found that 27% of respondents had been evicted in the past five years, the majority of whom were still living in unauthorised places: the roadside (59.9%) or 'tolerated' sites (19.9%). As shown in Table Eight, of those people who had been evicted 34.3% said that they had been evicted once or twice, 20.0% said they had been evicted between three and seven times and 14.3% said they had been evicted eight to 15 times. A very small number of people (less than 9%) said that they had been evicted more than 15 times. However, for some of them the answer was that they had been evicted in excess of 200 times. This shows that while eviction is experienced by a number of people, it is only a minority who are evicted regularly. Also of note, only a minority of the evictions recorded occurred in Devon (22.9%).

**Table Eight: Number of Evictions**

Number of Evictions	Frequency	Percentage
1-2	12	34.3%
3-7	7	20.0%
8-15	5	14.3%
Over 15	3	8.6%
No answer	8	22.9%
Total	35	100%

Source: SRRU Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment Survey 2006

The most commonly evicted group were English Gypsies, however, proportionately New Travellers were more likely to have experienced eviction than any other group. Of note is the finding that one respondent stated that they were given no warning of eviction. Legislation and policy guidance state that warning of eviction must be provided and effective needs assessments completed by any agent prior to eviction action.

In addition to those 27% of respondents who said that they had been evicted in the last five years, 17.4% of respondents said that they had moved on in order to avoid eviction, most of whom were in Devon or the South West at the time of moving on. These respondents were of all ages and from all ethnic backgrounds and the large majority had children. It is common for Gypsies and Travellers to move on in order to avoid eviction (Smith, 1995) as they are fearful of the potential loss of their homes allowed within the law if they do not comply with eviction. It is

therefore unsurprising that those people who have been keen to move on prior to eviction are those with families.

#### 4.3.3 Future Plans

In order to understand the future provision needed in Devon it was important to ask respondents about their plans. Of all respondents 42.2% said that they had no plans to move on and a further 6.1% said that they only intended to move within fifty miles of their current location. Those people who completed interviews from their settled site were the least likely to want to move on. Interestingly, 3.1% of respondents, including equal proportions of people that were settled and living on the roadside, said that they wanted to move abroad. It is not unusual for Gypsies and Travellers to move to and from foreign locations, both in Europe and further afield (Dearling, 1998).

#### 4.3.4 Reasons for Travelling

The reasons why Gypsies and Travellers travel can provide us with some explanation as to their accommodation needs. As can be seen from Table Nine, the respondents travelled for a combination of reasons: because of their culture, work and to visit friends and family. Overall, 58% of respondents associated their movement with their culture, either solely because of their culture (17.2%) or due to their culture and other factors. The likelihood of diminishing movement therefore appears remote while Gypsy and Traveller cultures remain strong, again highlighting the potential need for transit sites to facilitate such movement.

**Table Nine: Reasons for Travelling**

Reason for Travelling	Frequency	Percentage
Culture	22	17.2%
For work	17	13.3%
To visit relatives / friends	5	3.9%
All of the above	44	34.4%
Culture and Work	8	6.3%
Other	11	8.6%
No answer	21	16.4%
Total	128	100%

Source: SRRU Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment Survey 2006

Traditional Gypsies and Travellers are most likely to associate their movement with their culture, work and visiting friends and family, though their emphasis tends to be on their desire to work. Otherwise New Travellers most commonly associate their movement with their culture. When travelling Gypsies and Travellers commonly go outside of Devon, travelling throughout the UK, according to our research. Some Gypsies and Travellers do stay in the South West region when travelling around, though the majority go further afield. Traditional Gypsies and Travellers are more likely than New Travellers to go out of the county on their travels. This is possibly due to work, family and cultural commitments in other areas such as at traditional horse fairs held around the country, weddings, christening and funerals. The importance of familial ties in traditional Traveller communities and the rituals associated with these ties, such as the need to attend family births, deaths and marriages (Clark and Greenfields, 2006) means that movement away from an area may be common, but there is a subsequent need to return to a settled base where children are schooled and families are based.

The research shows that of those respondents who lived on settled sites, only 52.2% of them were able to keep their pitch if they went travelling. This may mean that even more Gypsies and Travellers would express their cultural desire to travel were they to have security of tenure on site.

It is clear from the findings presented here that Gypsies and Travellers in Devon, from both settled and roadside sites move around quite a lot. It is therefore necessary to consider how many vehicles they move with so that any transit site plans can include sufficient space for vehicles. On average the research shows that Gypsies and Travellers travel with three vehicles, most commonly including at least one caravan and one car. This is in contrast to the one or two vehicles that most people living on the roadside actually had with them in this study (21.1% of people living on the roadside had vehicles kept elsewhere). Recommendations for the amount of vehicle space needed on new sites are given in Section Seven.

#### 4.3.5 Alternative Accommodation

When asked specifically if respondents were looking for alternative accommodation in Devon 28.1% of respondents said that they were.<sup>8</sup> Not all of this group were respondents who lived on the roadside, affirming the previous findings of the survey that some Gypsies and Travellers were happily in transit. A diverse range of people said that they were looking for alternative accommodation, including most commonly younger people and those with children. The majority of these respondents (52.7%) said that they wanted to own their own land to live on. This is an interesting finding as it seemingly means that many Gypsies and Travellers are prepared to provide sites for themselves as government has previously suggested should be made possible to resolve the problem of lack of sites. However, 90% of planning applications for private sites for Gypsies and Travellers are turned down at first hearing (Johnson and Willers, 2004).

Five Gypsies and Travellers said that they were seeking alternative accommodation in some sort of housing, either privately or council owned. Overall 51.6% of respondents had lived in a house at some time in their life, the majority of whom had grown up in a house and were most commonly New Travellers, though a few English Gypsies had also done so. Of those people who had lived in housing at some time 9% had done so when having children. The respondents to the survey said that they had left housing for a range of reasons, including due to domestic problems. 47.7% said that they had left housing out of choice, because of their lifestyle or because they could not settle. The cultural nomadism of Gypsies and Travellers and the associated aversion that some people have to *'bricks and mortar dwelling'* may explain this. Interestingly however, 28% of respondents said that they would be prepared to live in a house. Those people who had lived in a house previously were most likely to be prepared to live in housing again as opposed to those who had not. Consequently, those more willing to live in housing were New Travellers.

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<sup>8</sup> It should be noted here that this question may have been misinterpreted by respondents who were happily living in their location, but were desirous of legal status for it – such as those people living on tolerated sites. In other words the desire for alternative accommodation may not be fully representative of the need for authorised sites.

#### 4.3.6 Where People Stop when Travelling and Views on Pitch Provision in Devon

When we consider where people usually stop when travelling, the survey results show that people living on the roadside usually stop on unauthorised or roadside sites (71.1%) and only a minority usually stop on an authorised site (21.1%). Of those people currently living on a settled site, only a minority usually stop on official council owned sites (14.4%). It seems likely that this statistic simply highlights the lack of authorised sites available given the fact that only 24.4% of our sample actually lived on official council sites. Also, people who usually live on their own land (with or without planning permission) are unlikely to find available space on council sites when they move around. When asked specifically why respondents do not stop on official council sites the large majority (87.5%) said that there was insufficient space to do so. The rest of the respondents gave varying reasons for not stopping on official council sites, including their view that such sites were 'dirty' or overcrowded.

On the limited occasions when respondents have stopped on official council owned sites when on the move, 50% do so as a tolerated visitor and 50% do so as an unauthorised visitor. The majority of the people who do this are English Gypsies. However, in the six months prior to the survey being completed only two people had actually stopped on official council sites while on the move. When respondents had stopped on official council owned sites when on the move, whether recently or in the past, they said that they had moved on out of their own choice or due to work commitments.

A large majority of the respondents to the survey (92.2%) said that there were not enough long term pitches in Devon. When asked about the number of long term pitches and sites required in Devon, respondents most commonly (40%) said that between six and ten *sites* were necessary. Otherwise between one and five sites were considered sufficient by 24% of respondents and between eleven and twenty by 29% of respondents. This is fewer than the calculations made independently by the research team (see Section 4.4) indicating Gypsies and Travellers in Devon are being modest in their requirements.

The number of *pitches per site* was most commonly held to be relatively small as 23.3% of respondents said that six to ten pitches per site was sufficient and 17.8% of respondents said that between eleven and fifteen

pitches per sites was appropriate. It was unusual for respondents to suggest that more than 20 pitches should be on a site (5.6%) and more common for very small pitch numbers to be preferred (10%). This finding is reflective of the literature and other research in this area (Niner, 2002, Cambridge Sub-Region Traveller Needs Assessment). See Table Ten for a full breakdown of pitch preferences. Recommendations for the optimum number of pitches on new sites are given in Section Seven.

**Table Ten: Preferred Number of Pitches**

Preferred number of pitches on a site	Frequency	Percentage
1-5	9	10.0%
6-10	21	23.3%
11-15	16	17.8%
16-20	13	14.4%
20+	5	5.6%
No response	26	28.9%
Total	90	100%

Source: SRRU Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment Survey 2006

The average number of vehicles on a pitch space was two on settled sites and one to two on roadside sites. Gypsies and Travellers said that the minimum number of vehicles needed on a permanent site was actually four. This research has found that the average number of people per pitch in Devon is 2.79, which is higher than the average settled household size of 2.29 in Devon.<sup>9</sup> Given the finding that respondents to this study commonly have at least two children living with them and a vehicle is considered overcrowded if it contains more than three people within it, it seems reasonable that pitches should allow for at least two caravans or a large twin unit, a car and an additional vehicle space for accommodating a transport vehicle, a work vehicle or a visitor. Niner (2002) recommends generous pitch sizes to accommodate the needs of Gypsies and Travellers beyond simply the accommodation of vehicles. This study will present further site needs later in these findings.

<sup>9</sup> For comparison to other areas it should be noted that in the Cambridge Sub-Region Traveller Needs Assessment the average household size was 4.77, reflecting the high numbers of traditional Gypsies and Travellers in the area and in Dorset it was 2.8 where there were more New Travellers.

Due to the number of Gypsies and Travellers living on individual pitches/spaces being higher than average and in order to determine pitch need, it was necessary for the research team to analyse the extent of overcrowding on current Devon Gypsy and Travellers sites.<sup>10</sup> Niner (2003) has stated that the national average of overcrowding on authorised Local Authority sites is approximately 10%. In Devon this figure rises to 11.8% on Local Authority sites, but those people who own their own land have a greater overcrowding problem with 12.5% of those who have planning permission being overcrowded and 16.7% of those without planning permission being overcrowded, perhaps due to restrictive planning permission meaning that they would be in breach if they brought on more trailers. Respondents living on the roadside are the most overcrowded however, with 21.9% of people being technically overcrowded. Given the fact that most people stated that they travelled with only one or two vehicles this is unsurprising. The research shows that over-crowding is most common in urban areas and amongst the Irish Traveller community. Gypsies and Travellers recognise the problem of overcrowding, 24.4% of respondents said that their site was overcrowded and 68.2% of those respondents referred to having to 'double up' within pitch spaces.

Alongside the issue of overcrowding of Gypsy and Traveller sites in Devon is the issue of any growth in provision in the future. As stated above respondents to the survey had an average of two children living with them and 38.9% of respondents said that they would need to increase the size of their accommodation in the next five years, largely due to the need to accommodate family/the household. As mentioned in Section 4.1 above, using a family formation rate of 3% per annum, as advocated by Niner and used within the Cornwall Needs Assessment, there will be 41 additional Gypsy and Traveller 'households' in Devon between 2006 and 2011 (excluding any movement into the county for which it is impossible to calculate).

The accommodation of visitors on sites is vital to the continued cultural expression of Gypsies and Travellers nomadism. Although 14.1% of respondents to the survey said that they could accommodate visitors on site, the majority of those who said so lived either on a tolerated unauthorised site or on the roadside. Generous pitch provision could

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<sup>10</sup> The research team used the over-crowding measure that was developed by the Cambridge Sub-Region Traveller Needs Assessment team.

allow space for visitors on authorised sites without having to ‘mix’ permanent and transit sites as discussed below.

The respondents to the survey commonly said that they wanted permanent, long term sites ‘*everywhere*’ (21.1%) in places that were ‘*rural*’ or ‘*semi-rural*’ (22.1%) in Devon with close amenities (11.6%). Interestingly many Gypsies and Travellers stated a desire to be sited in places that would not engender local dispute to their presence. For example one respondent said they wanted to be, ‘*where there is enough room without causing friction with neighbours*’. Additionally, some respondents said that they did not want to be placed on inappropriate, unclean spaces such as near rubbish dumps. New Travellers most commonly stated that they wished to be in rural or semi-rural locations, whereas English Gypsies said that they needed to be in specific location in Devon. Such specificity most likely relates to a desire to be close to existing family networks in the area.

When asked about the type of stopping places needed, as can be seen in Table Eleven, 68.8% of respondents said that permanent residential pitches were required and 78.1% of respondents said that either transit or ‘*halting*’ pitches were necessary. This finding in the research again emphasises the general desire of Gypsies and Travellers to have permanent bases from which to travel via transit sites. Interestingly 21.9% of respondents said that they wanted to be able to stop on green lanes, that were traditionally used by Gypsies and Travellers in the past. This finding most likely reflects the relatively high proportion of New Travellers living in the Devon area. Such use of green lanes is recommended by Thomson (n.d), a Director of the respected organisation Friends, Families and Travellers.

**Table Eleven: Preferred Type of Pitch**

Preferred type of pitch	Frequency	Percentage
Permanent	22	68.8%
Transit	20	62.5%
Green lanes	7	21.9%
Halting places	5	15.6%
Other	4	12.5%
Total	58	181.3%

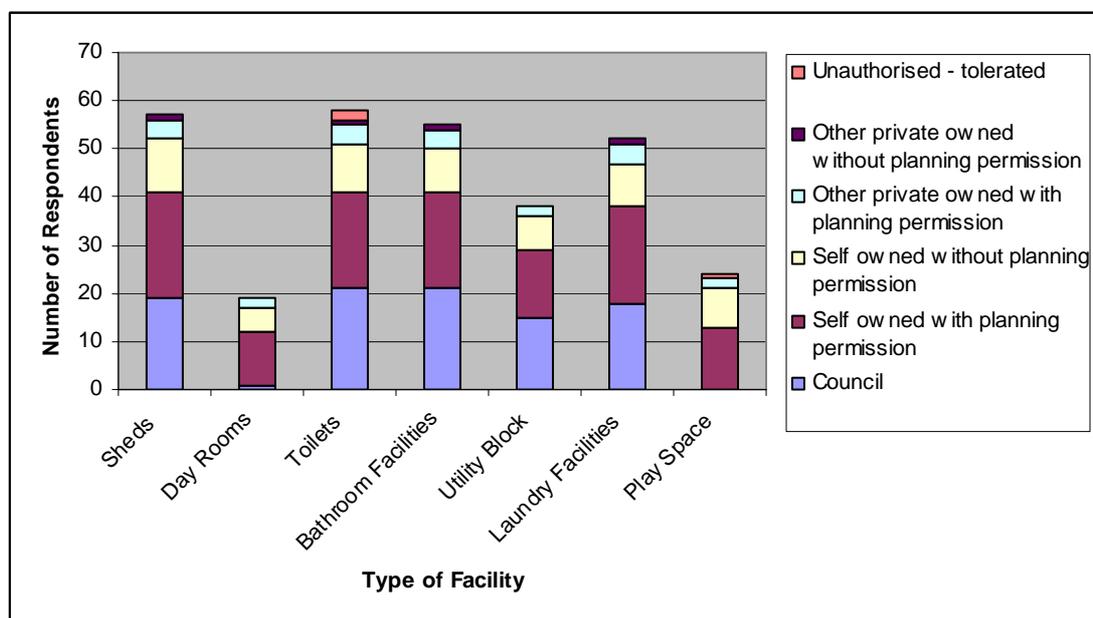
Source: SRRU Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment Survey 2006

When asked whether it would be appropriate to combine permanent residential pitches with transit provision only 35.9% of respondents said that this was a good idea. Given the nature of Gypsy and Traveller communities, who rely on close family and friendship ties, it is unsurprising that there is little enthusiasm for mixed sites. Alongside the general fear of strangers within the community lies the important issue of cultural differences between types of Gypsy and Traveller. It is generally inappropriate to assume that different groups of Gypsy and Traveller would be prepared to live together on the same site. As numerous research studies have shown, there are distinctive cultural differences between traditional Gypsies and Travellers and New Travellers and between the different groups of ethnicity within traditional Gypsies and Travellers.

#### **4.3.7 Site Facilities and Services Provided to Sites**

The survey findings showed that facilities provided on sites are varied according to the type of site that is occupied. As can be seen from Chart One Gypsies and Travellers living on official Local Authority owned sites had access to toilets, bathrooms, sheds, utility blocks and laundry facilities. People who owned the site that they lived on had day rooms, and commonly had toilets, bathrooms, laundry facilities and play space. The people with these facilities were most likely to be English Gypsies, largely because they are more likely to occupy authorised Local Authority sites or self owned land with some sort of authorisation.

**Chart One: Facilities Provided to the Gypsy and Traveller Community – by Type of Site**

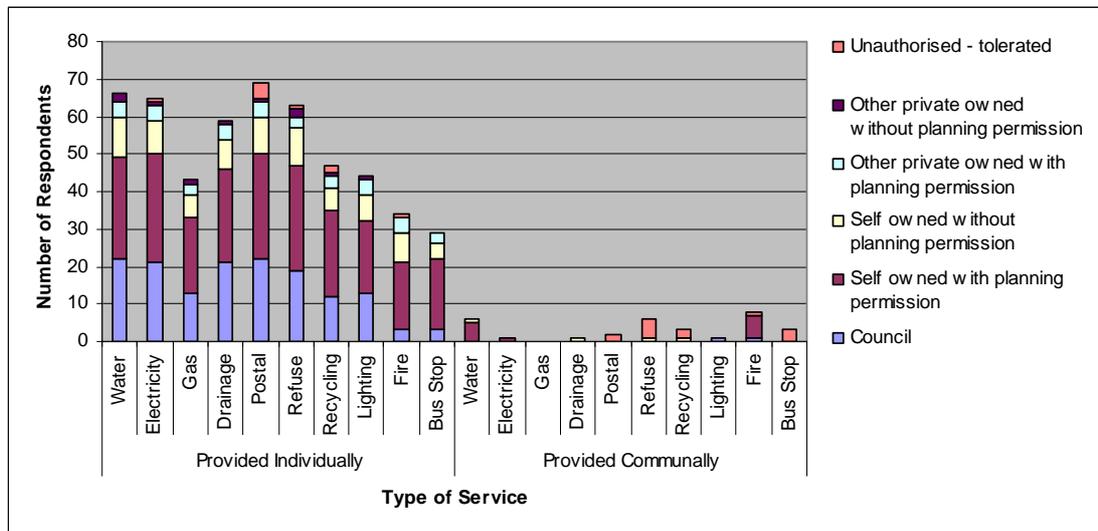


Source: SRRU Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment survey 2006

Of those people who do not have facilities on their site the most commonly desired structures are a laundry, play space, toilets, a dayroom and bathrooms, in order of preference. Showmen were most likely to want a shed, toilets, bathroom, laundry facilities and utility block on site, whereas English Gypsies were most keen to have a day room and utility block and play space and Irish Travellers likewise said that they would like a play space.

In terms of services provided to sites Chart Two shows those respondents living on official Local Authority sites had water, electricity and/or gas, refuse collection, recycling and drainage provided either individually or communally, as did most of those who lived on self owned sites with planning permission. This again means that English Gypsies have the most services provided to them. Interestingly the postal service appears to be the most comprehensive provision to Gypsies and Travellers who received post commonly on all types of settled site to all types of Gypsy and Traveller. Those people living on tolerated sites were most likely to receive their post communally. They were also the most likely to have refuse collection occur communally, including recycling.

**Chart Two: Services Provided to the Gypsy and Traveller Community – by Type of Site**



Source: SRRU Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment survey 2006

In terms of fire safety, people who owned their own land were most likely to have some sort of fire protection on site, either individually or communally. Overall levels of fire protection are low on all types of site for all types of Gypsy and Traveller. The research team would hope to see fire hoses and perhaps sand buckets in rented, particularly Local Authority sites. It is perhaps unsurprising then that the most commonly desired service on site was fire protection both communally and individually.

There is evidence in the research that some sites have access to a bus stop, but this is by no means comprehensive. The respondents to the survey stated that they would like bus services within reach of their site. This finding coheres with the requirement of Circular 01/06 that sites should allow access to local services.

Finally, the service most desired by respondents to the survey who did not already have it, was access to a communal water supply.

The research shows that New Travellers were least likely to make requests for particular facilities and services on sites which reflects the 'low-impact' nature of many New Traveller lifestyles (Earle et al, 1994).

#### 4.3.8 Management of Sites and Conditions

When defining site need, services and space it is important to consider the management of such sites. The research found that 39% of respondents said that their site was '*managed*' in some sense, either by a private company for the Local Authority, by the Local Authority itself, or by the Gypsies and Travellers themselves. A substantial minority (40%) of those respondents whose sites were managed said that the management was unsatisfactory and 92.8% of dissatisfied respondents were living on official Local Authority sites and were most commonly managed by a private company. Of all the people living on settled sites that were not managed, 89.1% said that they did *not* want the site managed by anyone, and no-one said that they did want their site managed.

Official Gypsy and Traveller sites commonly have a set of site policies or a license agreement (for Local Authority sites). Such license agreements have been found in research to be more extensive than council house tenants are subject to (Niner, 2003) and can be so restrictive as to cause dispute and upset between Gypsies and Travellers and site managers (James and Richardson, 2006). In order to ascertain the functioning of such agreements the survey asked respondents about restrictions placed on sites. Of all the people living on settled sites a significant proportion (25.6%) said that there were restrictions on the site that they did not like and these particularly related to people living on authorised Local Authority sites. On a positive note however, only 5.6% of respondents stated that they were not allowed to keep their animals on their site. There is an importance placed on family pets within Gypsy and Travelling communities, such as dogs that provide a sense of protection.

With regard to the conditions of sites, the majority of respondents to the survey who lived on settled sites said that the condition of their site was either '*very good*' or '*good*' (63.3%) as can be seen from Table Twelve. However, a significant minority (22.2%) felt that their site's condition was '*poor*' or '*very poor*'. Those who were more negative about their site were more likely to live on an official Local Authority site.

**Table Twelve: Condition of Sites**

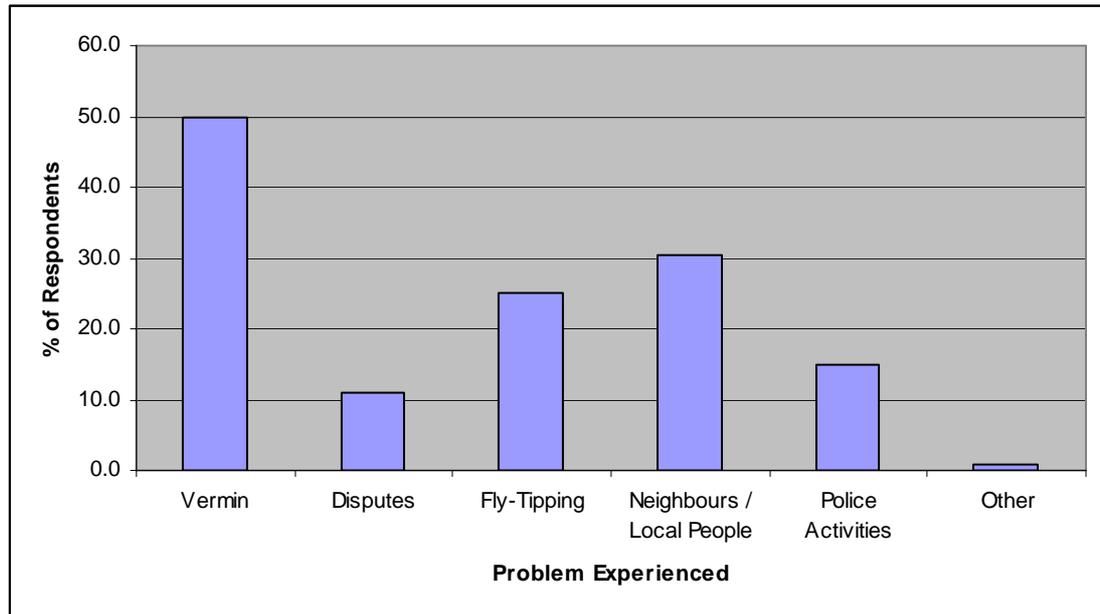
Site Rating	Frequency	Percentage
1.0 – Very Good	36	40.0%
1.5	2	2.2%
2.0	19	21.1%
2.5	4	4.4%
3.0	13	14.4%
3.5	1	1.1%
4.0 – Very Poor	6	6.7%
No Response	9	10.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100.0%*</b>

Source: SRRU Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment survey 2006

\*Percentages do not total 100 due to rounding

Gypsies and Travellers living on the roadside have some different concerns to those living on settled sites. When asked about problems with their environment, 34.2% of respondents living on the roadside said that they had had problems, particularly with vermin. Chart Three illustrates that people living on settled sites also had their biggest environmental problem with vermin on site (50%) and this was particularly found to be problematic on authorised Local Authority sites and on unauthorised tolerated sites. Settled respondents also reported a distinct problem with 'fly tipping' (25%), where members of the public dump rubbish on Gypsy and Traveller sites. Unauthorised tolerated sites were those which experienced most fly tipping. Interestingly, 81.3% of sites that had problems with vermin also had problems with fly tipping activity.

**Chart Three: Problems Experienced on Settled Sites**



Source: SRRU Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment survey 2006

Both settled and roadside respondents to the survey commonly said that they had had problems with neighbours or local people (30.5%). Problems of harassment of Gypsies and Travellers by the public are recorded in research and texts (such as Johnson and Willers, 2004) and the CRE (2006) has emphasised the need for Local Authorities to ensure they fulfil their role in improving relations between Gypsies and Travellers and the settled populace.

Despite the fact that the respondents to the survey clearly stated a range of problems that they had experienced on their sites, the research found that they were very unlikely to report them to either the Local Authority or the Police. In fact the Gypsies and Travellers were more likely to move on in order to move away from the problem. In terms of public perceptions of Gypsies and Travellers and associated tensions with the public, it is possible that some of those tensions are caused through irresolution of problems on site, such as fly tipping or neighbourhood disputes. Had these problems been resolved prior to Gypsies and Travellers moving on, the settled communities perceptions of Gypsies and Travellers may have been improved.

#### 4.4 Future Pitch Requirements for the County

This section of the report uses the data supplied locally to the research team on Gypsy and Travellers encampments, along with the data generated through the survey about personal/family circumstances to estimate the future pitch requirements for Devon at the County level. District/Unitary Authority breakdowns are provided in Appendix Four.

The starting point for the calculations is the number of existing sites and families within the County, and it is important to note that the numbers have been derived from the amalgamated information supplied by individual Local Authorities and other agencies (see Table Three in section Three) rather than the Caravan Count return, as this provided a considerably more comprehensive basis. Information was gathered from these multiple agencies, including Gypsy liaison officers, Police and TES, to inform knowledge of the number of existing authorised and unauthorised sites in Devon and the number of temporary stopping places. The information was cross checked and scrutinised for replication and was then tabulated by area. The information gathered covered an extended period of time to ensure that comprehensive knowledge of Gypsy and Traveller sites in Devon was garnered, rather than a *'snapshot'* of time that the caravan count represents. However, the very nature of unauthorised sites, particularly those that are not tolerated, is that they will exist for relatively short periods of time until they are moved on by the Police or Local Authorities, or the Gypsies and Travellers may move on prior to such official action. Hence this data represents a period of time in the Devon area, but is likely to change and fluctuate beyond the study period.

It is also important to point out that, as explained in Section Three, data and information for some areas was more comprehensive than others and in some cases information supplied by the Authorities had missing elements. For the purpose of the calculations a number of estimates had to be made where data about the number of pitches and/or families was missing. When just some information was missing it was assumed that one static vehicle or pitch was equal to one family and that there were two adults per family. Where all the information was missing, making it impossible to estimate the number of families per site, appropriate data from the survey was used to either check the actual number of families on a specific site or to calculate the average pitch size for that type of site

within the specific district. A default of two families per pitch was used in the small number of cases where all the information was missing.

On this basis it can be seen that there are 105 sites available within the county (including Local Authority Residential, Authorised Privately Owned and Unauthorised but excluding temporary stopping places) and 285 Gypsy and Traveller families. 155 of these families are currently occupying unauthorised sites. Consistent with the (former) ODPM's guidance, such calculations should also take into consideration overcrowding. Following the methodology used within the Cambridge Sub-Region Needs Assessment, pitches/spaces were assumed to be overcrowded when four or more people were living in one vehicle. The survey findings showed that 13% of Gypsies and Travellers sites were overcrowded within Devon and this was applied at a district level to the total number of families in order to estimate the current shortfall of pitches through overcrowding which is 26. Thus the County has a current shortfall of 181 pitches (155 from families on unauthorised sites and 26 from overcrowding).

It is also important to look to the future and, again consistent with the ODPM guidance, predictions have been made which include calculations for family formation. A family formation rate of 3% per annum was applied, as advocated by Niner and used within the Cornwall Needs Assessment.

N.B. Although the licence for the current site at Broadclyst will not be renewed displacement has not specifically been included within the predictions because it is the understanding of the research team that this will simply occur through natural attrition rather than through purposive action – i.e. when someone moves on or dies their pitch will not be made available for use by anyone else.

Using the family formation rates forecasts have been generated for the next five years – i.e. 2006 – 2011, which as shown in Table Thirteen totals 226 extra pitches. However, in order to comply with more recent RSS requirements an additional row is included within the Table, showing the predictions from 2011-2016 of an extra 53 households through family formation.

It should be noted that the shortfall identified is for permanent pitches in order to accommodate the current 'homeless' or overcrowded Gypsy and Traveller population. As will be discussed more fully in the

recommendations section, the research team strongly suggest that a two-stage process is adopted to address Gypsies and Travellers accommodation needs with permanent (as opposed to transit) pitches provided in the first instance.

**Table Thirteen: Future Pitch Requirements for Devon**

Devon as a Whole	
<b>SITES AVAILABLE AND FAMILIES</b>	
Local Authority residential sites available	3
Number of families	29
Authorised privately owned sites available	49
Number of families	101
Unauthorised sites available (identified during the study period)	53
Number of families	155
Temporary stopping places used (current and historical)	91
<b>Total sites available (3 + 49 + 53)</b>	<b>105</b>
<b>Total number of families (29 + 101 + 155)</b>	<b>285</b>
<b>CURRENT SHORTFALL</b>	
Current shortfall of pitches from families on unauthorised encampments	155
Percentage of sites overcrowded in Devon (from survey findings)	13%
Shortfall of pitches from overcrowding	26
<b>Total current additional demand (155 + 26)</b>	<b>181</b>
<b>FUTURE SHORTFALL</b>	
Family formation 2006 – 2011 = 45 households	45
<b>Total shortfall 2006 – 2011</b>	<b>226</b>
Family formation 2011 – 2016 = 53 households	53

Source: SRRU Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment 2006

The individual calculations for each District/Unitary Authority on which Table Thirteen is built are shown as a series of tables in Appendix Four. However, these are predicted on the basis of existing authorised and unauthorised sites, not taking into account temporary stopping places, and it should be noted that the absence of a shortfall in a particular District/Unitary Authority does not necessarily mean that provision is not required within that area. For example, whilst Torbay does not currently have any sites and therefore does not have a shortfall according to the methodology on which those tables have been constructed, it nevertheless has a number of known temporary stopping places that are

used and the TES data shows that there are Gypsy and Traveller children within the area which may suggest the need for provision. Importantly, the shortfall of pitches is a County-wide problem that requires a co-ordinated County-wide response.

#### 4.5 Health

Health outcomes for Gypsies and Travellers tend to be very poor as has been described in the literature review of this report. However, the majority of respondents to this Needs Assessment stated that their health was *'very good'* (42.2%), as can be seen from Table Fourteen, with only 8.6% of respondents having said that their health was *'very poor'*. A further 29.7% of respondents said that their health was *'good'*. These findings concur with those of the Travellers Wellbeing report carried out by the Devon Health Forum in 2003.

**Table Fourteen: Health Ratings of Respondents**

Health Rating	Frequency	Percentage
1.0 – Very Good	54	42.2%
1.5	7	5.5%
2.0	31	24.2%
2.5	4	3.1%
3.0	12	9.4%
3.5	5	3.9%
4.0 – Very Poor	11	8.6%
No Response	4	3.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: SRRU Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment survey 2006

For those people who do suffer ill health a range of reasons have been given for this including *'stress'* (13%) and *'short term physical'* problems (10.9%). By far the most common reason for ill health was *'long term physical'* problems (58.7%). In relation to good health Gypsies and Travellers cited their healthy (6.5%) or active (19.6%) lifestyle as explaining their well being.

When asked about the health status of family members 21.1% of the sample said that they had family members with either *'poor'* or *'very poor'* health. In 89.5% of these cases *'short term physical'* or *'long term physical'* problems explained the poor level of health.

Discussion of health and welfare in Gypsy and Traveller communities is relatively limited as are reports on health and well-being (barring some excellent exceptions such as Parry et al, 2004). Even asking a question about disability was recognised by this study's Gypsy and Traveller interviewers as extremely sensitive. However, a reasonable number of people, just over half of respondents, did respond to a question on disability. Of those people who responded, 10% said that they did have a '*disability*' (although that might not necessarily be a diagnosed disability) and the majority of these were among the people who had rated their health as '*poor*' or '*very poor*'. National studies show that 18% of the working population have a disability. Of the people who answered questions about disability in the family, 11% said that they had a family member with a disability. Disability was found in this study across the different types of Gypsy and Traveller community. Despite these findings on disability, only 2.3% of all respondents said that they had help at home, and only 2.7% of all respondents said that they would like help which may be an area for some further research. The close family ties within Gypsy and Traveller communities may explain the lack of take up of services as families and friends provide support.

Interestingly, 18.8% of respondents said that they would be likely to need help provided in the home within the next five years which may be something that Supporting People could explore in more depth. This most likely reflects the ageing population who will increasingly need support, but is also partly explained in the findings by needs relating to children with health or disablement issues. When people have stated that they will need support in the future, they most commonly envisage this help occurring in the home.

When feeling unwell Gypsies and Travellers in Devon utilised a range of services as can be seen from Table Fifteen. Principally respondents called on a doctor (83.6%) or the Accident and Emergency (A&E) department of a hospital (64.1%). Gypsies and Travellers from official Local Authority sites were the most likely to go to A&E departments. This result is of particular note as the use of A&E is most commonly related to crisis management and more settled Gypsies and Travellers have previously been understood to utilise general practice health services (Devon Health Forum, 2003). Some respondents had used their local health visitor (14.8%). New Travellers were most likely to have used an alternative therapist (8.6%). Of note was the fact that Gypsies and Travellers living on the roadside were relatively likely to talk to

Traveller Education Services about health matters. Only 41.4% of respondents used a dentist. This finding may simply reflect the national difficulty of attaining National Health dental care.

**Table Fifteen: Health Services Used by Respondents**

Health Services Used	Frequency	Percentage (n=128)
Doctor	107	83.6%
Hospital Accident & Emergency	82	64.1%
Dentist	53	41.4%
Health Visitor	19	14.8%
Hospital Other	18	14.1%
Midwife	14	10.9%
Alternative Therapist	11	8.6%
Travellers Education Service	9	7.0%
Nurse	8	6.3%
District Nurse	5	3.9%
Support Worker	4	3.1%

Source: SRRU Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment survey 2006

\*Percentages do not total 100 due to multiple responses

Respondents living on roadside sites were asked about their ability to attain 'follow-on' appointments for health care. The majority said that they would arrange their movements around such appointments to ensure they could attend and therefore this was not viewed as particularly problematic. Only one respondent said that they found it difficult to get such treatment. However, whilst not generally considered problematic for Gypsies and Travellers themselves, it may be useful for Local Authorities to be aware of follow up appointments so that they can make preparations.

In order to ascertain the level of service provided to Gypsies and Travellers and thus their experience of discrimination, respondents were asked if they had ever had poor experiences with health professionals. The results show that 10.9% of respondents said that they had had poor experiences, most commonly with the doctor or the dentist. Given the fact that most respondents used a doctor, this finding is less significant. However, of note is the finding that the most common reason given for poor experience by respondents was the evidence of prejudice by the health professional.

Alongside the occasional complaint of poor health practice is a more positive response from respondents. Overall 42.2% of respondents said that they had had a good experience of people in the health services. The most commonly visited practitioner, again the doctor, gained most praise (57.4%). Midwives, who had been used by 11% of respondents were also praised (10.6%). Health visitors, dentists, Accident & Emergency departments and other hospital services, as well as the Traveller Education Service were all praised as having provided health support. The reasons given by respondents for their positive experiences with health practitioners were varied. Most commonly respondents said that the health practitioner had been helpful (36.7%), but also Gypsies and Travellers said that some practitioners had been sympathetic to their lifestyle (16.7%).

#### **4.6 Education**

As has previously been noted, asking Gypsies and Travellers about their personal lives can be very difficult and overall this research has had a good response rate on difficult questions. The questions asked of Gypsies and Travellers about their education were similarly well responded to with 82.8% of respondents answering questions in this area.

As can be seen from Table Sixteen, respondents to the survey had largely been educated to secondary level, with 87.7% of respondents having received a primary education and 76.4% of respondents having received secondary education.

**Table Sixteen: Type of Education**

Type of Education	Frequency	Percentage (n=106)
Nursery	20	18.9%
Primary	93	87.7%
Secondary	81	76.4%
16+	11	10.4%
College	27	25.5%
University	11	10.4%
Apprenticeship	5	4.7%
Reading/Writing	67	63.2%
Travellers School Charity	3	2.8%
Training for Work	22	20.8%
Training for Life	20	18.9%

Source: SRRU Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment survey 2006

\*Percentages do not total 100 due to multiple responses

Within these findings though analysis shows that all those people who have described themselves as New Travellers have received secondary education, whereas only 66.7% of traditional Gypsies and Travellers have done so. There is a recognised cultural practice of secondary school age children from traditional Gypsy and Traveller families learning practical skills at home, rather than in the school room. Also, there has been some reluctance within families for their children to be exposed to the broad curriculum that is taught in modern schooling, including culturally inappropriate classes in drug and sex education for example. There are also serious parental concerns about racist bullying. However, research has shown that increasingly Gypsy and Traveller parents are keen for their children to gain an education (Clark, 1998, Bhopal, 2004). Indeed, this study found that respondents with school aged children were more likely to have sent their children to school (87.2%) than to have been to school themselves.

The majority of respondents who had attained an education post age 16 were New Travellers, with those respondents commonly also attending University. Due to the occupation of sites according to type of Gypsy and Traveller, it is unsurprising that those people occupying authorised Local Authority sites, who tend to be English Gypsies, have lower school attainment levels. Likewise those respondents who occupy roadside and unauthorised tolerated sites, who tend to be New Travellers, are the most educated.

On analysis of the survey data in relation to gender it is clear that amongst traditional Gypsy and Travellers women are more likely to have received a primary education than men and this is also the case for secondary education. However, with regard to post age 16 education men are more likely to have attended. Amongst New Travellers there is an even split of men and women educated at primary and secondary level, but post age 16 and particularly at University women were far more likely to attend.

Only four respondents had received no formal learning at all. Otherwise respondents reported having attained a range of skills through informal learning, including reading and writing skills (63.2%), training for work (20.8%) and training for life (18.9%) which commonly came from family relationships. Although the research has shown above that respondents' children are more likely to have gone to school than their parents, informal learning was found in the survey to continue to support formal learning environments, as 42.6% of parents said that their children had learned '*from example*' from within the family home.

A significant minority (26.6%) of respondents to the survey (i.e. adults rather than children) said that they would like to receive further education or training. The majority of these would like to attain some sort of manual or craft training (26.5%), however a desire was also shown for literacy and numeracy training (11.8%), further or higher education (8.8%), professional or existing skills development (11.7%) and training in some area of health (5.9%). A number of parents (25.5%) stated that they would like to be able to support their children's learning more, but barriers to such were identified as a lack of information technology (IT), grants for tools and equipment, home tutors and books. It should be noted here that the '*fairground model*' of schooling, recognised as good practice within the Travellers Wellbeing Report (2003), allows for pupils to attend formal schools in winter months and then have supported distance learning in the travelling months of the year, including the provision of resources such as laptop computers.

Barriers to education are recognised by organisations such as the Traveller Education Service who work flexibly with Gypsies and Travellers to ensure their access to education. Respondents to the survey had experienced barriers to their education (16.4%), most commonly their travelling lifestyle. Research very clearly shows that the lack of secure sites can result in inconsistent and broken educational experiences

which results in poor school attainment (Clark and Greenfields, 2006). A significant minority (27.8%) of respondents to the survey who were living on the roadside said that evictions and forced movement had made it difficult for them to gain access to education for their children.

#### 4.7 Policing and Crime

Gypsies and Travellers relations with the Police have historically been somewhat tense (James, 2004). However, with the advent of diversity training and specific diversity officers within forces there has been a move towards a more inclusive, community oriented approach to Gypsies and Travellers in policing.

Just over half of respondents to the survey said that they had had some contact with the Police (52.3%). Of those people the majority said that their experience of contact with the Police had either been 'OK', 'good' or 'very good' (41.8%). However, 29.9% said that their experience of contact with the Police was 'very poor' as opposed to 17.9% who had said it was 'very good'. Also, when previously asked about any problems on site, 15% of respondents said they experienced problems with 'Police activities'. Overall then, contact with the Police had generally been experienced positively by respondents, but a significant minority had had a very poor experience with them. This may reflect the degree to which certain officers have been trained to work with Gypsies and Travellers; those officers who have received effective training and have taken up a role as a diversity officer are more commonly responded to well, but those who have not may be less able to deal with Gypsy and Traveller communities sensitively (Rowe, 2005).

One of the most negative outcomes of poor relations between the Police and Gypsies and Travellers is the unwillingness of Gypsies and Travellers to report crime committed against them. When asked about their experience of victimisation 23.4% of respondents said that they had been a victim of crime, which coheres with the national average of 24% (British Crime Survey, 2004). However, only 53% of those respondents who had been victims had reported the crime to the Police. When crimes had been reported, a third of respondents said that they had not been acted upon by the Police. The main reason given by respondents for not reporting crimes was that they did not trust the Police. This lack of trust has been shown in research to be resultant of Gypsy and Traveller

experiences of eviction, Police surveillance and disproportionate use of stop and search procedures (Greenfields, 2006, James, 2004, 2006).

Related to experiences of victimisation is the Gypsies and Travellers experiences of racism. Half of respondents (50%) said that they had experienced racism and most of those who said this were traditional Gypsies and Travellers as opposed to New Travellers. The reporting rate for this type of crime at 17.2%, was much lower than for other offences. Only limited information was provided by Gypsies and Travellers on what had happened in these cases, but it is clear that action was taken by the Police in some cases and was not in others. Given the nature of such offending it is of note that action was not taken by the Police on occasion. Of those people who did not report racist offending 36.4% said that this was because they did not trust the Police. The commonly held view that Gypsies and Travellers prefer to resolve their own conflict issues is at odds with the findings of this survey, as only one respondent said that they had sorted the problem out themselves.

#### 4.8 Media

Research has shown that media portrayals of Gypsies and Travellers are extremely negative (Morris in Clark and Greenfields, 2006). Portrayals of Gypsies and Travellers in a negative light serves to alienate them from the settled community and therefore create tensions that can result in disputes surrounding accommodation rights and needs for Gypsies and Travellers. Table Seventeen shows that 33.6% of respondents to this research said that they had had a *'very poor'* experience of the media. Only 17.1% of respondents said that their experience of the media had been *'good'* or *'very good'*. The key reasons for the poor experiences of Gypsies and Travellers were that there was *'inaccurate reporting'* (34.3%), *'bad image presented'* (27.1%) and *'hostility from the media'* (10%).

**Table Seventeen: Experiences with the Media**

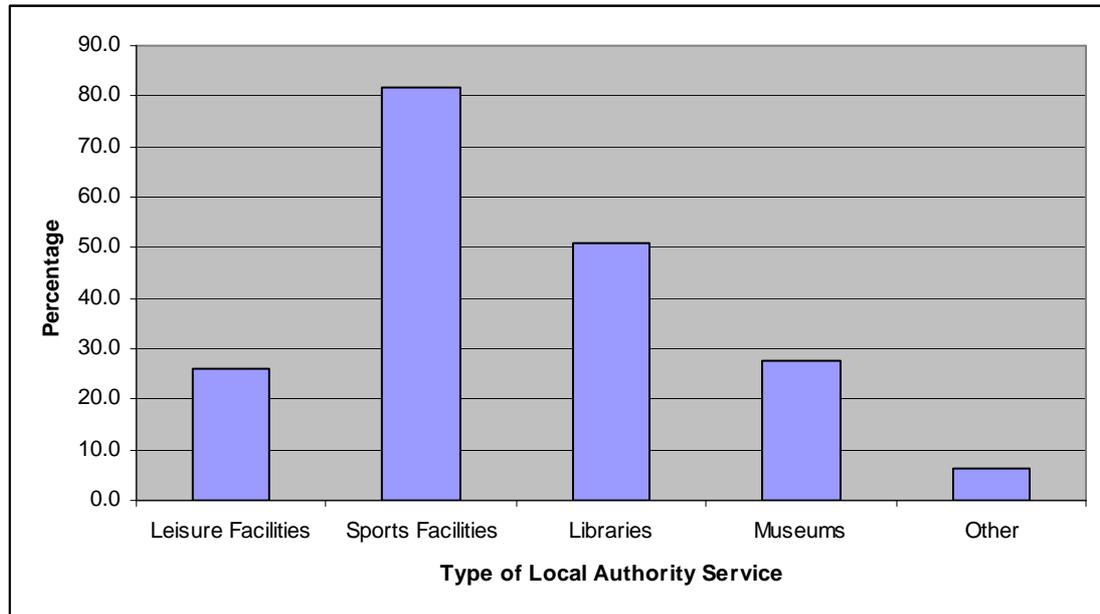
Experience Rating	Frequency	Percentage
1.0 – Very Good	4	3.1%
1.5	4	3.1%
2.0	14	10.9%
2.5	5	3.9%
3.0	9	7.0%
3.5	1	0.8%
4.0 – Very Poor	43	33.6%
No Response	47	37.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: SRRU Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment Survey 2006

#### 4.9 Other Services

Gypsies and Travellers use of services provided by their local area, other than the health and education services is important to ascertain so that planners can address need in relation to site placement and so that Local Authorities can ensure that Gypsies and Travellers are not being discriminated against through the withholding of services, or through inappropriately designed and/or delivered services. When asked whether they used other Local Authority services 50.8% of the Gypsy and Traveller respondents to the survey said they did. As can be seen from Chart Four, the most commonly used facilities were, sports facilities (81.5%), libraries (50.8%), museums (27.7%) and leisure facilities (26.2%). Of those people who used sports facilities, 39.6% said that they used the sports facilities for their showers and these respondents were most commonly roadside Gypsies and Travellers. None of the respondents who utilised sports facilities showers were from authorised Local Authority sites, which is unsurprising as they are the most likely people to have bathroom facilities on site.

**Chart Four: Use of Other Local Authority Services**



Source: SRRU Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment Survey 2006

Linked to the need for further information technology services within educational provision identified in Section 4.6, 21.2% of respondents who said they used libraries did so to gain access to a computer as opposed to 15.2% who went to the library to use books.

The people who did not use Local Authority services said this was because they either had no need of them (29.8%) or are not interested in them (22.8%), perhaps suggesting the need for Local Authorities to engage in consultation with Gypsies and Travellers to find out what services they would be interested in. Some respondents said that the services were too far away from them (8.8%). Although this is a relatively small number of people, it should be noted as planning guidance in Circular 01/06 emphasises the importance of Gypsy and Traveller sites being near to services without the necessity of use of a car. Those people who said they had no need of Local Authority services were slightly more likely to be English Gypsies or those living on tolerated or self owned sites.

A significant minority of respondents (36.7%) said that they had been discriminated against in the provision of services generally. Of note in this respect, Local Authorities have an option to carry out Equality Impact Assessments on new or recently changed services. This

framework could potentially be useful in assessing whether the manner in which a Local Authority is planning to deliver a service may discriminate against Gypsies and Travellers. However, on analysing these findings it is clear that respondents are referring to a range of services, both provided by Local Authorities and private business. Respondents had been refused use of the library (19.1%), turned away from swimming pools (12.8%), turned away from launderettes (19.1%), declined insurance (12.8%), declined catalogue shopping (8.5%) and declined banking services (4.3%). Of most note was the fact that a very high proportion of respondents had been turned away from public houses (61.7%) which explicitly breaches the Race Relations Act. These findings reflect research that has commonly found a general societal discrimination against Gypsies Travellers that is borne of fear and misinformation, as outlined above. The tackling of relations between Gypsies and Travellers and the settled community has been highlighted as paramount by the CRE (2006).

## 5. Qualitative Interviews with Gypsies and Travellers

The Gypsy and Traveller Survey was followed by a period of qualitative fieldwork which took place over the summer of 2006. The research team met with groups, both from settled sites and at the roadside in order to explore some of the survey themes in more depth. This phase of research also included interviews with some of the *'harder to reach'* groups including Gypsies and Travellers in bricks and mortar accommodation as well as children. This section of the report discusses the key findings from each of these elements. It is of note that the interviews that were carried out (including with people in housing) emphasised the differences that exist between different types of traveller, such as between English Gypsies and Irish Travellers<sup>11</sup> Showmen and New Travellers. Such differences are not just a matter of social or ethnic identity though as they also involve different attitudes, expectations and patterns of behaviour towards the members of each group and between the groups. Such differences are reflected in different wants and needs in respect to sites, the provision of amenities and access to services as is also evident from the survey findings.

### 5.1 Site Preferences

Although both Sowton and the Ride have a mix of English and Irish Travellers with no obvious issues arising from that, the survey findings found a lack of enthusiasm for sites that mixed different types of Gypsy and Traveller together. This was explored in more detail during the qualitative interviews in which it was suggested that the sharing of sites between different groups had been a problem in the past, and was something to be avoided in the future. In the interviews Gypsies and Travellers clearly expressed their kinship ties and desire to travel with their family and friendship groups. This may explain their aim not to travel with other types of Gypsy and Traveller. Their cultural expression and way of living may be very different to other types of Gypsy and Traveller as discussed in the survey findings, with New Travellers tending to prefer low impact lifestyles that are not formally organised and traditional Gypsies and Travellers having strict rules regarding family behaviour and cleanliness. With fundamental differences such as these, one emphasising a strong structure of kinship, the other favouring

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<sup>11</sup> None of the interviewees identified themselves in this category, however, it was mentioned as significant by one informant.

a less structured way of organising social relationships, each group is likely to view the other as a potential threat, as one interviewee put it:

*'Different communities don't tend to live together. I don't really understand some communities either and so I think that [sharing sites] would cause problems – especially [with] the new age Travellers'.*

This view, however, was not unanimous and some of those interviewed would be happy to use sites occupied by different Gypsies and Travellers. Such attitudes were explained through the rationale that if conflict occurred with neighbours on a site, it was possible to move on to a different place, although a fear was expressed that if more official Council sites are developed in Devon Gypsies and Travellers will be forced to use them. As one New Traveller said of official sites:

*'...they will try to force people on to them, we don't want that – to be forced to live there....{we} want to be able to move around, otherwise we might as well just live in a house'.*

As was apparent in the survey findings the ability to move on was often not, however, a matter of choice for the Gypsies and Travellers interviewed as many interviewees said that they had experienced eviction or forms of harassment that had resulted in their having to move on. For others, moving on was driven through fear of having their vehicle taken and therefore losing their home.

For some interviewees the constant round of evictions had exacerbated their problems of accessing certain services, education and finding work (see below). The Showmen were different in this regard as they move to designated fairground sites, rather than setting up unofficial Gypsy and Traveller sites or settling on authorised Local Authority sites, between spring and autumn. They then went to their permanent sites in the winter, though such sites in Devon were not necessarily authorised. Their pattern of movement was more regular though, and because of the nature of their business, they were more tied in to the formal economy and dictates of Local Authority bureaucracy than the other Gypsies and Travellers interviewed.

Despite the differences between types of Gypsy and Traveller outlined above, the qualitative research found some common needs and wants in terms of site provision. Consistent with the main survey findings, there

was a general preference for small sites. The interviews revealed that larger sites were disliked in general as being difficult to manage and often infested with vermin. It was pointed out that this particular problem could not be solved by putting down poison as many Gypsies and Travellers owned dogs which could be harmed by such treatment. The root cause of the problems on sites was seen as poor site management.

The New Travellers also talked about *'responsible'* and *'irresponsible'* behaviour regarding the use and maintenance of sites and the people who used them. As one example, some sites were named as places to avoid because they were associated with the use of Class A drugs. Another example related to the problem of rubbish and waste disposal, the Gypsies and Travellers pointed out that they cleared their sites before they left, and one of the English Gypsy interviewees pointed out that he had offered to pay the council to collect the rubbish from his pitch, but they had not responded.

The overall consensus was that sites needed hard standing and taps, and should also be designed in a way that fitted in with a nomadic lifestyle, which may include allowing the use of outside fires and a supply of wood, and also allowing people to carry out their work from the site. As expressed by one of the English Gypsy interviewees:

*'...when they build sites they don't build them for the way Travellers want to live. They like to have a fire outside – but on site they get told 'no fires, no scrap etc'. The Council don't understand that this is their livelihood'.*

The interview data has therefore drawn out two particular issues that the survey findings have not focused on. The need for hard standing sites, where vehicles may be maintained in the winter for example, has been found as relevant in other research (James, 2006) and is clearly relevant to site needs for this study. Similarly, it should be noted that space for outside fires may be relevant to nomadic community living. The desire expressed for water reflects the main survey findings and likewise the facilitation of work vehicles on site has previously been mentioned. However, the need expressed here for mixed sites, on which Gypsies and Travellers can work, is of note as planning guidance considers such sites discreetly and with less emphasis than solely residential sites.

Another identified need was for secure postal addresses. As highlighted in the main survey findings the lack of a postal address can cause problems accessing certain services, claiming benefits and having a bank account. As one interviewee pointed out:

*'...an address would be great. 99% of work we can't do as we don't have an address, we can't even register a vehicle.'*

It was pointed out that a lack of postal address can mean that some vehicles *'disappear'* off the DVLA database and cannot therefore be insured, which makes them illegal.

Problems with accessing a number of other services such as public libraries and banks were mentioned, but specifically by the New Travellers and in these cases it was again pointed out that lack of a proper address was the main barrier to accessing such services. However, the desire was clearly expressed for a site to use as an address and for trading but with the ability to move on as well.

The qualitative research found a willingness among some Gypsies and Travellers to pay for services and rent for pitches, but it should be noted that this carries with it the danger of falling into a situation where they may not be able to afford to pay any rent or charges as they cannot guarantee earning regular income the whole year round. As identified in the survey findings and in the interviews outlined above, Gypsies and Travellers commonly work on an *'ad hoc'* basis through self employment and they experience barriers to finding constant employment. These circumstances can result in Gypsies and Travellers being financially insecure.

In the survey findings it was clear that some Gypsies and Travellers were unhappy with their site's management and a preference was generally expressed for no formal management. However, in interviews it was acknowledged that sites needed to be managed properly. There was no strong opinion about how this could be organised, whether it should be by members of Gypsy and Traveller communities themselves, or by another designated person who could act as point of contact with the site provider.

Another theme to emerge from the qualitative research is that views about sites and the councils who own land in some cases is coloured by perceptions that such land is *'common land'* and therefore the public have

some right or entitlement to use it. Some interviewees reported that Local Authorities were removing these rights by the redesignation of land specifically so it could not be used for sites. Clearly there are misunderstandings concerning the legal position of what common land is, and who actually has rights over it, and that in turn is likely to affect attitudes and behaviour regarding both the provision and management of sites. Some of the Gypsies and Travellers interviewed had bought land which they wished to use as their permanent base. Each of these people had tales of the struggles they had had with Local Authorities and planning legislation.

## 5.2 Discrimination

All the Gypsies and Travellers interviewed reported incidents of harassment and discrimination which ranged from threats and physical violence to verbal abuse. It is not the purpose of this report to either confirm or disconfirm the truth of the individual cases that were reported during the course of the interviews, however, there is no doubt that all travelling groups that took part in the interviews, with the exception of the Showmen had suffered from discrimination in a number of forms which may have also resulted in difficulties in accessing certain services. Although in the case of the latter this was more likely to be caused by bureaucratic procedures and the need for a permanent address than individual acts of discrimination, there was nonetheless a widespread distrust of both Local Authorities and the Police, and as also highlighted within the main survey findings, a small number of people reported direct discrimination, particularly among some health sector workers.

It was evident that many Gypsies and Travellers had experienced forms of discrimination since childhood. Many English Gypsies recalled that bullying and name calling at school had been commonplace, which in part may also explain the reluctance to continue schooling beyond a basic level. Reports of violence, threatening behaviour and bullying in school were not however confined to those living on sites, but were also reported by those in housing. One person reported that:

*'We are getting racial abuse from the neighbours over the back and there are a couple of kids there too, I think they are bullying [my son] because he is a Gypsy'.*

Others who had settled into housing also reported instances of this kind. Another interviewee said *'I don't tell people I'm a Gypsy, but I don't deny it'* before informing us that she had lost friends when they had found out that she was from a Gypsy family. Clearly the terms *'Gypsy'* and *'Traveller'* carry with them negative associations even when an individual is in bricks and mortar accommodation, and can also be a problem for their children. In turn, this was often linked in to what Gypsies and Travellers perceived as inaccurate and biased media reporting.

### 5.3 Benefits

Consistent with the Gypsy and Traveller Survey findings, most of the interviewees, especially the older generations, reported that they were not informed about what benefits they may be entitled to which, as mentioned earlier, may be due to the independent nature of Gypsy and Traveller cultures. Perhaps not surprisingly those who were interviewed in housing were generally more aware of what their entitlements and rights were but overall only one Traveller, a young mother, reported that she was in receipt of benefits and that was because she perceived that she had little choice.

### 5.4 Health Care

The general self reported health of the interviewees varied from those who said they were in good health to some with chronic conditions that may or may not be attributed to a travelling lifestyle. Some of those who had moved into permanent accommodation reported that they had suffered from depression and feelings of isolation, but this was by no means a general occurrence. It has been found in other research that Gypsies and Travellers are more likely to move into bricks and mortar accommodation if they have health issues (Clark and Greenfields, 2006).

The most significant problem identified throughout the qualitative research in relation to health care is access to a dentist: all of those in the roadside interviews mentioned this as a problem, as also did some of the people in housed accommodation. As mentioned in the survey findings, such difficulty of access to dental services may simply reflect the wider societal problems of gaining dental care. Some other problems were also highlighted in accessing more general health services, including not

being registered with a general practitioner which meant that when a problem with health arose, the nearest accident and emergency unit was the usual first point of contact. However, this seemed less of an issue for the Showmen. As one of the Showmen said:

*'We just go to any local GP surgery and say that we're a temporary resident and they generally see us as soon as they can'.*

However such action relies not only on finding a local general practitioner, but also on the fact that people who are travelling may not be in one place long enough to make and keep an appointment. As noted, there were also a few reported instances of individuals in the health sector discriminating against Gypsies and Travellers. However, in contrast, there were also a number of reported cases where people were full of praise for the health care they had received. These findings clearly reflect the main survey findings.

## 5.5 Education

Low levels of literacy were reported among a few of the traditional Gypsies who were interviewed, with moving between schools and bullying within the school being cited as the main reasons for this. One interviewee explained that:

*'I can't read and write. I went to school when I was younger but only a few times, I got bullied so my mum pulled me out'.*

However, in the words of another, allowing children to stay at home '*too much*' was '*typically Gypsy*'. The experience of New Travellers interviewed was quite different with one having attended private school.

Travelling itself was clearly seen to disrupt education. As one English Gypsy interviewee put it:

*'I was shuffled around a bit at primary school level. I went to several schools and didn't enjoy it much'.*

Another English Gypsy said that she only went to school until she was eight years old and a further said she left school at 12, having '*spent more time out of school than in it*'. The qualitative interviews

revealed what was described as 'moral' issues for many Gypsy families sending their children (particularly girls) to secondary schools in that:

*'Traveller girls are brought up with very high morals.....Gypsy's don't like the Traveller girls going to big school as they get the sex influence/boys etc so they try to keep them away from that'.*

Notwithstanding these issues, the main survey findings show that educational attainment has increased amongst the younger generation and the qualitative interviews also reflected that education is seen by parents to be important, with some interviewees, including from traditional Gypsy and Traveller and Showmen families, talking very proudly about the GCSEs, for example, that their children had attained.

The general perception was that things are improving. In the words of one interviewee:

*'School can be a difficult thing when you are travelling because the teachers don't understand the set up we have but I think in general it's getting better now and people are more aware ....I would say that the TES has got better'.*

It is of note, however, that in some cases the ambitions of the children (see below) matched the experiences of their parents, which was to acquire practical skills which were better suited to a nomadic lifestyle rather than formal qualifications and emphasis was placed by some adult interviewees on the value of being taught such skills and also of work experience.

## **5.6 Housed Gypsies and Travellers**

The interviews found that the reasons for moving into housed accommodation varied. In some cases this was due to marriage outside the travelling group with one partner not wishing to travel, in another it was due to poor health and in one instance it was a case of having to accept accommodation in order to prevent having a child taken into care. Housing tenure also varied from owner occupied to being owned by another family member to being council owned. While individual cases all showed a great deal of variance, one factor that was seen as a positive

benefit was the stability that housing offered which enabled children to attend the same school on a regular basis.

Less positively, the loss of openness and sense of space that is found when on the road was mentioned by all those who had moved into housed accommodation. Some mentioned how confined and restricted they felt, even after a number of years. One interviewee had moved into a house, but having found the experience too depressing had moved out and into a caravan on a permanent pitch. She explained that:

*'...when you are in a house you do begin to question your own identity'.*

For others adapting to a more sedentary form of life was less problematic, but all of the Gypsies and Travellers pointed out that unlike being on the road, they were unable to choose their neighbours. Interviewees had often experienced a sense of isolation when they had moved in to housing, especially in relation to their extended family, one person pointed out that whereas in the past they would just go out of their door to see their relatives, now they had to make arrangements in advance. Living on the road was seen as more sociable and close knit than living in a house which again reflects the importance of kinship and friendship ties to Gypsies and Travellers. As expressed by one interviewee:

*'The best thing about being on site is having all your family around you'.*

## **5.7 Interviews with Children**

The interviews with children focussed on a number of issues relating to schooling as well as attempting to gather some general views that concerned living nomadically. Out of the fourteen children and young people that were interviewed, half were Showmen, four were English Gypsies and three were New Travellers or '*nomad*' (the latter being a self description). One of the children was living in a house, and while she liked some aspects of it such as having more room to play in, she also expressed a dislike of doors. As noted above, some of the adults also thought that house dwelling gave them a sense of confinement.

When asked where they wanted to live, among the Gypsies and Traveller children there was an overall preference for the outdoors '*A nice big field*' and '*A field with a horse*' were typical answers, while others said that having space around them was very important. Only one of

these children expressed a preference for a house, as they wanted more space to themselves, but ideally this had to be out of the way of other people. There were some notable differences between these responses and those among the Showmen. In the case of the latter, it was generally the place where they stayed for the winter months that was given as the ideal place to live. There were two exceptions here, one child mentioning Florida, as the family were building a house there, and another mentioning Poland, as he had heard about it from Polish workers at the fair. Ideal destinations aside, for the Showmen children, it was the existence of friends in the regular winter quarters and in the schools they attended during that time that was important, and while moving around was seen by most as a fun thing to do, some also reported that they disliked being away from their friends at this time. The interviews with other Gypsy and Traveller children however, did not reveal the same network of friends that is rooted to a locality.

Reflecting the comparatively low levels of eviction identified in the Gypsy and Traveller Survey, only one of the children interviewed had had experience of being evicted. This same child also reported that when they had been in school they had been bullied, and consequently had been taken out of school and was being educated by her mother. She disliked school she said, *'because I get picked on'*.

All types of Gypsy and Traveller children reported that in some instances name calling and bullying were problems for them at school. In turn, some would attempt to hide their origins and not tell school friends that they were from Gypsy and Traveller families, while others did not mind everyone knowing, and a few sometimes told other children. *'My mates at school are nice to me about it'* said one from a Showmen family, adding that:

*'...people I'm not friends with sometimes call me a Gypsy. The teachers do tell them off but not much'*.

The implication here that being called a *'Gypsy'* was in some way insulting, highlights the differences between type of Gypsy and Traveller.

The interviews with children found that aspirations for their future were by and large moulded by their cultural experience of living nomadically, which in itself is unsurprising. When asked what they would like to do

when older, there was a tendency to mention the acquisition of skills that could be of use in a travelling life. Although some children simply said they wanted to travel, among the girls there was a preference for becoming hairdressers, but there was no comparable obvious choice amongst the boys. One wanted to become a mechanic, and realised that he would have to go to college to realise this aim, and another gave three scenarios that ranged from continuing fairground working to owning an amusement arcade to being an accountant, and that the later choice would mean going to college or university.

The data from these interviews allows us insight into some of the issues, problems and aspirations of the children. In some cases it can be seen that name calling and bullying are problems that can lead to children withdrawing from education, however, this is by no means applicable to all the children that were interviewed. Some were happy to say what kind of family they came from, whereas others concealed their origins as a means of pre-empting name calling and other forms of bullying. Whether or not this was because of their experiences or because of parental guidance cannot be ascertained, but at the very least such actions show a keen awareness of some of the social implications of their unique position.

## 6. Stakeholder Interviews

In addition to interviewing Gypsies and Travellers, it was important for this study to ascertain the views of relevant service providers. All partners of the Steering Group were invited to be interviewed in their capacity as representatives of the key stakeholder agencies or groups relevant to the study within Devon. The vast majority of partners agreed to take part and the interviews were conducted either face-to-face or by telephone and were based upon a standard interview schedule. This included a core set of 'open' ended questions, which allowed the interviewee to discuss issues in a non-prescriptive format as well as a limited number of 'closed' questions that captured certain profiling and attitudinal data.<sup>12</sup> An interview schedule can be found in Appendix One.

The professions of the interviewees included Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officers and Community Development workers as well as representatives of public sector organisations including local council departments (such as housing and environmental planning) along with other statutory bodies. The majority of the interviewees had been in their current professional roles for less than two years and their engagement with Gypsies and Travellers ranged from infrequent to regular.

### 6.1 Views on Gypsy and Traveller Uptake of and Outcomes from Services

Steering Group partners revealed a number of issues surrounding the uptake of and outcomes from services for Gypsies and Travellers. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the key theme to emerge from the interviews was the underlying problem of the lack of accommodation in the form of authorised permanent and transit sites, which Gypsies and Travellers who cannot afford to buy land or who have purchased land without receiving planning permission depend upon to avoid experiencing eviction and/or being 'moved on'.

The inter-relationship between accommodation and service provision was highlighted during the interviews. As one stakeholder articulated:

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<sup>12</sup> Some additional questions were also asked of particular representatives where appropriate, for example, those representing Dartmoor National Park.

*'People need to understand cause and effect between housing and other provision. If this understanding existed.....there would be increased co-operation that would eventually lead to increased provision of services'.*

This, coupled with the nomadic nature of Gypsy and Traveller culture, was seen by many interviewees to result in access to services such as education and health care as well as to appropriate benefits being problematic. For example, whilst some Gypsies and Travellers have a 'fixed' base from which to access medical services, the issue of GPs not taking on those that are travelling because they have no fixed address was highlighted during the stakeholder interviews. Further, it was pointed out that Gypsies and Travellers tend not to see the need for preventative health care – the sorts of services that are offered to the general community such as smear tests and so forth – so tend not to seek it out and because they do not get into the 'system' it is not offered to them.

More generally, from the service provider viewpoint, corresponding effectively with Gypsies and Travellers is difficult due to their changing residential locations. And vice versa, it was felt that for Gypsies and Travellers, knowing where to find relevant contact details in order to access services is problematic when moving to locations where provision of services fall under different local councils. Access to education was particularly highlighted as suffering from the 'knock on effects' of this problem, compounded by the fact that unauthorised encampments are not recognised as catchments zones for access to schools.

Further underlying issues identified involve the social and political exclusion of Gypsies and Travellers, which is spurred by a lack of cultural understanding by settled populations. The negative perceptions held about Gypsies and Travellers was highlighted within the interviews, expressed by one stakeholder as public frustration that Travellers 'flout the rules that everybody else lives by'. It was also pointed out that most people perceive Gypsies and Travellers to be a homogenous social group which is inaccurate. According to one particular interviewee:

*'...there are at least three quite distinct groups: those with local family who look for settled accommodation, who want the same access to services as people in homes. Then there are those who are in transit through the area who are here for economic reasons – e.g. going to*

*Cornwall to pick vegetables as work, whose requirements are clean, safe transit pitches that aren't available at the moment. Then there are 'new age travellers' who seek different sites, radically different, some would like permanent facilities and some would like a far more environmentally friendly setting. The last group have far more difficulties in accessing health and education facilities'.*

It was suggested that lack of public dialogue regarding the needs of and provision for these distinct groups perpetuates cultural misunderstandings between resident and nomadic populations. Further, it is the considered view of the Needs Assessment Team that such cultural misunderstandings were evident on the part of some of the service providers who were contacted during the course of the study.

Interviewees indicated that that cultural ignorance on the part of the general public can reveal itself in many ways including bullying at school, which in turn further affects Gypsy and Traveller access to the education system. Echoing the experiences of the interviewees within the qualitative fieldwork, it was pointed out for example, that if an incident does occur at school the families are much more likely to want to take their child out of school, to take avoidance strategies rather than to deal with the situation. It was suggested that whilst this can be a fear for all parents it particularly impacts on Gypsy children.

## **6.2 Strengths and weaknesses of Current Provision**

Interviewees were also asked what they saw as the main strengths and weaknesses of current provision for Gypsies and Travellers in Devon and many respondents were unsure. In the words of one interviewee, *'We are all a bit in the dark really concerning the services that are needed'.*

To this end there was a consensus among Steering Group members that the Housing Needs Assessment is the first step in understanding what is required. Hence, in many cases judgement was reserved on this issue.

However, a limited number of strengths and weaknesses were highlighted during the interviews. In terms of strengths, it was pointed out that Devon's topography provides numerous locations in which permanent and transit sites could be located, i.e. urban localities surrounded by an abundance of rural countryside that is accessible by a thorough road network. Coupled with this natural topography are

current efforts to provide consistent approaches in overcoming issues relating to crime, residence, education and health services through Devon County Council's Unauthorised Encampments Protocol. The Travellers Education Service also exemplifies dedicated efforts to directly overcome barriers to services that Gypsies and Travellers experience.

In terms of weaknesses, as already mentioned, there is a clear lack of accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers in Devon, which is reflected by the high number of unauthorised encampments within the county. The interviews revealed that this lack of accommodation is a problem in and of itself but that it can also lead to a lack of trust between different parties, preventing long-term relationships developing between local councils and Gypsies and Travellers, which in effect thwarts suitable policy formation. Problematic relationships and lack of trust were seen to be exemplified in, for example, the fact that there are few reported crimes by Travellers to the Police, as well as a more general suspicion amongst the travelling communities of service providers. In the experience of one stakeholder:

*'Personally, when we started to get involved in this, I got the sense that the traveller community didn't want us to get involved. Perhaps we were doing something that they thought wasn't wanted or maybe needed. Maybe they thought we were going to throw them off the land'.*

The perception was that barriers are being broken down through engagement in local forums such as the Dartbridge Collective which brings Gypsies and Travellers and service providers together. Notwithstanding these positive developments, however, it was pointed out that difficulties continue to exist and are compounded by the fact that for many service providers, work with Gypsies and Travellers tends to be simply reactive to circumstances that arise. This was identified as a clear weakness and it was suggested that better consultation with Gypsies and Travellers about what they want from service provision would be beneficial.

### **6.3 Collaboration in Service Delivery**

The extent to which service providers collaborate regarding provision for Gypsy and Travellers was also discussed during the interviews but proved difficult to measure due to the mixed responses from

interviewees. Whilst some collaboration is evident between service providers, the majority of interviewees claimed that much more could be done in this respect. Poor internal and external communications were highlighted as particular areas of concerns. Whilst there are some very good models of communication in existence, for example, in Plymouth there is a multi-agency 'virtual' group set up as an E-mail distribution list (including all City Council Departments as well as TES, the Police, GP surgeries and the Education Allocations Team) which notifies everyone on the list of any new encampments, in the words of one interviewee:

*'As a county we - all services - need to meet and talk to each other so that services compliment rather contrast – e.g. how can you provide education at schools without an adequate bus service to get kids there?'*

Further, the perception expressed was that barriers to effective collaboration stem from an insufficient understanding of what currently exists in terms of Gypsy and Traveller provision. And linked to this the interviews identified that a further detrimental effect upon collaboration can be the uncertainty surrounding the exact nature of individual service provider remits. This, in effect, was thought to lead to miscommunication and the responsibility for Gypsy and Traveller issues being passed from agency to agency. The interviews highlighted that good inter-agency networking can be defeated by this factor. And further problems were thought to arise from the sporadic nature of collaboration between service providers in the Steering Group that rarely make contact with Gypsies and Travellers. It was suggested that inexperience can lead to inefficient collaborative networks. Added to which it was pointed out that there can be contrasting goals between departments. For example, some are trying to get Gypsies and Travellers off local land while some departments are trying to help them stay on the land.

That said some very good examples of effective collaboration were highlighted. For example, TES provides placements for Diversity Officers from Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, which, it was suggested, is helping to break down barriers. It was also suggested that collaboration between TES and Devon, Plymouth and Torbay Local Authorities, under the umbrella of 'safe guarding children', has solidified recently involving a good sign-posting relationship with health services. The TES have also established an inter-county network through the

South West Co-ordinators Group. This consortium-like network involving co-ordinators from Devon, Cornwall, Somerset, Dorset and Bristol regularly discuss issues surrounding Gypsy and Traveller education on a strategic level. The Co-ordinators Group also assists in tracking travelling groups within the South West and providing information for Gypsy and Travellers on TES contacts as they move from one county to another.

Other local organisations such as the Devon Racial Equality Council were praised by a number of interviewees for their collaborative ethos, along with the GTLOs. However, it was generally perceived that improvements within the County could be made. Many Steering Group members suggested that collaboration could be enhanced by increasing awareness of agency specifications and roles; services provided to the public; and the role within the network of organisations dealing with Gypsy and Travellers and their sign-posting capabilities. There was also some suggestion of involving more practitioners in the county-wide multi-agency meetings to increase understanding at the frontline of delivery.

Overall the Needs Assessment was seen a key stage in the process of improving collaboration between Devon-wide organisations through increasing agency knowledge of current issues. This was viewed as part of a process that will establish a unified common agenda regarding Gypsies and Travellers. These issues are highlighted in the conclusions and recommendations that follow.

## 7. Conclusion and Recommendations

The overarching aim of the Needs Assessment is to assess the housing and accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers within the Devon. Subsidiary aims are to identify need within the Gypsy and Traveller communities for learning, health services and other services provided by Local Authorities and their partner organisations; to better understand current levels of access to services, and any barriers experienced; as well as to increase understanding of how services might best be provided to meet Gypsies and Travellers needs. It is intended that the information gathered will be used to inform strategies and plans to ensure the inclusion of Gypsy and Traveller communities, and to close the gaps in the outcomes that persist in: education, employment, health, safety, accommodation (including accessing support to allow people to maintain their chosen accommodation) and the environment.

The findings from each of these aspects of the research have been presented in detail within this report. In terms of housing and accommodation, the study has identified the need for a **minimum of 226 permanent extra pitches** within the County over the period 2006 – 2011 with a further 53 needed between 2011 and 2016. The inter-relationship between accommodation and wider services has also been highlighted. Consistent with wider literature, and notwithstanding some examples of very good practice, the Needs Assessment has identified that many Gypsies and Travellers within Devon are experiencing difficulties in accessing and gaining positive outcomes from local services. Although it is tempting to suggest that all Gypsies and Travellers settle to attain an address and therefore gain access to services, this is one area that the services need to recognise as procedurally problematic. The constant institutional requirement for a fixed address often results in Gypsies and Travellers being excluded. This is true for both settled and roadside sites as even settled sites are not necessarily recognised as postal addresses.

The drafting of recommendations for addressing these issues has been a consultative process and having conferred with the Housing Needs Assessment Steering Group in their role as representatives of the wider service providers and Local Authorities within the County, this concluding section of the report sets out the research team's final recommendations for addressing these issues, although it will be important to recognise the need for local prioritisation. They fall within

three broad headings: pitch provision, service provision and general information sharing and communication.

## 7.1 Pitch Provision

### **Recommendation One: Local Authorities should Work Together to Distribute New Pitch Provision Appropriately**

The study has identified the need for a minimum of 226 extra permanent pitches within the County over the period 2006 – 2011. Importantly, the shortfall of Gypsy and Traveller pitches is a County-wide problem that requires a co-ordinated County-wide response. Although disaggregated data has been produced, as per the requirements of the Needs Assessment brief, at District/Unitary Authority levels it should be noted that the figures have been calculated on the basis of existing authorised and unauthorised sites, not taking into account temporary stopping places. For example, whilst Torbay does not currently have any sites and therefore does not have a shortfall according to the methodology on which the disaggregated data has been constructed, it nevertheless has a number of known temporary stopping places that are used and the TES data shows that there are Gypsy and Traveller children within the area which may suggest the need for provision. Clearly the absence of a shortfall in a particular District does not necessarily mean that provision is not required within that area, and Authorities should plan and implement a shared strategy to meet the County-wide need that has been identified within this report.

### **Recommendation Two: Adopt a Two-Stage Approach to Site Provision which Initially Concentrates on Permanent Pitches**

People moving through Devon, along with the high proportion of roadside sites in the county implies the need for transit pitch accommodation, particularly along the main routes through Devon. However, the need for transit sites is likely to be reduced if spaces for visitors on permanent sites are increased to facilitate visiting family and friends (see Recommendation Three below). Hence it is strongly advised that permanent provision is made available *before* transit sites are developed. The provision of permanent accommodation will meet the needs of the current 'homeless' after which it will be possible to assess the extent of transit provision required within the County.

### **Recommendation Three: Ensure that the Location and Configuration of Sites is Adequate and Appropriate**

In general terms, the placing of Gypsy and Traveller sites in poor environmental environments, such as near waste disposal sites (the Ride in Plymouth is near the dump and Sowton is built on top of an old waste site) has been recognised as a problem in research (Niner, 2003). The Gypsy and Traveller respondents in this research similarly express a need to have sites in healthy environments and Local Authorities should consider this when planning site locations. As Niner suggests, it may be possible that such sites are cheap and less contentious with the settled community, but Gypsy and Traveller sites should be placed '*only in areas considered appropriate for general residential use*' (Niner, 2003:218).

The desire of Gypsies and Travellers to have good community relations when defining where sites are placed is a positive message from their communities that the council should make every effort to enhance and work upon with the settled community, as the CRE note in their 2006 report.

The particular needs of New Travellers should be considered here. New Travellers are disproportionately evicted and there are no authorised sites for them. Hence efforts need to ensure that New Travellers are not disproportionately treated to other groups of Gypsy and Traveller (James, 2006). As Niner (2003) notes, there appears to be no evidence for a reduction in the number of people who move in to nomadic dwelling from a sedentary existence and indeed there is a history of such in the UK. As such provision needs to allow for all travelling groups.

It is specifically recommended that sites should be relatively small, with no more than a maximum of 20 pitches and preferably between six and fifteen pitches. The Local Authority sites in Devon cohere with this size requirement as Sowton has eleven pitches and Plymouth has thirteen (Broadclyst is in the process of closure). However, the suggestion by Niner (2002) that sites could be expanded (in order to facilitate population growth and lack of available sites) may not be appropriate for the Devon area as the sites mentioned are already broadly within reasonable size limits. Some growth may be possible, but only on a very minimal level.

All new pitches on permanent sites should accommodate at least four vehicles. This will allow space for two accommodation vehicles or a

twin accommodation unit that will accommodate the average family as represented in this research. A further vehicle space will allow for the parking of a vehicle used for general transport purposes or for work and a final space will accommodate visitors or a work vehicle. Gypsies and Travellers in Devon have a high household size and thus high levels of overcrowding. These findings place great weight on Local Authorities to ensure that future provision is sufficient, particularly that pitches can accommodate the needs of households. And overcrowding is an issue that goes beyond simply the space provided within vehicles. In order for a site to be a safe place to live, both health and safety and fire regulations must be adhered to and consequently site design should allow for sufficient space between vehicles and pitches, as well as within them. Given that many Gypsies and Travellers in Devon are living on unauthorised sites, the roadside or on sites without planning permission it is likely that regulations are not adhered to. Indeed the research findings show that the least provided service to Gypsies and Travellers in Devon is fire protection and this is their most desired service. Fire safety officers can and will do fire safety assessments of sites and vehicles and are keen to provide this support to the Gypsy and Traveller communities.

Alongside the issue of overcrowding is the matter of future provision for the growing population of Gypsies and Travellers in the next five years. Plans for such provision should take into account that the close proximity of family and friends requires sites to allow for expansion or for other sites in the area that are connected by good transport links.

Of note, the self-employed, manual labour carried out by Gypsies and Travellers means that they commonly have working vehicles and tools that need to be facilitated on site. Currently such facilities are not sufficiently available and should be improved.

Finally, whilst the lack of use of official stopping places by Gypsies and Travellers while they are on the move implies the need for transit sites (see above), it also infers a need for spaces for visitors on permanent sites to facilitate visiting family and friends. Currently there is very limited provision. The desire to move on from such stopping places out of choice or for work implies that they would be used solely for visiting purposes – so long as there is sufficient pitches elsewhere for people who need permanent or transit provision.

**Recommendation Four: Ensure Flexibility in the Provision of Extra Pitches and Consult with Gypsies and Travellers Regarding Provision for Specific Areas**

Flexibility of provision in meeting the identified need is essential and communication with Gypsy and Traveller communities as suggested in Annex D of Circular 01/06 is highly recommended by this Needs Assessment. As ODPM circular 01/06 suggests requirement for site provision can be fulfilled by both Local Authority and private provision, including Registered Social Landlords. The desire of Gypsies and Travellers in Devon to live on their own land means that planning teams within local planning departments should work with Gypsies and Travellers to identify appropriate land for ownership and site development so that such applications could be considered sympathetically. Better communication should pre-empt problems with planning, to support applications where appropriate and ultimately to result in effective provision.

The findings from the survey data show that New Travellers most commonly wish to live in rural areas and the desire for use of green lanes as stopping places highlights the distinctive needs of the different communities that the accommodation assessment is aiming to present. Traditional Gypsies and Travellers in this research identified their desire to have more formally organised sites with facilities such as play space and utility blocks. Local Authorities should be sensitive to these differing needs when planning site provision and considering applications for private sites. This point may be particularly relevant to private site applications as the Needs Assessment does not aim to provide a definitive guide to what every Gypsy and Traveller site should contain or be located. Such a generic blue print would prove too prescriptive and may lead to inappropriate sites being developed.

Likewise, the range of facilities and services that Gypsies and Travellers currently have access to and desire access to highlights the difference between types of Gypsy and Traveller and their perceived needs. The provision of pitches must be sensitive to such issues as it unlikely for example that New Travellers will feel able to stop on very formally organised sites that have multiple facilities. The need for water and space in a rural environment appears to be their need according to the findings of the survey element of this research and the qualitative interviews whereas traditional Gypsies and Travellers are likely to

require more facilities. Each should be accommodated in their own way. As Niner (2003) suggests from her national research, in order to fulfil the needs of local communities small, flexible schemes for provision should be set out that meet the need of the specific communities in the area.

Within this flexible provision, the willingness of some Gypsies and Travellers to consider house dwelling should be considered by local housing departments and information provided to Gypsies and Travellers on what housing would be available to them should they desire this (rather than where they are compelled to do so).

### **Recommendation Five: Ensure Diversity and Choice in Provision Where Possible**

With the enactment of Section 62 a-e of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act enacted through the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 it will be possible to evict Gypsies and Travellers from land if there is sufficient space available on a local site for them. After Needs Assessments have been completed and provision laid out the policy focuses on enforcement in order to reduce unauthorised encampments. As previously stated some different Gypsy and Traveller groups live together harmoniously. However, the research has found that Irish Travellers may not want or feel able to go on to a pitch that is in an English Gypsy site and/or visa versa (and similarly for New Travellers) which may in real terms result in unauthorised encampments appearing if the only pitches available are those on a site occupied by Gypsies and Travellers of ethnicity other than those needing pitches. In other words, if mixing of cultural groups is forced, conflict may arise that will create tensions with the settled community and cause cost to the Local Authorities. Similarly if insufficient pitches are provided for different types of Gypsy and Traveller and unauthorised encampments occur this will result in continued poor health, education and welfare outcomes for the unsited Gypsies and Travellers and in the high cost to Local Authorities of evictions. Hence it is essential that diversity and choice for individual Gypsies and Travellers is ensured wherever possible.

### **Recommendation Six: Ensure that Sites are Properly Managed and Looked After**

Concerns from Gypsies and Travellers that existing site provision is poorly managed and of poor condition may mean that it is appropriate for Local Authorities to review their management and policies relating to site licenses. Authorities might want to consider setting up tenants associations as a way of involving residents in the maintenance and management of their sites. All Local Authorities should have a tenants participation team that could take the lead on this. Local Authorities may also look to the use of site refurbishment grants which should be utilised in consultation with Gypsies and Travellers to ensure that site conditions are effectively improved.

The evidence of problems with fly tipping for Gypsies and Travellers and related problems on site (particularly with vermin) highlights the need for Local Authorities to tackle illegal fly tipping. As Clark and Greenfields (2006) coherently argue, a combined strategy of tackling fly-tipping, whilst also ensuring provision of refuse collection from sites (and skips) and effective access to Local Authority rubbish tips for disposal of work related waste, is likely to ensure that rubbish on site is reduced and thus the related problem of vermin will also reduce. This will help to ensure that the public no longer feel upset at the sight of rubbish on Gypsy sites and the Local Authority will not have to bear the cost of cleaning up sites after people have left. Also Gypsies and Travellers will not have to suffer the existence of vermin within their living area.

The fact that Gypsies and Travellers do not report problems on site to the authorities may result in increased tensions with the public. Hence, early resolution of problems is vital to ensure good community relations. Were Local Authorities and agencies able to engender faith in the Gypsy and Traveller community through consultation and information and provision of good condition sites, it is likely that Gypsies and Travellers will be more likely to report problems and tensions will be reduced. Again the use of tenants associations may prove useful here.

### **Recommendation Seven: Facilitate Gypsy and Traveller Movement**

The movement of traditional Travellers out of the Devon area to fulfil cultural, work and family obligations is vital to the continuation and progression of Gypsy and Traveller culture. This movement out of Devon also means a degree of movement into Devon for similar purposes. For example the Barnstaple Fair involves an influx of Showmen in September of each year. Similarly weddings, funerals and christenings in Devon may mean the arrival of a number of Gypsies and Travellers to a specific part of Devon. The Local Authorities should be prepared and able to welcome such groups into their area for periods of time in order to facilitate the culture of Gypsies and Travellers. If such influxes are ignored or unplanned for, then Gypsies and Travellers may settle on inappropriate land that will cause difficulties with the settled community and Local Authorities who may choose to carry out eviction proceedings. Clearly in the circumstances described above for the movement of Gypsies and Travellers into the area it would be most appropriate if eviction proceedings were not entered in to.

The cultural desire of travelling to fulfil family commitments should also be facilitated by security of tenure being provided to those living on permanent sites.

### **Recommendation Eight: Make Certain that Accommodation Plans are Handled Sensitively by Local Authorities Regarding the Media**

The poor experiences of Gypsies and Travellers with the media and the likely consequence of increased tensions with settled communities highlights the need for accommodation provision plans to be handled sensitively by Local Authorities in delivery to the media. Any concerns regarding site provision expressed through the media should be viewed cautiously as not necessarily reflecting the views of the settled community, or at least acting as inflaming the fears of settled communities. Working with Gypsies and Travellers and settled communities directly to reduce such fears should be paramount for Local Authorities in planning and disseminating plans for Gypsy and Traveller sites.

## 7.2 Service Provision

### **Recommendation Nine: Improve Access to Health Provision along with Non-Discriminatory Practices**

The evidence of disability and ill health in the Gypsy and Traveller communities and the desire for more support, however small, means that services are required. The findings of the research that high proportions of Gypsies and Travellers (including from Local Authority sites) use A&E Departments suggests the need for better support in linking Gypsies and Travellers to the available services. There may also be a requirement for further research into health and social care issues, with particular regard to supporting disabled Gypsies and Travellers as well as for those who say that they are likely to need help within the home during the next five years, this potentially being a role for Supporting People. Having a better understanding of the related issues may facilitate improved delivery and encourage the further take up of such services and thus reduce the burden on informal carers within family networks.

The evidence of health practitioners acting in a prejudicial manner towards Gypsies and Travellers is of some concern here. It highlights the necessity for all health and social care services to ensure they engage in non-discriminatory practice and have an embedded understanding of diversity issues. Alongside the generic diversity training, practitioners need to be specifically equipped to deal effectively with Gypsies and Travellers who are likely to have distinct cultural practices and potentially differing needs than most of the settled population.

As noted by the Travellers Wellbeing Report (2003) there is no clear strategy within Devon health services for ensuring effective treatment and support for Gypsies and Travellers. The good practice established across many areas of Devon, as outlined in the positive findings of this report should be followed up with a clear strategy that enables all practitioners to work effectively. There may also be a case for the development of specialist health workers alongside trained community advocates within this strategy.

**Recommendation Ten: Ensure that Educational Provision is Appropriate to Gypsy and Travellers Needs and Aspirations**

The travelling lifestyle should not bar people from having an education. OFSTED has stated that Gypsy and Traveller children are the most '*at risk*' in education and findings from the Needs Assessment indicate that, whilst more Gypsy and Traveller children attend school now than they have done in the past, difficulties still arise for many. Bullying at school was mentioned as a particular issue and the fact that many families tend to take avoidance strategies and remove their children rather than deal with the situation. This needs to be widely recognised within schools and again handled with an embedded understanding of diversity issues. There is a clear role for Governing Bodies to take this forward as part of their leadership function.

The qualitative interviews with children and young people also revealed that the aspiration for many was to acquire skills that could be of use in a travelling life. Educational provision should be sensitive to these issues and be delivered in a flexible manner to meet individual children's needs and aspirations, whilst still providing high standards of more traditionally '*academic*' education.

It is also important that aspirations for further education as expressed by some Gypsy and Traveller adults within the main survey is facilitated in a way that is appropriate to their travelling lifestyles. This should be considered by the Learning and Skills Council within its overall remit to improve the skills of young people and adults in order to boost the Country's productivity.

**Recommendation Eleven: Develop Better Relationships between Gypsies and Travellers and the Police**

Gypsy and Traveller relations with the Police have been shown in the survey to have some negative elements. Some excellent work has been done by Police Officers nationally to improve relations between Gypsies and Travellers and the Police such as the '*Pride Not Prejudice*' conferences organised by John Coxhead of Derbyshire Constabulary. The engagement of Devon and Cornwall Constabulary with such initiatives would be highly beneficial, but must be accompanied by effective dissemination across the force to all officers.

Excellent policy development has occurred in some Police Forces in England and Wales to encourage Gypsies and Travellers to report race hate crimes such as in the Metropolitan Police in London, Cambridgeshire and Merseyside. In addition, joint working between the Police and Local Authorities, along with other agencies such as TES would be beneficial as incidents do not have to be reported directly to the police – victims can report to other agencies if they feel more comfortable doing this. Such policy development is likely to increase reporting of these crimes in Devon and work to improve relations between the Police and Gypsies and Travellers.

**Recommendation Twelve: Tackle the Denial of Gypsies and Travellers Access to Public Houses**

The research finding that Gypsies and Travellers are being turned away from public houses in Devon is of some immediate concern. The use of signs in pubs saying ‘*no travellers*’ has commonly been reported and is openly racist and illegal under the Race Relations Act. Local Authorities provide the licenses for public houses and the promotion of good relations with the settled community is their responsibility (CRE, 2006). It is unlikely that such openly racist behaviour would be tolerated against any other ethnic group. Measures should be implemented as soon as possible by Local Authorities, ideally in conjunction with the Police, to ensure such racism is prevented.

**7.3 General Information Sharing and Communication**

**Recommendation Thirteen: Improve Communication Within and Between Service Providers**

Councils should identify where Gypsy and Traveller matters are dealt with and ensure that planning and diversity officers for example are working together. The failure of one agency to warn Gypsies and Travellers of an eviction highlights the importance of ‘*joined up*’ thinking throughout and across agencies – ensuring that all staff are aware of correct procedures. As an example of good practice, in Plymouth there is a multi-agency ‘*virtual*’ group set up as an E-mail distribution list which notifies everyone on the list of any new encampments. This list includes all City Council Departments as well as TES, the Police, GP surgeries and

the Education Allocations Team and it could be considered for other areas of the county.

It is also recommended that agencies across the Devon-wide area should continue working together as a group, in the way they have done to commission the Needs Assessment in order to ensure joined up working and information sharing. This body could be responsible for the development of a Gypsy and Traveller Strategy to take forward the issues raised through the Needs Assessment.

**Recommendation Fourteen: Improve Communication Between Services Providers and Gypsy and Traveller Communities.**

Notwithstanding some areas of very good practice, poor communication between service providers and Gypsy and Traveller communities was found by the Needs Assessment to be an issue within Devon. It is strongly recommended that improvements are made in this area and, importantly, that service providers are culturally sensitive at all times in their communications. It is the considered view of the Needs Assessment team that cultural misunderstandings were evident on the part of some of the service providers who were contacted during the course of the study. All organisations should consider specialist diversity training for their frontline staff who deal directly with Gypsies and Travellers. The Needs Assessment Steering Group, should it continue to exist beyond the study period (see recommendation thirteen above), could potentially take this forward through the development of their Gypsy and Traveller Strategy, drawing on the experience of TES in this area of work.

There are also some particular areas in which the provision of information should be improved including within planning. The range of 'types' of planning permission given to Gypsies and Travellers was found to be confusing for the population. It becomes of particular concern when a family member passes away and subsequent occupiers of their pitch no longer have planning permission due to it having been provided on a named basis. This process needs to be made far clearer to the Gypsy and Traveller community, through a process of engagement and consultation – as Circular 01/06 requires of planning departments.

Another key area regards benefit information. The lack of knowledge of benefit information is likely to be due to Gypsies and Travellers not

engaging with employment agencies and the targeting of urban communities by such agencies for benefits information dissemination. This should be addressed through information being provided to Gypsies and Travellers alongside the settled population.

Finally, the information packs developed by the Devon Racial Equality Council that were used within the study were a highly valuable resource and could perhaps be utilised more widely.

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## Appendices

## Appendix One

### Gypsy and Traveller Interview Schedules

**SRRU**



**Social Research & Regeneration Unit**

A University of Plymouth Centre of Expertise

## GYPSY & TRAVELLER NEEDS ASSESSMENT INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

**CONFIDENTIAL**

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**Gypsy & Traveller Needs Assessment Interview Schedule**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Social Research & Regeneration Unit at the University of Plymouth has been asked by public authorities in Devon to talk to Gypsies & Travellers throughout Devon about their accommodation needs as well as their needs for local services such as health and education. Dr Rebekah Southern and Dr Zoë James are co-ordinating the study with the advice of members of the Gypsy & Traveller community. The purpose of the study is to advise the public authorities about the need for sites and other services.

We are hoping to talk to around 100 Gypsies & Travellers throughout the County and would very much like your help in answering some questions. Although we would like to take your name and address this will not be passed to anyone else so you can speak freely. We are going to hold a public meeting at the end of the study, which will be in the autumn of this year, to talk about what we have found and would like to invite you but we can only do that if we know how to reach you.

The questions will take about an hour. If there is anything that you don't want to answer that's absolutely fine. Just tell us and we will skip on to the next question. And if you want us to stop at any point that's OK, too. Please just tell us.

Is there anything that you'd like to ask us before we begin?

**FACE SHEET INFORMATION**

**Name of interviewer** .....

**Date of interview**.....

**Time started**.....

**Time finished**.....

**Place of interview**.....

**Address if Different**.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**Name of Interviewee**.....

**Gender of Interviewee**       Male       Female

**Type of site occupied:**

- Council
- Self owned with planning permission
- Self owned without planning permission
- Other private owned with planning permission
- Other private owned without planning permission
- Authorised non 'gypsy site' (e.g caravan/mobile home park)
- Unauthorised Roadside (use coloured form)
- Unauthorised - tolerated
- Tolerated (not officially)
- Unauthorised other (please specify)

.....

**Approximate size of site (number of caravans)**.....

**Section One: Are you happy to answer questions about your travelling?**

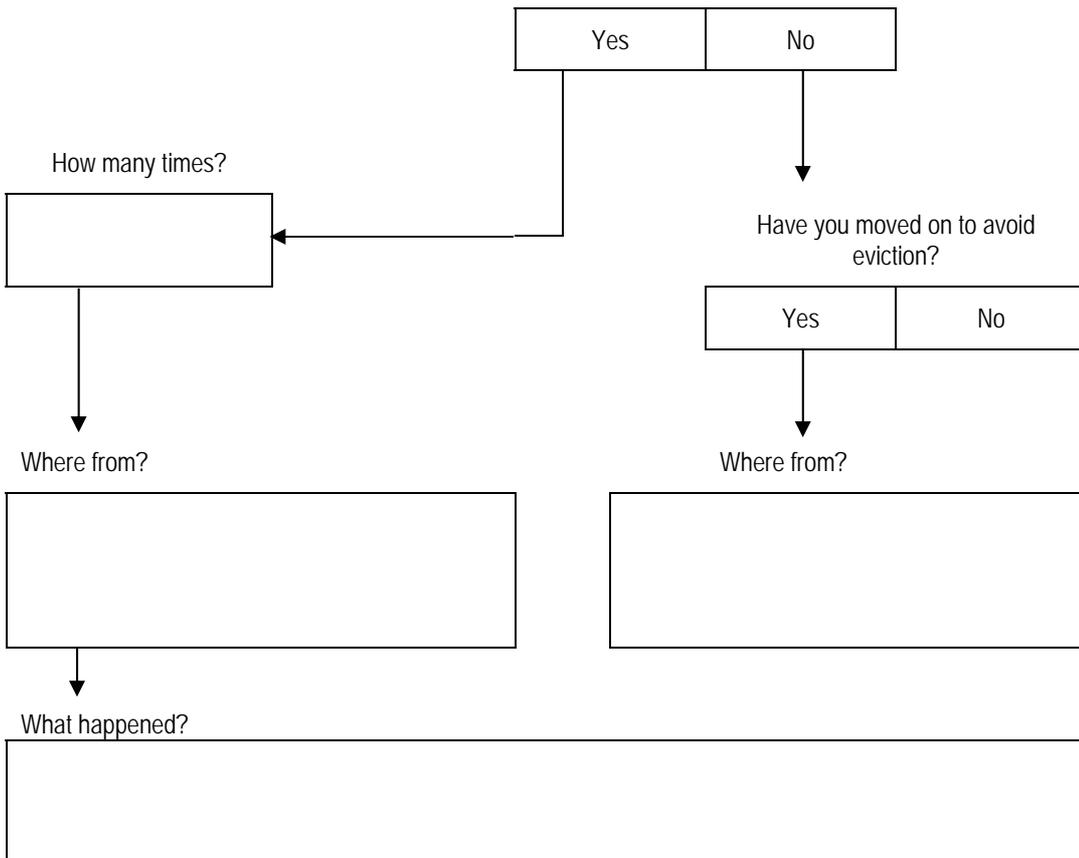
**1. Can you tell me about this site?**

	How long have you been here?	
--	------------------------------	--

	Where were you before?	
--	------------------------	--

	How did you end up at this site?
--	----------------------------------

**2. Have you been evicted in the last 5 years?**



**3. Where do you plan to go to next?**

**4. Why do you normally travel?**

- Culture
- For work
- To visit relatives/friends

Other

**5. Do you normally travel out of Devon?**

In the last 6 months? ← 

Yes	No
-----	----

↓  
Where did you travel to?

**6. How many vehicles/tourers do you normally have with you when you travel? (Please insert number)**

	Caravan/Tourer	Living vehicles other than caravans	Cars	Other vehicles (please specify)

7. Do you keep this pitch when you travel?

Yes	No
-----	----

Is this difficult? Tell us about it.

8. Are you looking for other accommodation in this area?

Yes	No
-----	----

What sort of accommodation?

What attracts you to this area?

9. Do you usually stop on council sites?

Yes	No
-----	----

As tolerated visitor	As unauthorised visitor
----------------------	-------------------------

In the last 6 months?

For how long?

Why did you leave?

Were there no spaces?

Why not?

10. Have you ever lived in a house?

Yes	No
-----	----

Why did you go in?

Where?

For how long?

Why did you leave?

11. Would you live in a house?

Yes	No
-----	----

12. Have you ever had your own land?

Yes	No
-----	----

Where?

For how long?

Why did you leave?

Any comments?

13. The council are looking at the need for additional sites. Do you think there are enough long term pitches available in Devon?

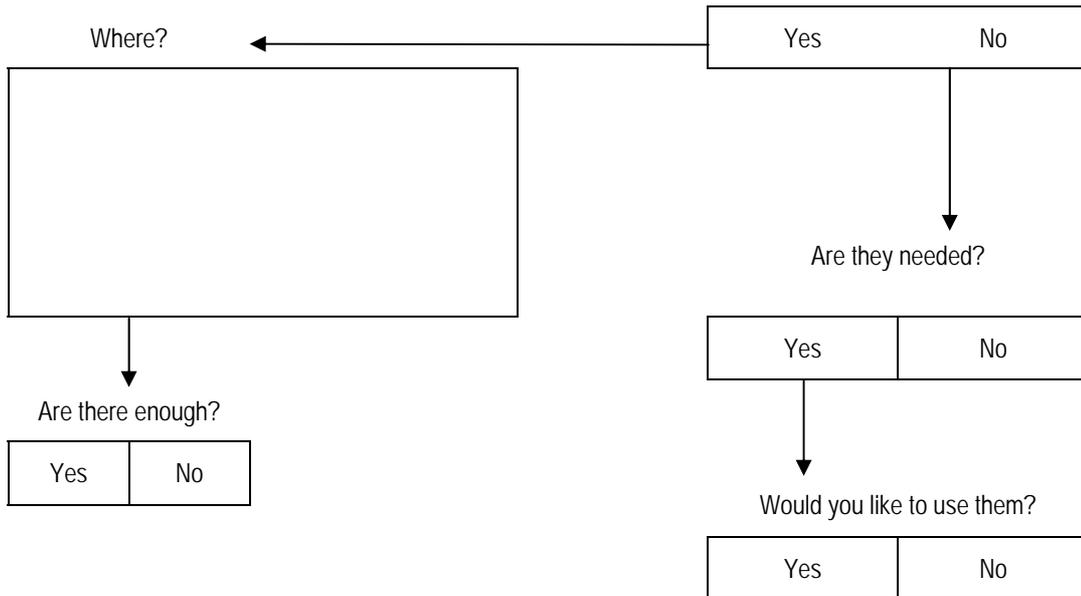
How many more do you think should be provided?

No	Yes
----	-----

What size do you think they should be?

Where do you think they should be provided?

14. Are you aware of any stopping places/transit sites in the area?



15. How big should a pitch be?

e.g. - 2/3 trailers  
 - twin unit + 2 trailers

- No of pitches on a site?

16. Do you think it is a good idea to combine residential and transit pitches on the same site?

Yes	No
-----	----

- How do you accommodate visitors?

Section Two: Are you happy to answer questions about your current accommodation?

17. How many vehicles do you have?

Static

Other living  
vehicles

Tourer

- Would you have more if you could?

Yes	No
-----	----

- Do you have enough space inside your accommodation at the moment?

Yes	No
-----	----

- And outside?

18. Do you think you'll need something bigger in the next 5 years?

- Are any of your family/household going to need their own pitch in the next 5 years?

Yes	No
-----	----

- Do you have enough space to park other vehicles?

Yes	No
-----	----

19. Do you have or would like to have any of these structures on your site?

	Have	Want
Sheds		
Day - rooms		
Toilets		
Bathroom facilities		
Utility block		
Laundry facilities		
Play space		

20. Do you have or would like to have any of these services on your site?

	Have		Want	
	Individual	Communal	Individual	Communal
Water				
Electricity				
Gas				
Drainage				
Postal Service				
Refuse disposal				
Recycling facilities				
Outside lighting				
Fire protection				
Bus stop				

- Is there anything else you want?

21. Is this site managed by anyone?

Who by?	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Yes</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">No</td> </tr> </table>	Yes	No
Yes	No		
	Would you like it to be? <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 5px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Yes</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">No</td> </tr> </table>	Yes	No
Yes	No		
Are you satisfied with the management? <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 5px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Yes</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">No</td> </tr> </table>	Yes	No	Who should manage it? <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 50px; width: 100%; margin-top: 5px;"></div>
Yes	No		
Comments <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 120px; width: 100%; margin-top: 5px;"></div>			

22. Can you keep animals here?

Do you need permission?	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Yes</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">No</td> </tr> </table>	Yes	No	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Why not?</td> </tr> </table>	Why not?
Yes	No				
Why not?					
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Yes</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">No</td> </tr> </table>	Yes	No	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; width: 100%;"></div>		
Yes	No				

23. Are there any restrictions on the site you don't like?

	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Yes</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">No</td> </tr> </table>	Yes	No
Yes	No		

24. Are there any non Gypsies & Travellers on this site?

Yes	No
-----	----

←

Who?

25. What are the conditions like on this site?

Very Good Very Poor

1 2 3 4

26. Is this site:

- Under used/has spare pitches?

Yes	No
-----	----

↓

Why?

- Overcrowded?

Yes	No
-----	----

↓

Are people doubling up?

Yes	No
-----	----

27. Have you ever had problems with:

Long tails/vermin

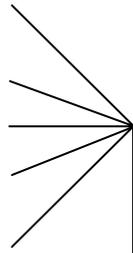
Disputes

Fly-tipping

Neighbours/Local People  
(please circle)

Police Activities

Other

What happened?

--

How was it dealt with?

--

Section Three: Are you happy to answer questions about what you do?

28. What do you do?

--

- Has this changed over the years?

How?

Yes	No
-----	----

--

Why?

--

29. Does your current address make it difficult for you to get work?

Yes	No
-----	----



Why?

30. Is it possible to keep vehicles/equipment on this site for work?

Yes	No
-----	----



Why?

31. Have you received any advice on possible benefits you might be entitled to?

Yes	No
-----	----



Would you like some?

Yes	No
-----	----

Note: follow up for support

Who from?



**Section Four: Are you happy to answer questions about your health?**

32. How would you describe your health?

Very Good

Very Poor



Please give reasons:

33. Do any of your family members have 'poor' or 'very poor' health?

Yes	No
-----	----

←

Reasons

34. Do you or any of your family members have a disability?

You  Family

35. Do you or does anyone in your family have any help provided at home by any services?  
(e.g. hand rails, ramp, home help/carer, help with shopping)

Yes	No
-----	----

←

What?

↓

Do you need any?

Yes	No
-----	----

↓

What?

- Do you think that you or anyone in your family is going to need help provided at home in the next 5 years by any services?

Yes	No
-----	----

←

What

36. Who do you get help from if you are feeling unwell and when?

✓

Please give more detail:  
(e.g. how far away)

Doctor		
Health Visitor		
District Nurse		
Nurse		
TES		
Dentist		
Midwife		
Alternative Therapist		
Hospital A & E		
Hospital other		
Support Worker other		

- Have you had any poor experiences with any of these people

Who?



Yes

No

Why?

Q36 continued overleaf/.....

- Have you had any good experiences with any of these people

Who?	←	Yes	No

Why?

37. Does your lifestyle affect your health in anyway (positively or negatively)? Please explain:

**Section Five: Are you happy to answer questions about your education?**

38. What type of education have you had?

<i>Formal</i>	✓	Full details if possible
Nursery		
Primary		
Secondary		
16+		
College		
University		
Apprenticeship		

*Informal*

✓

Full details if possible

Reading/writing

--	--

Training for work

--	--

Training for life

--	--

Travellers school  
charity

--	--

- Would you like to receive any further education or training?

What?



Yes	No
-----	----

--

Have you experienced any barriers to education?

Yes

No

--

--

39. Have you got any school-age children?

Ages	←	Yes	No
<input type="text"/>			

How do they usually learn?

↓  
School

Home Schooling

From being around you  
(examples:  
mechanics, home  
making, horse riding,  
boxing)

What do you think about it?

- Would you like anything to help them learn more?

What?

←	Yes	No
---	-----	----

Section Six: Are you happy to answer questions about other services and safety?

40. Do you use any other local authority services?

Yes		No
↓		↓
What?	What for?	Why not?
Leisure facilities	<input type="checkbox"/> <input style="width: 200px;" type="text"/>	
Sports facilities	<input type="checkbox"/> <input style="width: 200px;" type="text"/>	
Libraries	<input type="checkbox"/> <input style="width: 200px;" type="text"/>	
Museums	<input type="checkbox"/> <input style="width: 200px;" type="text"/>	
Other	<input type="checkbox"/> <input style="width: 200px;" type="text"/>	
	What? →	

41. Have you ever been discriminated against in the provision of services?

- e.g.
- Not allowed to use the library
  - Turned away from pool showers
  - Turned away from pubs
  - Turned away from the launderette

- Declined any insurance
- Declined catalogue shopping
- Declined banking services

How?	←	Yes	No

42.. Have you ever been in contact with the police?

Yes	No
-----	----

Was your experience

Very Good Very Poor



Why?

43. Have you ever been a victim of crime?

Did you report it to the police?

Yes	No
-----	----

Yes	No
-----	----

Why not?

What happened

44. Have you ever been a victim of racism?

Did you report it to the police? ← 

Yes	No
-----	----

Yes	No
-----	----

 → Why not?

What happened

45. What has your experience of the media been like?

Very Good Very Poor

1 2 3 4

Why?

Section Seven: Are you happy to answer questions about you and your family?

46. How would you describe yourself?

English Gypsy/Romany	
Irish Traveller	
Scottish Traveller – Gypsy	
Welsh Traveller	
New Traveller	
Showman	
Other	

→

47. How many people live with you on your pitch/space?

English Gypsy/Romany	<input type="text"/>
Irish Traveller	<input type="text"/>
Welsh Traveller	<input type="text"/>
Scottish Traveller – Gypsy	<input type="text"/>
New Traveller	<input type="text"/>
Showman	<input type="text"/>
Other	<input type="text"/>

→

48. Can you tell us how old you are?

49. Do you have brothers and sisters?

Do they travel? ← 

Yes	No
-----	----

↓

Yes	No
-----	----

↓

Where?

↓

Do they live near each other?

Yes	No
-----	----

- Do you have any family members in housing?

What	Yes	No
------	-----	----

[Note: If in study area, please can we have details?]

- Do you have children?

How many?	Yes	No
-----------	-----	----

How many live with you?

That is our final question. Is there anything else that you would like to tell us about (please specify in the box below).

Thank you very much for helping us. We would like to talk in a little bit more depth to some of the people we have interviewed in a few weeks time. Would you be happy for us to contact you again?

Yes	No
-----	----

Do you know other Gypsies or Travellers that we could approach to help us with these questions?

Yes	No
-----	----

If Yes, please take details or pass our details on to the respondent:

Dr Rebekah Southern : 01752 232747  
Dr Zoë James : 01752 233252

Social Research & Regeneration Unit  
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University of Plymouth  
Drake Circus  
Plymouth  
PL4 8AA

**SRRU**



**Social Research & Regeneration Unit**

A University of Plymouth Centre of Expertise

**GYPSY & TRAVELLER NEEDS ASSESSMENT  
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE  
UNAUTHORISED ROADSIDE**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

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**Gypsy & Traveller Needs Assessment Interview Schedule – Unauthorised Roadside**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Social Research & Regeneration Unit at the University of Plymouth has been asked by public authorities in Devon to talk to Gypsies & Travellers throughout Devon about their accommodation needs as well as their needs for local services such as health and education. Dr Rebekah Southern and Dr Zoë James are co-ordinating the study with the advice of members of the Gypsy & Traveller community. The purpose of the study is to advise the public authorities about the need for sites and other services.

We are hoping to talk to around 100 Gypsies & Travellers throughout the County and would very much like your help in answering some questions. Although we would like to take your name and address this will not be passed to anyone else so you can speak freely. We are going to hold a public meeting at the end of the study, which will be in the autumn of this year, to talk about what we have found and would like to invite you but we can only do that if we know how to reach you.

The questions will take about an hour. If there is anything that you don't want to answer that's absolutely fine. Just tell us and we will skip on to the next question. And if you want us to stop at any point that's OK, too. Please just tell us.

Is there anything that you'd like to ask us before we begin?

**FACE SHEET INFORMATION**

**Name of interviewer** .....

**Date of interview**.....

**Time started**.....

**Time finished**.....

**Place of interview**.....

**Address if Different**.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**Name of Interviewee**.....

**Gender of Interviewee**       Male       Female

**Section One: Are you happy to answer questions about your travelling?**

**1. Can you tell me about where you are stopping at the moment?**

How long have you been here?

Where were you before?

How did you end up here?

**2. Have you got a permanent site anywhere?**

Where?

Yes No

**3. Have you been evicted in the last 5 years?**

Yes No

How many times?

Where from?

What happened?

Have you moved on to avoid eviction? Yes No

Where from?

4. Where do you plan to go to next?

5. Why do you normally travel?

- Culture
- For work
- To visit relatives/friends
- Other

6. Do you normally travel out of Devon?

In the last 6 months? ← 

Yes	No
-----	----

↓  
Where did you travel to?

7. How many vehicles/tourers do you normally have with you when you travel? (Please insert number)

Caravan/Tourer	Living vehicles other than caravans	Cars	Other vehicles (please specify)

8. Are you looking for other accommodation in this area?

Yes	No
-----	----

What are you looking for?

9. Where do you usually stop?

Unauthorised Site		<div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <span style="font-size: 2em;">}</span> </div>	
Authorised Site			
Roadside			
Own land with planning permission			
Own land without planning permission			
			<span style="font-size: 1.2em;">→</span> Explain

10. Have you ever lived in a house?

Why did you go in?	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Yes</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">No</td> </tr> </table>	Yes	No
Yes	No		

↓

Where?

↓

For how long?

↓

Why did you leave?

11. Would you live in a house?

Yes	No
-----	----

12. Have you ever had your own land?

Yes	No
-----	----

Where?

For how long?

Why did you leave?

Any comments?

13. The council are looking at the need for additional sites. Do you think there are enough pitches available in Devon?

How many more do you think should be provided?

No	Yes
----	-----

What type - e.g. permanent; transit; green lanes; halting places

What size do you think they should be?

Where do you think they should be provided?

14. How big should a pitch be?

e.g. - 2/3 trailers  
 - twin unit + 2 trailers

15. Do you think it is a good idea to combine residential and transit pitches on the same site?

Yes	No
-----	----

- How do you accommodate visitors?

**Section Two: Are you happy to answer questions about your current accommodation?**

**16. How many living accommodation/vehicles do you have with you?**

Tourer  Living vehicle  yurt/bender

- Do you keep other vehicles elsewhere?

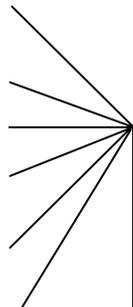
Yes	No
-----	----

Details:

**17. Have you ever had problems with:**

- Poor environment
- Long tails/vermin
- Disputes
- Fly-tipping
- Neighbours/Local People  
(please circle)
- Police Activities
- Other

<input type="checkbox"/>



What happened?

How was it dealt with

Section Three: Are you happy to answer questions about what you do?

18. What do you do?

- Has this changed over the years?

Yes	No
-----	----

←

How?

Why?

19. Does your travelling make it difficult for you to get work?

Yes	No
-----	----

↓

Why?

- Do you use a c/o address?

Yes	No
-----	----

20. Is it possible to keep vehicles/equipment for work?

Yes	No	→	Why?
-----	----	---	------

↓

- What do you do with them?

21. Have you received any advice on possible benefits you might be entitled to?

Who from?

Yes	No
-----	----

↓

Would you like some?

Yes	No
-----	----

Note: follow up for support

Section Four: Are you happy to answer questions about your health?

22. How would you describe your health?

Very Good Very Poor

1	2	3	4

Please give reasons:

23. Do any of your family members have 'poor' or 'very poor' health?

Reasons

Yes	No
-----	----

24. Do you or any of your family members have a disability?

You

Family

25. Do you or does anyone in your family have any help provided at home by any services?  
(e.g. hand rails, ramp, home help/carer, help with shopping)

What?  <input style="width: 100%; height: 80px;" type="text"/>	<table border="1" style="margin: 0 auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Yes</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">No</td> </tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> Do you need any? <table border="1" style="margin: 0 auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Yes</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">No</td> </tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> What?  <input style="width: 100%; height: 100px;" type="text"/>	Yes	No	Yes	No
Yes	No				
Yes	No				

- Do you think that you or anyone in your family is going to need help provided at home in the next 5 years by any services?

What  <input style="width: 100%; height: 130px;" type="text"/>	<table border="1" style="margin: 0 auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Yes</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">No</td> </tr> </table>	Yes	No
Yes	No		

26. Who do you get help from if you are feeling unwell and when?

✓

Please give more detail:  
(e.g. how do you access them when you are on the road?)

Doctor

Health Visitor

District Nurse

Nurse

TES

Dentist

Midwife

Alternative Therapist

Hospital A & E

Hospital other

Support Worker other


-What about getting follow-on appointments?

- Have you had any poor experiences with any of these people?

Yes	No
-----	----

Who?

Why?

- Have you had any good experiences with any of these people?

Yes	No
-----	----

Who?

Why?

Section Five: Are you happy to answer questions about your education?

27. What type of education have you had?

*Formal*

✓

Full details if possible

Nursery

--	--

Primary

--	--

Secondary

--	--

16+

--	--

College

--	--

University

--	--

Apprenticeship

--	--

*Informal*

✓

Full details if possible

Reading/writing

--	--

Training for work

--	--

Training for life

--	--

Travellers school  
charity

--	--

- Would you like to receive any further education or training?

What?

Yes

No

--

Have you experienced any barriers to education?

Yes

No

--

--

28. Have you got any school-age children?

Ages	←	Yes	No

How do they usually learn?

↓  
School

--

Home Schooling

--

From being around you  
(examples:  
mechanics, home making, horse riding, boxing)

--

- What do you think about it?

--

- Have evictions/movements made education difficult?

--

- Would you like anything to help them learn more?

What?

←	Yes	No
---	-----	----

--

**Section Six: Are you happy to answer questions about other services and safety?**

**29. Do you use any other local authority services?**

Yes		No
↓		↓
What?	What for?	Why not?
Leisure facilities	<input type="checkbox"/> <input style="width: 200px;" type="text"/>	
Sports facilities	<input type="checkbox"/> <input style="width: 200px;" type="text"/>	
Libraries	<input type="checkbox"/> <input style="width: 200px;" type="text"/>	
Museums	<input type="checkbox"/> <input style="width: 200px;" type="text"/>	
Other	<input type="checkbox"/> <input style="width: 200px;" type="text"/>	
	What?	

**30. Have you ever been discriminated against in the provision of services?**

e.g. Not allowed to use the library  
 Turned away from pool showers  
 Turned away from pubs  
 Turned away from the launderette

Declined any insurance  
 Declined catalogue shopping  
 Declined banking services

How?

←	Yes	No
---	-----	----

31. Have you ever been in contact with the police?

Yes	No
-----	----

Was your experience

Very Good Very Poor



↓  
Why?

32. Have you ever been a victim of crime? (thinking especially about being on the road)

Did you report it to the police?

Yes	No
-----	----

Yes	No
-----	----

Why not?

What happened

33. Have you ever been a victim of racism?

Did you report it to the police? ← 

Yes	No
-----	----

Yes	No
-----	----

 → Why not?

What happened

34. What has your experience of the media been like?

Very Good Very Poor

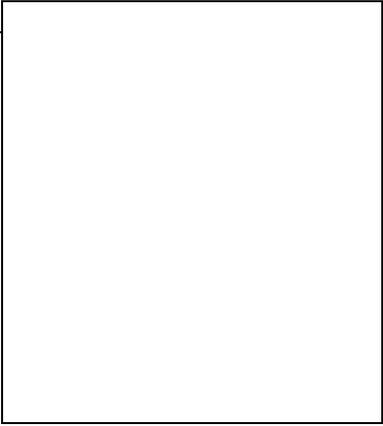
1 2 3 4

Why?

Section Seven: Are you happy to answer questions about you and your family?

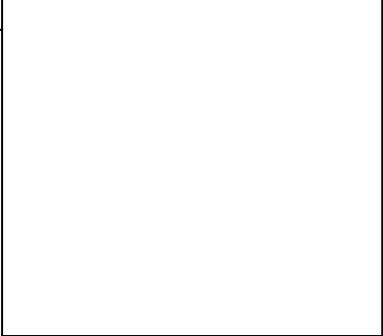
35. How would you describe yourself?

- English Gypsy/Romany
- Irish Traveller
- Scottish Traveller – Gypsy
- Welsh Traveller
- New Traveller
- Showman
- Other

36. How many people live with you on your space?

- English Gypsy/Romany
- Irish Traveller
- New Traveller
- Scottish Traveller – Gypsy
- Showman
- Other

37. Can you tell us how old you are?

--

38. Do you have brothers and sisters?

Do they travel?

Yes	No
-----	----

↓

Yes	No
-----	----

↓

Where?

↓

Do they live near each other?

Yes	No
-----	----

↓

- Do you have any family members in housing?

What

Yes	No
-----	----

[Note: If in study area, please can we have details?]

↓

- Do you have children?

How many?

Yes	No
-----	----

↓

How many live with you?

That is our final question. Is there anything else that you would like to tell us about? (Please specify in the box overleaf).

--

Thank you very much for helping us. We would like to talk in a little bit more depth to some of the people we have interviewed in a few weeks time. Would you be happy for us to contact you again?

Yes	No
-----	----

Do you know other Gypsies or Travellers that we could approach to help us with these questions?

Yes	No
-----	----

If yes please take details or pass our details on to the respondent:

Dr Rebekah Southern : 01752 232747  
Dr Zoë James : 01752 233252

Social Research & Regeneration Unit  
Faculty of Social Science & Business  
University of Plymouth  
Drake Circus  
Plymouth  
PL4 8AA

## Appendix Two: Stakeholder Interview Schedules

- ❖ Can you tell us about your organisation (or department) and specifically about the work that you do with Gypsies & Travellers?  
*Prompt for – Area of coverage*  
*Numbers of staff working in the area*  
*Approx numbers of G&Ts working with*  
*Any strategies/policy documents that we should be aware of*
- ❖ What's your role within the organisation?  
*Prompt for - How long have you been in the role?*
- ❖ Part of our brief is to look at the uptake of services and outcomes for Gypsies & Travellers compare with the outcomes for the rest of the population. What, in your experience, are the key issues around uptake and outcomes for Gypsies & Travellers in Devon?  
*Prompt for - Strengths & weaknesses of current provision*  
*Views on what could be done better*
- ❖ Do you collaborate with other organisations locally in connection with your work with Gypsies & Travellers?  
*Prompt for - Which ones?*
- ❖ How good would you say the collaboration is between organisations in Devon with a Gypsy & Traveller remit?  
*Prompt for - Examples*  
*Could anything be improved?*
- ❖ Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about that you think would be useful for the study?

Thank you and close

## **Appendix Three: District and Unitary Authority Plans**

### **Dartmoor**

Reference to Gypsies and Travellers is limited within the Dartmoor National Park Local Plan (adopted version 2004) which simply refers the reader to Policies H8 and H9 within the Devon Plan as described above. Dartmoor is awaiting the recommendations of the Gypsies and Travellers Committee before setting its policy for the provision of Gypsy and Traveller communities.

However, within the Dartmoor National Park Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Issues and Options Paper (2005) some recognition is given to the necessity of assessing the local housing and accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers. The document states that local housing assessments must, in the future, indicate how their housing needs will be met as part of wider housing strategies. Further, the Dartmoor National Park Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report (2005) talks of the need for specific and innovative initiatives to engage with some of the harder to reach group including Gypsies and Travellers, in the preparation of local development documents.

### **East Devon**

East Devon District Council's Local Plan (1995-2011) makes brief reference to Gypsies and Travellers in that it adopts Policy H8 and H9 (see Devon Plan above). It also states that there has, in recent years, been little pressure to establish new sites for residential mobile homes, although some existing sites have been upgraded or extended. Proposals for residential mobile homes will be subject to the same policies as other housing proposals but it states that, for the most part, developments are unlikely to prove environmentally acceptable in terms of their visual impact and prominence. However, it also states that permission may be granted as an exception within existing sites for Gypsy caravans or in cases of special circumstances.

### **Exeter**

Exeter City Council has a limited number of specific references to Gypsy and Traveller communities within their current and planned policies. Some consideration is given to Gypsy and Traveller issues within the City Council's Local Plan (in the community section) and in their aims to protect and enhance

existing community facilities and promote the provision of new community facilities. The Plan highlights how Gypsies and Travelling Show-people share a need for *'sites where mobile and sometimes temporary homes can be pitched and in some cases work activities can be pursued'* (p75). However, the policy states that regular monitoring shows there to be little demand in Exeter for new permanent sites; it focuses instead on the seasonal demand for people passing through the city.

The Council policy makes reference to the Joseph Rowntree Foundation Report, *'Neighbours Views of Official Sites for Travelling People'*, which identifies key sources of neighbourhood complaints against Gypsy sites, in stating that *'the development of sites for Gypsies and Travelling Show-people will be permitted provided that:*

- a) the noise and disturbance from vehicles and any business related activity likely to be carried out will not harm the local amenity*
- b) convenience shopping and other appropriate facilities are reasonably accessible*
- c) the development will not harm the character of a residential area or the landscape setting of the city*

*And provided that:*

- d) any permanent structures are for ancillary use only and not for use as dwellings*
- e) site boundaries provide suitable privacy and security*
- f) adequate parking is available including parking for commercial vehicles related to any business activities likely to be carried out and for visitors*
- g) where children are likely to be present, suitable play areas are provided, or are available nearby'.*

Exeter's Housing Strategy (2004-009) specifically mentions the Sowton site and the fact that the county has closed and plans to sell the adjacent site which has been informally used as a transit site for the area. It states that having reviewed all council owned land the Council's Property Group has been unable to identify an alternative.

Exeter's Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Issues and Options Paper also refers to the Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs

Assessment exercise, stating that *'if a shortfall in provision is identified, the intention is to make sites available to Gypsies and Travellers alongside firm but fair unauthorised camping'* (p21). Sites will be allocated through the Local Development Framework of the District (s) and subject to full consultation.

## **Mid Devon**

The Mid Devon Local Plan First Alteration (December 2005) talks of the settled population of Gypsies within the District which, it suggests, has remained roughly static for many years at around 30 pitches on authorised sites. Since Mid Devon does not lie over routes frequented by large groups of Gypsies or Travellers:

*'...there would not appear to be the demand for temporary stopping or transit sites. The Local Plan therefore does not allocate specific sites for Gypsy caravans, but instead contains policy H8 which allows proposals to be assessed on their merits'* (p47).

Sites for Gypsy caravans will be permitted provided that:

- a) The site is outside and an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Site of Special Scientific Interest, County Wildlife Site, Nationally Important Archaeological Site of Protected Open Space, unless no harm would arise to the special interest of such a designation;
- b) in the case of static provision, they are within or with reasonable access to and Area Centre, Local Centre or Village;
- c) in the case of transit or temporary stopping sites, they are close to a National or County route;
- d) a landscaping scheme is provided which screens the site from outside view and takes account of residential amenity;
- e) adequate open space is provided;
- f) areas for business, where appropriate, are provide within sites, with satisfactory measures for their separation from accommodation spaces, protecting the amenity of residents.

Mid Devon District Council within their Community Housing Strategy (September 2005) also make reference to the development of a comprehensive

strategy between 2005-2008 to address the needs and aspirations of Gypsies and Travellers in the District, including for sites and access to services, particularly education. The strategy will effectively respond to the new measures within the Housing Act (2004) for local housing Needs Assessments and will inform a policy which will be produced by the Supporting Vulnerable People Group in connection with Planning and Environmental Health.

The Housing Strategy also indicates that the Council is currently revising its procedures in respect of Gypsies and Travellers and will adopt a memoranda of understanding through the Community Safety Partnership with Devon and Cornwall Constabulary.

### **North Devon**

North Devon District Council address issues around Gypsy and Traveller communities within the Housing section of the North Devon Local Plan Revised Deposit. It uses Caravan Count data collected by the Environmental Health Unit, to establish that there were 20 caravans in North Devon between July 1997 and July 2000 and, as with other District Councils, states that

*'...in view of this low level of demand there is considered to be no current requirement for additional Gypsy sites in the District. Consequently, no sites have been specifically proposed although the need for new ones may arise in the future' (p75).*

The Plan does distinguish between transit and longer term sites in its discussion and the level of services expected of the different types of site. And it also makes reference to the fact that sites may include business activities that are likely to generate significant vehicle movements. As such it states that sites should be located where they will not cause nuisance or conflict with neighbouring uses (including businesses) but acknowledges that where practical sites should accommodate a mix of uses and have regard to the safety of their occupants, specifically including children.

Policy HSG14 states that a site for use by Gypsies will only be permitted where:

- a) it is suitable for a mix of residential and business uses having regard to the safety of the occupants, or where this is not practicable, any subsidiary business use is within easy walking distance;
- b) the use of the site, including any associated business activities, does not harm the amenities or operations of neighbouring uses;

c) in the case of a long term site, it is within easy walking distance of town or identified village and it can be adequately serviced by electricity, drinking water supplies, washing facilities, sewage disposal and regular refuse collections; and,

d) in the case of a short term or transit site, it has a convenient drinking water supply, means of sewage disposal and refuse collection point.

Further, a site for use by Gypsies will not be permitted in a location which would harm the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Heritage Coast, Exmoor National Park or the Coastal Preservation Area.

Gypsies and Travellers also feature within North Devon District Council's Homelessness Review (June 2003) in its section about homeless people with multiple needs. It refers the reader to the Devon Health Forum Handbook on Traveller Well-being and also makes reference to work with the Gypsy Liaison Officer in the development of a policy for dealing with Gypsies and Travellers that supports their needs whilst balancing the pressure from residents and businesses to evict them as quickly as possible. It also highlights the lack of emergency stopping places or authorised campsites in the District, thus making it difficult to comply with homelessness legislation for these particular groups.

### **Plymouth City Council**

The Strategy section of Plymouth City Council's Local Plan (1995-2011) First Deposit makes brief reference to how it seeks to provide residential accommodation for Travellers. And an action point under the Corporate Plan (2006 – 2009)'s strategic objective of improving the health and well-being of local people is the implementation of a Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Survey.

Plymouth City Council's Housing Strategy (2004-2007) also makes reference to the support given to the city's Gypsy community and future improvements to this through the appointment of a Traveller Liaison Officer and through the continuation of the multi agency forum's work to identify suitable temporary sites and to better co-ordinate the provision of key services including health and education.

Additionally, the '*Travellers – Needs Assessment Information*' Appendix K (2005), produced by Plymouth City Council (March 2005) provides a briefing on the local situation under the following headings:

- ❖ **Scale of the issue:** Plymouth has one authorised site with 13 pitches accommodating around 18 caravans.
- ❖ **Difficulties that Travellers/Gypsies face in accessing services:** this includes prejudice from health care professionals and continuity of service accessibility.
- ❖ **Consultation with stakeholders:** working through the Social Inclusion Unit and Plymouth City Council Housing Department, the following concerns have been identified: the absence of transient sites in Plymouth and the need to cater for the differences between Gypsies from an Irish origin who have permanent sites which they pay rent for and the transient Travellers who make a lifestyle choice to travel; difficulties accessing services and contributing to decision making; current beliefs about site contamination issues and; the identified need for capacity building work with Gypsy and Traveller communities. A number of technical and practical issues with sites have also been identified including the management of settled sites and the difficulties associated with illegal camps.
- ❖ **Local issues regarding Travellers:** problems occur with health and education within the Gypsy and Traveller communities due to the decline of traditional stopping places.

### **South Hams**

South Hams Local Plan Review (1995-2011) refers specifically to Gypsies rather than Travellers in the Housing section of the policy. It briefly discusses definitions of '*Gypsy*' and the potential accommodation needs of this group in terms of permanent sites, transit sites and temporary stopping places. In all cases it talks of the environmental impact of any development. It states that before permitting the establishment of a site it will be necessary to ensure that an appropriate need exists and it sets out the criteria for the establishment of a settlement site where such need is proven, as follows:

- a) associated employment uses that cannot be accommodated adequately on the site can be located in close proximity without significant adverse environmental or highway safety impact;

- b) the site is the most suitable of the available sites in the area for a mixed use development without undue loss of amenity to nearby residents;
- c) the development is limited by temporary consent where the proven need is short term;
- d) protected landscape, nature conservation and heritage interests will not be affected adversely.

Existing Gypsy sites will be safeguarded for that use.

In addition, South Hams District Council's *'Policy and Practice Guidelines relating to People of a Nomadic Lifestyle Residing in or Resorting to Our Area'* was presented to the South Hams District Council's Community Policy Development Group in May 2006 for review. These guidelines aim to provide a policy framework for the council in dealing with unauthorised encampments as well as supplementing the joint policy of Devon County Council and the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary (joint policy). It is concerned with addressing the following situations:

- ❖ Encampments on South Hams District Council land;
- ❖ Encampments on private land with the land owner's consent.

It states that the Council's first response to encampments on its own land will be to assess the impact of the encampment on others and the circumstances of the occupants. Whilst it is not considered normally possible to permit encampments, other than in the very short term, legal proceedings are seen as a last resort. Where private landowners have permitted Traveller encampments on their land the Council can use its planning powers - the same as for any other form of unauthorised development - but will have regard to the Local Plan and the Local Development Framework (as well as any other material considerations) in making a decision about enforcement action.

The resulting report from the Community Policy Development Group – *'Developing the Social Inclusion Policy – Gypsies and Travellers Provision'* concludes that in view of the possible introduction of a Devon-wide policy (the Devon protocol) the *'Policy and Practice Guidelines relating to People of a Nomadic Lifestyle Residing in or Resorting to Our Area'* could set out the detailed procedures for the South Hams. However, it appears that the Council is awaiting the results of the Housing Needs Assessment study in order to progress their policies.

## Teignbridge

Using data from the Caravan Count, Teignbridge Local Plan First Review Initial Deposit (1995-2011) states that the District has an average of 15 caravans and that the numbers have reduced over recent years. There is currently one transit site within the District at Bovey Tracey, which is a private site consisting of 16 pitches (compliant with Policy H9 (see Devon Plan above)), along with a number of individual private pitches located across the area. Following consultation with the Advisory Council for the Education of Romany and other Travellers (ACERT) the District Council sees no further need for extra sites but instead focuses on safeguarding the site in Bovey Tracey.

However, Teignbridge District Council Local Development Framework Issues and Alternative Options Paper (May 2005) acknowledges that Teignbridge has the highest number of authorised and unauthorised pitches (Gypsy and Traveller sites) out of all the Districts and Unitary Authorities in Devon. The document refers to key questions and criteria which need to be identified to action a plan to meet the needs of the Gypsy community. The Core Strategy for the Local Development Framework (2001-2016) will include overarching core policies relating to, amongst other issues, the criteria for Gypsy and Traveller site proposals. It will also contain non-strategic and generic development control policies covering a range of topics, including safeguarding Gypsy sites.

## Torbay

The Housing section of Torbay's Local Plan (1995-2011) briefly discusses the diversity of '*travelling people*' and their particular land-use requirements as well as the current Government Guidance on such issues. It also outlines the criteria for applications for caravan sites, including residential sites for settled occupation, temporary stopping places and transit sites for travelling people as follows:

- a) sites will be acceptable within the built up area, provided that their operation is not to the detriment of the visual amenities of adjoining areas, and subject to satisfactory landscaping;
- b) sites should not be to the detriment of the amenities of adjoining areas in respect of noise and other disturbances arising from the movement of vehicles to and from the site, the stationing of vehicles on the site, and any on-site business activities (which should at all times be incidental to the residential use of the site);

- c) sites should be provided with a satisfactory means of vehicular access, together with adequate provision for turning and parking;
- d) sites should be provided with a reasonable level of essential services including access to drinking water, refuse collection, and sewage disposal;
- e) sites should be located within reasonable distance of local services and facilities (e.g. shops, schools, and hospitals);
- f) temporary stopping places and transit sites may be acceptable on temporary vacant/unused land subject to the above criteria; and,
- g) sites will be acceptable outside the built-up area only if they are well screened and do not conflict with prevailing landscape, nature conservation, countryside and agricultural protection policies.

The Plan states that there are currently no sites within Torbay to accommodate Travellers and no sites with the benefit of planning permission. Further, as with other District Councils, based on the very low returns to the Caravan Count in recent years, Torbay District Council assesses no need for the allocation of new sites for travelling people. However, it is envisaged that demand could occur in the future.

Of note, Torbay Council has also produced a document entitled '*Unauthorised Camping: Mass Gathering Contingency Plan*' (April 2006). This document outlines action to be taken for preventing any large scale unauthorised gatherings taking place; or for managing '*unpreventable*' incidents. Based on learning points that have arisen from other areas in recent years the plan outlines the Council's response to such incidents, working in partnership with the Police and other agencies. It also sets out the legal action required for welfare checks along with the '*expected behaviour*' of both temporary and resident community members.

### **Torrige**

Within the Housing, Retail and Community Services section of Torrige District Council's Local Plan (1997-2011) reference is made to the absence of Local Authority owned or run permanent or transit Gypsy sites within the Torrige District, although it highlights the existence of one privately run site. Based on the Caravan Count data, similarly to other District Councils, Torrige Council assessed that there is currently no significant additional need. However, under

Policy HSC11 sites for Gypsies will be permissible where there is a proven need provided that:

- a) the site is well related to local services and,
- b) associated employment uses that cannot be accommodated adequately on the site can be located in close proximity without significant adverse environmental impact and,
- c) the site is the most suitable of the available sites in the area of need for a mixed use development without undue loss of amenity to nearby residents and,
- d) highway safety is not compromised and,
- e) important landscape and conservation interests will not be affected adversely and,
- f) the development is limited by a temporary consent where the proven need is short term.

Further, the duration of occupancy by individual households will be limited by planning condition with such duration to be determined with reference to the circumstances of the justification for the provision. This policy applies to all sites (permanent, transit or emergency stopping) and the Plan goes on to indicate very specific locational criteria for the selection of specific sites.

### **West Devon**

The West Devon Local Plan Review (March 2005) makes reference to Gypsies and Travellers in two sub-sections of the Mobility Policy (H42 and H43). It acknowledges the nomadic life style of Gypsies and Travellers and the resulting requirements in terms of housing, employment and other services. However, based on Caravan Count data it states that

*'...at the present time there is no need for the establishment of any facilities in the West Devon area. However, the Borough Council will keep the level of need under review and should the situation change, will consider proposals where a proven need has been established' (p86).*

Policy H43 states that where the need for provision is proven (including winter quarters) permission will be granted provided that:

- a) it has or can be provided with suitable access;
- b) it has or can be provided with services;
- c) it is well located in terms of local amenities;
- d) it will cause no unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of its surroundings, any wildlife habitat or the amenities enjoyed by those who live or work nearby;
- e) where the proven need is short term the development is limited by temporary consent;
- f) associated employment uses that cannot be accommodated adequately on the site can be located in close proximity without adverse environmental or highway safety impact.

## Appendix Four: Calculations used for District/Unitary Authority Future Pitch Requirements

East Devon	
Local Authority residential sites available	1
Number of families	5
Authorised privately owned sites available	13
Number of families	15
Unauthorised sites available	5
Number of families	5
Temporary stops used	0
<b>1. Total number of families</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>2. Total sites available</b>	<b>19</b>
Families on unauthorised encampments	5
Percentage of sites overcrowded in District	0%
<b>3. Total additional demand</b>	
Current shortfall of pitches	5
Shortfall of pitches from overcrowding	0
Family formation 2006 – 2011 = 4 households	4
<b>Total extra pitch need 2006 – 2011</b>	<b>9</b>

Mid Devon	
Local Authority residential sites available	0
Number of families	0
Authorised privately owned sites available	19
Number of families	31
Unauthorised sites available	5
Number of families	8
Temporary stops used	6
<b>1. Total number of families</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>2. Total sites available</b>	<b>24</b>
Families on unauthorised encampments	8
Percentage of sites overcrowded in District	0%
<b>3. Total additional demand</b>	
Current shortfall of pitches	8
Shortfall of pitches from overcrowding	0
Family formation 2006 – 2011 = 6 households	6
<b>Total extra pitch need 2006 – 2011</b>	<b>14</b>

North Devon	
Local Authority residential sites available	0
Number of families	0
Authorised privately owned sites available	2
Number of families	2
Unauthorised sites available	3
Number of families	4
Temporary stops used	7
<b>1. Total number of families</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2. Total sites available</b>	<b>5</b>
Families on unauthorised encampments	4
Percentage of sites overcrowded in District	0%
<b>3. Total additional demand</b>	
Current shortfall of pitches	4
Shortfall of pitches from overcrowding	0
Family formation 2006 – 2011 = 1 household	1
<b>Total extra pitch need 2006 – 2011</b>	<b>5</b>

West Devon	
Local Authority residential sites available	0
Number of families	0
Authorised privately owned sites available	0
Number of families	0
Unauthorised sites available	1
Number of families	4
Temporary stops used	1
<b>1. Total number of families</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2. Total sites available</b>	<b>1</b>
Families on unauthorised encampments	4
Percentage of sites overcrowded in District	21%
<b>3. Total additional demand</b>	
Current shortfall of pitches	4
Shortfall of pitches from overcrowding	1
Family formation 2006 – 2011 = 1 household	1
<b>Total extra pitch need 2006 – 2011</b>	<b>6</b>

Plymouth	
Local Authority residential sites available	1
Number of families	13
Authorised privately owned sites available	1
Number of families	2
Unauthorised sites available	3
Number of families	26
Temporary stops used	33
<b>1. Total number of families</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>2. Total sites available</b>	<b>5</b>
Families on unauthorised encampments	26
Percentage of sites overcrowded in District	20%
<b>3. Total additional demand</b>	
Current shortfall of pitches	26
Shortfall of pitches from overcrowding	8
Family formation 2006 – 2011 = 6 households	6
<b>Total extra pitch need 2006 – 2011</b>	<b>40</b>

Exeter	
Local Authority residential sites available	1
Number of families	11
Authorised privately owned sites available	0
Number of families	0
Unauthorised sites available	2
Number of families	4
Temporary stops used	13
<b>1. Total number of families</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>2. Total sites available</b>	<b>3</b>
Families on unauthorised encampments	4
Percentage of sites overcrowded in District	40%
<b>3. Total additional demand</b>	
Current shortfall of pitches	4
Shortfall of pitches from overcrowding	6
Family formation 2006 – 2011 = 2 households	2
<b>Total extra pitch need 2006 – 2011</b>	<b>12</b>

South Hams	
Local Authority residential sites available	0
Number of families	0
Authorised privately owned sites available	2
Number of families	14
Unauthorised sites available	17
Number of families	42
Temporary stops used	15
<b>1. Total number of families</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>2. Total sites available</b>	<b>19</b>
Families on unauthorised encampments	42
Percentage of sites overcrowded in District	0%
<b>3. Total additional demand</b>	
Current shortfall of pitches	42
Shortfall of pitches from overcrowding	0
Family formation 2006 – 2011 = 9 households	9
<b>Total extra pitch need 2006 – 2011</b>	<b>51</b>

Torbay	
Local Authority residential sites available	0
Number of families	0
Authorised privately owned sites available	0
Number of families	0
Unauthorised sites available	0
Number of families	0
Temporary stops used	9
<b>1. Total number of families</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>2. Total sites available</b>	<b>0</b>
Families on unauthorised encampments	0
Percentage of sites overcrowded in District	0%
<b>3. Total additional demand</b>	
Current shortfall of pitches	0
Shortfall of pitches from overcrowding	0
Family formation 2006 – 2011 = 0 households	0
<b>Total extra pitch need 2006 – 2011</b>	<b>0</b>

Torridge	
Local Authority residential sites available	0
Number of families	0
Authorised privately owned sites available	2
Number of families	3
Unauthorised sites available	10
Number of families	20
Temporary stops used	7
<b>1. Total number of families</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>2. Total sites available</b>	<b>12</b>
Families on unauthorised encampments	20
Percentage of sites overcrowded in District	0%
<b>3. Total additional demand</b>	
Current shortfall of pitches	20
Shortfall of pitches from overcrowding	0
Family formation 2006 – 2011 = 2 households	4
<b>Total extra pitch need 2006 – 2011</b>	<b>24</b>

Teignbridge	
Local Authority residential sites available	0
Number of families	0
Authorised privately owned sites available	10
Number of families	34
Unauthorised sites available	7
Number of families	42
Temporary stops used	0
<b>1. Total number of families</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>2. Total sites available</b>	<b>17</b>
Families on unauthorised encampments	42
Percentage of sites overcrowded in District	14%
<b>3. Total additional demand</b>	
Current shortfall of pitches	42
Shortfall of pitches from overcrowding	11
Family formation 2006 – 2011 = 10 households	12
<b>Total extra pitch need 2006 – 2011</b>	<b>65</b>