

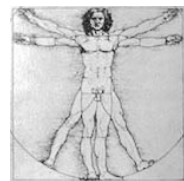
**Hartlepool Borough Council Gypsy and Traveller  
Accommodation Assessment 2014**

*Renaissance*

*- Research - Training - Consultancy -*

Final Version – December 2014

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## Executive Summary

### Introduction

As local planning authority, Hartlepool Borough Council is now preparing a Local Plan, which will be its core planning document for the period from 2016 to 2031.

As part of this process Hartlepool Borough Council must set targets for pitches for Gypsies and Travellers and yards for Travelling Showpeople, so that the need for appropriate permanent and transit accommodation can be properly addressed through the planning system.

The Government expects each local planning authority to make its own assessment of the need for such accommodation when preparing the Local Plan for its area. A robust evidence base must be drawn on to achieve this.

Hartlepool Borough Council's has appointed Renaissance Research Ltd to carry out a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) and this report describes the study that has been undertaken and the pitch requirements that have been identified.

### Methods

This GTAA updates an earlier assessment which covered all five Tees Valley local planning authorities. It includes:

- A review of current policy on planning for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople
- Findings derived from focus groups and interviews with members of the Gypsy and Traveller community in and around Hartlepool and interviews with other stakeholders including managers of sites in neighbouring authorities, Council staff and regional representatives of Travelling Showpeople
- A calculation of future accommodation needs in the period up to 2031, using methods based on government guidance that have been used in other studies

The 2009 Tees Valley Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment estimated a need for a total of 145 additional pitches for Gypsies and Travellers across the sub-region over the period 2007 – 2021, including six identified for Hartlepool. There are currently no sites in Hartlepool.

### Current population of Gypsies and Travellers in Hartlepool

The 2011 Census was the first ever to include a specific category for 'White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller' although some believe the Census may have recorded only a half to a quarter of people expected to identify themselves as 'White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller'.

In Hartlepool only 12 household representatives described their ethnicity as 'White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller', with a total of 40 individual people being identified as 'White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller'. If the Census undercount in Hartlepool was closer to what may have occurred elsewhere, an upper end population estimate of around 150 persons could be derived from the Census. A more reliable estimate may be derived from the number of Gypsy and Traveller children known to an authority's education department. However, as there are only 9 children identified in this way in Hartlepool, the estimate for the population calculated on this basis is 45 individual people, living in 15 households. This is close to the unadjusted

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Census figure, and as such rather unexpected because estimates using schools data are usually higher than those from other sources.

No caravans have been recorded in Hartlepool in any of the last five statutory caravan counts, although they are recorded in neighbouring council areas. Hartlepool Borough Council reports that there have been only eight unofficial Gypsy or Traveller encampments in the last three years.

There are no records of any Travelling Showpeople's yards in Hartlepool, nor of any planning applications to situate any there. A regional representative of the Showman's Guild confirms that no Travelling Showpeople are known to live in the area.

### **Interviews**

As the population of Gypsies and Travellers living in Hartlepool is known to be small, a rolling ball technique was adopted to identify potential survey respondents in Hartlepool. In total 17 people were approached for interviews and 14 were completed. Interviewees came from 13 different households, one more than the 12 household representatives recorded by the Census. These interviews produced information on 29 separate individuals, representing 64% of Hartlepool's Gypsy and Traveller population as derived from school records. As the Gypsy and Traveller population in Hartlepool is small, for the purposes of survey work it is not relevant to provide a confidence interval to estimate sample bias.

It rapidly became apparent through the fieldwork that notions of ethnic identity complex and nuanced. There were, for example, strong family connections between some of those who described themselves as Gypsy or of Gypsy ancestry and those who were descended from showmen or circus people. Respondents' claims about identity appeared to involve sophistication and sensitivity. Respondents were careful to make a distinction between having a Gypsy heritage ('coming off Gypsies') and actually being Gypsies themselves. Others, while distinguishing themselves from Irish Travellers, opted for 'Traveller'. Six described themselves as 'horse people' with varying degrees of Gypsy and Traveller ancestry, even including family histories involving Showpeople and circuses.

While most of the respondents were living in bricks and mortar accommodation, three respondents indicated that they were living in trailers or horse drawn wagons in and around the Hartlepool area.

All three of the respondents currently living in trailers/wagons and three of those living in houses expressed a preference for living in trailers/wagons in the future. The three respondents currently in housing and expressing this preference included people who had previously lived in trailers in Hartlepool and elsewhere and had wider family members living on sites in adjacent authorities.

While most of those living in houses suggested that they had grown used to the home comforts associated with bricks and mortar these included three cases where the preferences of spouses/partners differed. In one case a non-Gypsy spouse was attracted to living in a trailer despite her traveller husband's preference for bricks and mortar. Two older respondents both with partners that were suffering from age related health problems indicated that they would otherwise have preferred to live in trailers and would pursue this option in later years were they to lose their partners.

Five of the six respondents wishing to live in trailers/wagons wanted to remain in the Hartlepool area while one wanted to relocate to the Midlands due to work commitments.

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When asked the reason for accommodation preferences those preferring trailers reported to varying degrees their dissatisfaction with living in houses. Reasons included a preference to be 'free to move around' and for 'fresh air'. One suggested that she had 'never wanted to live in a house'. Another suggested that living in a house had contributed to various health problems and had affected her mental health.

All respondents were asked whether they felt that there was a need for a Traveller site in the Hartlepool area.

Respondents were clearly very aware of how controversial a recent attempt by the Council to identify a site for the town at Hart Village had been. In addition, several respondents indicated a concern that any site that might be developed should be well managed. There were many concerns about the behaviour of non-Travellers and 'irresponsible' Travellers who in their view should be excluded. The most recent unauthorised encampment at the site adjacent to Brenda road in Hartlepool was mentioned as having been the cause of a considerable amount of anti-social behaviour.

### **Accommodation needs calculation**

Due to the very small overall population of Gypsies and Travellers it is difficult to project the precise effects on demand of new household formation, as well as the proportion likely to remain in Hartlepool, or the likely propensity for living on sites for those that do.

As the traveller education data in Hartlepool suggests no more than ten households with school age children then it is unlikely that family formation will result in more than one additional pitch over the course of the next 17 years.

A pitch requirement calculation, following DCLG guidance, indicates a need for five Gypsy and Traveller pitches in Hartlepool between now and 2031. Demand for four of those pitches is likely to occur over the next five years, with the remaining pitch being required at some time in the following five year period.

There is no requirement to carry out an analysis of plot requirements for Travelling Showpeople because none are living in Hartlepool.

### **Meeting the needs**

In Hartlepool, having a need for a pitch, or an intention to live on one in the foreseeable future, appears now to affect only some members of a small number of family groups; perhaps no more than five family groups at most.

The need for pitches appears to come from two sources: young men with a Gypsy and Traveller heritage setting up home for the first time whose parents are living in bricks and mortar housing, and people in late middle age who have been living in bricks and mortar housing for some time. Planning for the needs of each of these groups presents quite different challenges.

The three young men found in this study to be actually involved now in living in trailers and wagons may be at a time of life when it is difficult to be sure about what will happen to each of them in future. A key point for this accommodation needs assessment is that they are three inadequately-accommodated concealed households, all with an indisputable local connection with Hartlepool and who could present themselves as homeless.

However, it is difficult to know how far to use their current situation to predict what kind of accommodation they will actually demand in future. Due to their young age, family situation and current economic status, their present way of life may prove to be short lived. Therefore,

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in the first instance, intervention from the Local Authority with regard to offering alternative accommodation options could possibly prove the best way of meeting their future housing needs, rather than providing a dedicated Gypsy and Traveller site at this stage.

The people in late middle age who say they wish to return to living on a site at some point are most likely to prefer a small quiet location where they can have their family visit them. They are unlikely to choose to live on a site made up of much younger occupants who they do not already know well. Other factors including increased caring responsibilities of various kinds, be it for partners, grand children or other relatives, as well as the onset of illness or infirmity, may further limit how many older people are ever actually able to make such a move. With that in mind, it is also unlikely that this theoretical need would benefit from the provision of a dedicated Gypsy and Traveller site at this stage either.

The scale of these issues means that any likely provision would be too small to be commercially viable if set up along lease-management lines like some sites elsewhere across Tees Valley. On the other hand research conducted in other parts of England has found that small sites based on family or friendship groups are most popular with Gypsies and Travellers, and least concerning for other residents living nearby.

Hartlepool is perhaps too isolated to co-operate with adjoining authorities to provide a site.

The security of any site in Hartlepool would also need to be carefully addressed, especially in the light of the public response to the 2013 consultation that attempted to identify a viable site. Any unmanaged stop-over type site as a way of meeting needs could prove to be the worst of all worlds.

Therefore in the first instance, the provision of a dedicated Gypsy and Traveller site in the Borough of Hartlepool, whether permanent or stop-over, may not offer the best solution to meeting the small theoretical housing need established through this accommodation assessment.

The various factors discussed in this study may well mean that no actual demand to live on a site is ever forthcoming, Therefore the recommendation is that the Council commits to proactively support and positively intervene with any member of the Gypsy and Traveller community needing re-housing, to explore their housing options, and does not seek to provide a dedicated site for Gypsy and Travellers in its Development Plan. Support from the Council will include access to currently available bricks and mortar housing, with referral to support agencies if necessary, as well as awareness-raising about the full range of accommodation options and how to pursue them.

Should the small theoretical need for a site then be manifested as actual demand through a Gypsy and Traveller member request or through a formal planning application, the Council will positively plan for such a site through the existing planning policy framework and any subsequent Development Plan policy framework.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 As the local planning authority, Hartlepool Borough Council is now preparing a Local Plan, which will be its core planning document for the period from 2016 to 2031.
- 1.2 In doing so the council is taking account of recently published planning policy from the Government. Amongst other things, this policy requires Hartlepool Borough Council to set targets for pitches and plots for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, so that the need for appropriate permanent and transit accommodation can be properly addressed through the planning system.
- 1.3 The Government expects each local planning authority to make its own assessment of the need for such accommodation when preparing the Local Plan for its area. A robust evidence base must be drawn on to achieve this. The Government has provided no prescribed or recommended methodology setting out how this should be done. *Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments*, CLG 2007, is being retained until it can be replaced with updated guidance. However, due to the Government's political commitment to localism, which seeks to increase the freedoms and flexibilities available to local authorities as they respond to the statutory requirements and framework of resources imposed on them, there is no longer a requirement to conform to the guidance contained in this document, or any future guidance that may replace it.
- 1.4 To contribute to the production of its Local Plan, Hartlepool Borough Council's has appointed Renaissance Research Ltd to carry out a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) between March and July, 2014.
- 1.5 This report describes the study that has been undertaken and includes an assessment of need for pitches and plots for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople over the period up to 2031.

## 2. Methodology

- 2.1 This GTAA seeks to update an earlier assessment of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs in Hartlepool which was conducted as part of a study of needs in all five Tees Valley local planning authorities and published as the *Tees Valley Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment* in 2009.
- 2.2 Whilst the 2009 *Tees Valley Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment* contained estimates of accommodation needs up to 2026 across the whole of Tees Valley, the objective of this current GTAA is to look more closely at the position in Hartlepool than was possible in 2009, in order to make any predictions of need that will be used to prepare the Local Plan as robust as possible.
- 2.3 This current GTAA also offers an opportunity to extend the accommodation needs assessment up to 2031 to cover the whole Local Plan period, and to include an assessment of the needs of any Travelling Showpeople who may live in Hartlepool.
- 2.4 It consists of the following elements:
  - A review of current policy on planning for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, and a summary of existing data on needs in Hartlepool, including the *Tees Valley Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment*. The aim of this part of the study is to provide a starting point from which to carry out more up to date local work on future accommodation needs.
  - Focus groups and interviews with members of the Gypsy and Traveller community in and around Hartlepool along with other stakeholders including managers of sites in neighbouring authorities, Council staff and regional representatives of travelling Showpeople. The aim of this part of the study is to provide an overview of issues affecting Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople living in Hartlepool.
  - Individual interviews and focus group sessions using a semi structured interview format with members of Gypsy and Traveller households living in Hartlepool. The aim of this part of the study is to find out as much factual, quantifiable data as possible on the various factors that will determine current and future accommodation needs.
  - A calculation of future accommodation needs in the period up to 2031, using methods based on government guidance that have been used in other studies such as the 2009 *Tees Valley Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment*. The aim of this part of the study is to provide figures on demand in Hartlepool for permanent pitches on sites that can be used by Hartlepool Borough Council to prepare its Local Plan covering the period up to 2031.



### 3. National policy background

- 3.1 The Housing Act 2004, Section 225 places a duty on local authorities to assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers, and to incorporate site provision in local development strategies and plans where a need is demonstrated. This means that a local Council must assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers residing in *or resorting* to it, as part of its general review of housing needs under section 8 of the Housing Act 1985. In addition, a Council must take into account its obligations under section 225 when preparing any housing or related strategy it is required to put together. It should be pointed out that there is no specific duty on a Council to directly provide either permanent or transit sites for Gypsies and Travellers. Instead Councils are free to decide whether or not directly providing permanent Gypsy and Traveller sites is part of their proper strategic response to the needs their assessment has identified.
- 3.2 The Government's current *National Planning Policy Framework* dates from March 2012. It frees local planning authorities from much of the regulation associated with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 by removing various requirements mainly at the regional strategic planning level, which was also the level at which inter-authority targets such as for the regional provision of Gypsy and Traveller sites, were previously decided. *National Planning Policy Framework* also renames as Local Plans the Local Development Frameworks which remain the main strategic planning documents that each local planning authority has to produce.
- 3.3 The Government's policy on planning to meet the specific accommodation needs for Gypsies and Travellers is set out in *Planning policy for traveller sites*. This document was issued at the same time as the *National Planning Policy Framework* and is to be read in conjunction with it. In this way, planning to meet the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers becomes part of planning to meet housing requirements in general. Earlier government guidance contained in *Circular 01/06: Planning for Gypsy and traveller Caravan Sites* and *Circular 04/07: Planning for Travelling Showpeople* was cancelled once these new policies came into force.
- 3.4 In *Planning policy for traveller sites*, the Government states its overarching aim as being 'to ensure fair and equal treatment for Travellers, in a way that facilitates the traditional and nomadic way of life of Travellers while respecting the interests of the settled community'. There is also an emphasis on ensuring Gypsy and Traveller sites are 'economically, socially and environmentally' sustainable, by amongst other things promoting 'peaceful and integrated co-existence', ensuring that children can attend school regularly and avoiding placing undue pressure on local infrastructure and services.

- 3.5 The requirements for Local Plans set out in *Planning policy for traveller sites* are that they should:
- set pitch targets for Gypsies and Travellers and plot targets for Travelling Showpeople which address the likely permanent and transit site accommodation needs of travellers in their area;
  - identify and update annually, a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years' worth of sites against their locally set targets;
  - identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years six to ten and, where possible, for years 11-15;
  - relate the number of pitches or plots to the circumstances of the specific size and location of the site and the surrounding population's size and density; and
  - protect local amenity and environment.
- 3.6 Whilst *Planning policy for traveller sites* asserts that each local planning authority should conduct its own assessment of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs, and use robust data to do so, the document also expects neighbouring authorities to work collaboratively to identify the accommodation needs of communities for whom travelling is an important part of their culture, if for some only for part of the year or during certain stages of their lives.
- 3.7 Although it aims to promote more private site provision, *Planning policy for traveller sites* also recognises a continuing need to find accommodation for those who are unable to provide their own sites, in order to help reduce the number of unauthorised developments and encampments. Local planning authorities are to set criteria for guiding land supply wherever need is identified and to form the basis for deciding on applications to develop sites even where no need has been identified.
- 3.8 As regards homelessness, legal definitions are offered in the Housing Act 1996, updated by the Homelessness Act 2002. For Gypsies and Travellers, section 175 of the 1996 Act is most relevant, stating that someone is homeless if they have accommodation but 'it consist of a moveable structure, vehicle or vessel designed or adapted for human habitation and there is no place where he is entitled or permitted both to place it and to reside in it.' This means that anyone living on an unauthorised site is homeless, if they have no other home they could reasonably go to. The Homelessness Act (2002) places a duty on local authorities to develop strategies to make sure there is enough accommodation for everyone who is homeless in their area.
- 3.9 Schedule 1 of the Human Rights Act 1998 applies 'the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence' to a caravan, even when it is unlawfully or illegally parked. Therefore the Act's protection applies to

Gypsies and Travellers on permanent sites and on unauthorised encampments too.

- 3.10 Under UK law, English Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers are recognised as ethnic minorities with legal rights to protection from nuisance, harassment, discrimination and harm from others. Travelling Showpeople, however, do not constitute an ethnic group under UK law.
- 3.11 The Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 states that it is unlawful to treat Gypsies and Travellers less favourably than people from other racial groups, discriminate against them directly or indirectly, or segregate them on racial grounds. Councils have a Race Equality Duty to promote racial equality and choice, promote consultation and active participation with the Gypsy and Traveller communities and publish a Race Equality Scheme.
- 3.12 The 2011 Census was the first national census to give respondents the opportunity to describe their ethnicity as 'White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller'. As a result, 58,000 people in England and Wales were identified as a Gypsy or Irish Traveller in the 2011 Census, 0.1 per cent of the usual resident population. The figure for England alone was 54,895. The figure most often quoted previously for the total size of Gypsy and Traveller communities nationally came from the Commission for Racial Equality who had suggested that the likely total number was around 0.6% of the population, somewhere over 200,000 across the country but concentrated in various historic centres, although the basis for that calculation had always been unclear.
- 3.13 Commentators including academics and spokespeople from Gypsy and Traveller organisations believe the 2011 Census figure to be a significant undercount caused by mistrust of officialdom and poor literacy or numeracy within these communities, together with a failure on the part of Office of National Statistics enumerators to engage properly with marginalised communities, especially with people living on unauthorised sites.
- 3.14 Leading academic Pat Niner has estimated the Census may have recorded as few as 27% of the total number of households nationally. Whilst a study published in 2013 by the Irish Traveller Movement in Britain (ITMB) has used figures from 46 Gypsy, Traveller Accommodation Assessments across each region of England to produce an alternative population estimate to the Census. ITMB's methodology suggests the total Gypsy and Traveller population in England could be 122, 785, including a population for the North East as a whole of 3,574, with 1,455 of these living across Tees Valley. These North East and Tees Valley figures are slightly more than double the population figures from the 2011 Census of 1,684 and 703 respectively.

## 4. The Tees Valley context

- 4.1 The 2009 *Tees Valley Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment* predicted the following need for pitches in each of the area's five local authorities over the period 2007 - 2021:

	Study area total	Hartlepool	Darlington	Middlesbrough	Redcar & Cleveland	Stockton
Current authorised pitch provision	129	0	62	25	0*	41
Additional pitches needed 2007-2012	79	4	61	4	-7	17
Additional pitches needed 2012-2016	26	1	15	3	1	7
Additional pitches needed 2016-2021	38	1	22	4	2	10
Estimated total additional Pitches needed 2007-2021	145	6	98	11	-4	34

\* site closed at time of assessment but coming back into use

- 4.2 In addition, it commented on the provision of short term transit sites in addition to permanent pitches:

*This indicates that all local authorities should look to provide accommodation for short-term users. More formal provision should be provided in Darlington, Stockton-on-Tees and Redcar & Cleveland. However, Hartlepool and Middlesbrough should also look to provide options for transient Gypsies and Travellers.*

- 4.3 It also drew attention to how the pattern of uneven distribution of pitches between each of the five local authorities in the Tees Valley area, which had grown up over many years, affected calculations of future need:

*[There] is a tendency, when the need for additional accommodation is assessed, for the needs assessment to further compound these inequalities in site provision. For example, authorities which already provide Gypsy and Traveller accommodation (publicly or privately) are assessed as having greater need for additional pitch provision than authorities with little or no pitch provision.*

- 4.4 And it went on to explain that it carried out its predictions of the future need for permanent pitches on what it described as a 'need where it is seen to arise' basis. The report's authors emphasised that actually providing pitches required a strategic approach based on partnership between each local planning authority and other stakeholders:

*[The] results of this apportionment [of extra pitches to each of the five Tees Valley boroughs] should not necessarily be assumed to imply that those needs should be actually met in that specific locality. Decisions about where need should be met should be strategic.*

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- 4.4 Using information gathered from the Traveller Education Service, the 2009 *Tees Valley Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment* estimated there were at least 267 families living in bricks and mortar housing across all of Tees Valley, but acknowledged that was 'probably a significant undercount'.
- 4.5 The five local planning authorities in Tees Valley including Hartlepool are at different stages in preparing how to include Gypsy and Traveller and travelling Showpeople's accommodation needs in their Local Plans. The current position with each of them is set out below:
- Hartlepool Borough Council is carrying out a local Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment following an attempt to use a criteria-based approach in 2013 to earmark a site for the 6 extra pitches predicted by the 2009 *Tees Valley Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment*. There are no permanent Gypsy and Traveller or Travelling Showpeople sites in Hartlepool, and no official transit sites.
  - Darlington Borough Council is updating its Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment, having carried out a study on potential Traveller sites and Travelling Showpeople sites in 2012 then running a public consultation on where new developments should occur. Currently there are 68 residential Traveller pitches on 9 sites with permanent planning permission on Darlington Council's database of existing sites. The Council provides 52 of these available pitches on two long-established sites, as well as 24 transit pitches. Both sites are leased and managed by members of the Gypsy community. In addition there are three small private owner-occupied sites for Gypsies and Travellers. The Council is currently planning to provide 35 extra permanent pitches, initially by using a £1.8m HCA grant to put 20 new pitches on a site adjoining one of its two current permanent sites. There is also a proposal for additional pitches adjacent to a small private site. The lack of Gypsy and Traveller sites has regularly been the ground on which planning permission has been granted in Darlington for private Gypsy and Traveller sites, particularly on appeal. There is no site for Travelling Showpeople in Darlington, with no need having been identified.
  - Stockton on Tees Borough Council carried out its own update of the 2009 *Tees Valley Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment* in 2012, as various recent changes including housing regeneration and the granting of planning permissions for residential pitches were likely to have altered future pitch requirements in the borough. In view of these changes, Stockton's update has calculated a need to provide for an extra 26 pitches over the period from 2012 to 2027, as opposed to the 34 between 2007 and 2021 predicted by the earlier Tees Valley assessment. A public consultation exercise was held in February and March 2014 on potential sites where these new pitches could be developed, and a call for sites brought forward one private proposal for a twenty-pitch site. There are currently 42 permanent Gypsy and Traveller pitches in Stockton, made up of 28 rented pitches on a Council owned site and 14 authorised pitches on 10 privately

owned small sites in various locations. There are no transit sites in the borough or sites for Travelling Showpeople; the 2012 Accommodation Assessment update found there to be no need to provide either of these.

- Middlesbrough Council completed a Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople topic paper in March 2014 as part of its Local Plan process. The topic paper describes how the Council has reviewed accommodation needs within the context set by the 2009 *Tees Valley Gypsy, Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment*, which it deems a key part of the current Local Plan's evidence base. The Council has extended the needs assessment up to 2029, its Local Plan's final year, by projecting forward household growth rates in order to work out likely pitch and plot requirements for the entire plan period. Over the life of the whole Local Plan, eight extra Gypsy and Traveller pitches and five extra Travelling Showpeople plots will be needed. The Council believes it has a deliverable and developable supply of sufficient pitches and plots over the requisite fifteen year period, achievable by developing within or adjacent to existing sites rather than through identifying new sites in the Local Plan. In support of this stance, the Council cites as evidence the small amount of provision needed over the next five years, an absence of unauthorised encampments since 2008, inevitable uncertainties over the following ten to fifteen year period and long-term spare capacity at its Gypsy and Traveller site. Currently there are 21 permanent Gypsy and Traveller pitches in Middlesbrough, all on one council-owned site, and 10 plots for Travelling Showpeople on one privately-run yard.
  - Redcar & Cleveland Council is currently in the middle of refurbishing the Gypsy and Traveller site that it owns. When it re-opens later in 2014, the site will offer 18 permanent pitches, an increase of five on current provision. The Council is planning on the basis needs identified in the 2009 *Tees Valley Gypsy, Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment* and has not yet begun work to review these targets. A transit area is provided within the Council's permanent site, but it has never been used as such, and there is no record of unauthorised encampments having occurred. There is no site for Travelling Showpeople in Redcar & Cleveland, with no need having been identified.
- 4.6 Hartlepool borders County Durham to the north and west. Here a Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessment was carried out in 2013 (also by Renaissance Research, the authors of this Hartlepool Assessment), as part of the Council's Local Plan process. Durham County Council provides six Gypsy and Traveller sites across the County. At the time of the Assessment, the Council was still in the process of refurbishing its sites, with four of them due to close for works to begin. On completion of the refurbishment programme in 2015, the Council will have increased its provision from the current figure of 115 to 123 permanent pitches, also increasing the number of double pitches. In view of this, the Assessment found no extra need for Gypsy and Traveller pitches over the next five years, but recommended that the needs assessment should be updated in 2020, by which time the true long-term pattern of demand for pitches in the County would have become discernible. There are in addition

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three privately owned sites for Travelling Showpeople in County Durham, which are home to 11 households. The Accommodation Assessment recommended that for Travelling Showpeople, any additional accommodation needs that might arise up to 2030 would be better pursued through the planning application process rather than through specific site allocations in the Local Plan.

## 5. Interviews in Hartlepool carried out for the 2009 Tees Valley Gypsy, Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment

5.1 As part of the fieldwork for the 2009 *Tees Valley Gypsy, Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment*, interviews were carried out with representatives of ten households in Hartlepool. These were eight women and two men. They all selected Romany/Gypsy (English) to identify their ethnicity from a list of options presented to them by the interviewer.

5.2 These ten households contained 34 individuals in total, comprising 20 adults and 14 children. The ages of the people in the households were:

Age	Number
0-4 yrs	3
5-10yrs	6
11-15 yrs	5
16-39 yrs	8
40-59 yrs	8
60-74 yrs	2
75-84	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>

5.3 All ten respondents were living in bricks and mortar housing. Their housing tenures were:

Owner Occupier	5
Council*	4
Private rent	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>

\* i.e. Housing Hartlepool, the social landlord set up by the transfer of Hartlepool Borough Council's housing stock

5.4 There was an adult in work in five of the households. Horse dealer, market trader, tarmac and tree felling were each mentioned as sources of employment.

5.5 All respondents felt positively about their current housing in terms of space and general suitability, although one suggested 'bigger bedrooms' would be an improvement. There were no reports of harassment or other problems with neighbours, although three had experienced eviction at some time in the past.

5.6 Seven of the respondents had been living in their current home for three years or more. Five predicted that they would continue to live there 'indefinitely', and five said they did not know how long they would stay. Two respondents said they had bought land in the past, with one describing difficulties Gypsies face in dealing with planning authorities.



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5.7 Nine described themselves as 'local to the area', with four being born in Hartlepool. All ten said they had family in the area and four said they had children in local schools.

5.8 When asked where they had lived previous to their current address, the following answers were provided:

Roadside	5
House	4
Private Site	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>

5.9 As for travelling, six said they travelled seasonally, two said they travelled just once a year and two said they no longer travelled. Five noted that the frequency of their travelling had changed, in each case because it was getting harder to find stopping places. Three said they had been forced to leave a stopping place in the previous year.

5.10 Six respondents said that they travelled to attend fairs and two said they travelled to visit relatives. Four mentioned travelling to Appleby, and Yarm Fair was mentioned too.

5.11 Looking to the future, three thought they would travel less, three thought they would travel the same amount and four did not know. Travelling appeared to be mainly fairly local and reliant on roadside stopping places.

5.12 As for future housing needs, one respondent was on the waiting list for social rented housing in Hartlepool, but apart from this, none of the respondents said they were in housing need. Two respondents each identified a son as needing accommodation at some time during the next five years, and one of them thought that a trailer/caravan might be what they required.

5.13 Other responses to the questionnaire include:

- Six of the respondents kept horses, but not other livestock
- Four own a caravan/trailer
- Four agreed with the suggestion that 'people working in services need to be aware of Gypsy and Traveller issues'
- Six felt that they 'would definitely use' a service offering help with filling in forms
- Four felt the they 'would definitely use' a service offering help with planning
- Five said their children attended school regularly and one said they didn't
- None said their children were being educated at home

5.14 Interviews were not carried out with Travelling Showpeople in Hartlepool for the 2009 *Tees Valley Gypsy, Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment* as no Travelling Showpeople lived there.

## **6. Hartlepool – current data**

### **Estimating the population of Gypsies and Travellers in Hartlepool from the 2011 Census**

- 6.1 As noted in paragraphs 3.12 -14 above, the 2011 Census was the first ever to include a specific category for 'White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller', although some academics and other spokespeople believe the Census may have recorded only a half to a quarter of people nationally who may reasonably have been expected to identify themselves as 'White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller'.
- 6.2 This problem of a likely Census under-count is apparent in the neighbouring council area of County Durham where the Census records only 467 Gypsy and Travellers, when other locally derived estimates have previously suggested a population of around 2,000 in this area with a long-established Gypsy and Traveller presence. And the 2013 study by the Irish Traveller Movement in Britain cited in paragraph 3.14 suggests a minimum population for the North East and Tees Valley of slightly more than double that recorded by the Census.
- 6.4 In Hartlepool only 12 household representatives described their ethnicity as 'White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller'. In total, 40 persons were identified in the Census as 'White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller' but it is not possible to ascertain whether some of these were resident in households with a non Gypsy/Traveller as the household representative.
- 6.5 If the underestimate in Hartlepool reflects the national picture described in the Irish Traveller Movement in Britain report, then on the basis of Census figures alone, there might be around 80 Gypsy and Irish Travellers living in Hartlepool. Whereas if the Census undercount in Hartlepool was closer to what may have occurred in County Durham, a population of around 150 could be derived from the Census, although as Hartlepool is not an historic centre of Gypsy and Traveller life in the way that parts of County Durham certainly are, the Irish Traveller Movement in Britain report may offer the more reliable basis for deriving an actual upper limit from the Census figures.

### **Estimating the population of Gypsies and Travellers in Hartlepool from local school records**

- 6.6 Given the problems with data from the recent Census discussed above, Renaissance Research has developed an approach to estimating the total population of Gypsies and Travellers from the number of Gypsy and Traveller children known to a Local Authority's Education Department. This approach has been adopted in similar assessments for County Durham, Greater Manchester, North Yorkshire and the East Riding of Yorkshire.
- 6.7 These estimates have been made by reversing the standard planning calculation of 2.6 pupils per year group to every 100 households. The standard

calculation has to be adapted for Gypsy and Traveller households because evidence strongly suggests that the average number of children in families with dependant children is higher in this community than in the population as a whole and they will therefore generate fewer households for any given number of school pupils.

- 6.8 A ratio of 1.7 school age children per year group to every 100 households has been adopted for the Gypsy and Traveller population. This ratio has been arrived at by taking 1.7 which is the average number of children for families for the population in England as a whole, dividing it by 2.6, which is the average number of children for Gypsy and Traveller families with children (taken from household surveys of this community elsewhere) and multiplying the result by 2.6, which is the ratio of pupils per year group in the standard calculation<sup>1</sup>.
- 6.9 There are only 9 pupils from Gypsy and Irish Traveller families known to the Hartlepool Borough Council's Education Department<sup>2</sup>, spread between six schools. No home educated children are recorded as being of Gypsy and Traveller heritage. Applying the figure of 1.7 households for every school age child suggests there may be about 15 Gypsy and Traveller households, which would translate into a population estimate of 45 Gypsy and Traveller persons living in the borough.
- 6.10 It is perhaps surprising for the estimate derived in this way to be so similar to the Census figure. In other GTAA's the figure calculated in this way has been much greater and it would therefore appear that the Hartlepool area is a special case. This might be explained in a number of ways:
- A lower propensity to self-identify as Gypsy or Irish Traveller with schools than in other parts of the country.
  - A more accurate enumeration in the Census of Gypsy/Irish Traveller individuals and households than that achieved elsewhere.
  - Greater complexity regarding ethnic self-identity in families associated with recognised Travelling communities.

### **Using Census returns to indicate the distribution of Gypsies and Travellers around Hartlepool**

- 6.11 The following table shows the distribution of 'White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller' persons from the 2011 Census by ward, but it should be noted that small numbers are *bowdlerised* in the Census in order to protect against disclosure of personal information. This means that records have been swapped between different geographic areas. Some counts will be affected, particularly small counts at the lowest geographies. All that might be said from Table 1 is that the

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<sup>1</sup> It is merely coincidental that the number of children per household in the other surveys and the numbers of school age children generated by 100 households in the planning formula are both 2.6.

<sup>2</sup> None of these self-identified in the School Census 2013.

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wards of Hart, Burn Valley and Rossmere are those most likely to contain Gypsy and Irish Traveller households:

<b>2011 ward</b>	<b>All usual residents</b>	<b>White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller</b>
<b>Hart</b>	6,913	9
<b>Burn Valley</b>	5,688	8
<b>Rossmere</b>	6,353	5
<b>Owton</b>	5,691	4
<b>St Hilda</b>	5,708	4
<b>Brus</b>	6,779	2
<b>Dyke House</b>	4,952	1
<b>Elwick</b>	2,061	1
<b>Foggy Furze</b>	4,497	1
<b>Park</b>	5,934	1
<b>Rift House</b>	6,285	1
<b>Seaton</b>	6,865	1
<b>Stranton</b>	6,105	1
<b>Throston</b>	5,972	1
<b>Fens</b>	4,871	0
<b>Grange</b>	5,222	0
<b>Greatham</b>	2,132	0

6.12 Owing to the very small numbers of Gypsy and Traveller children recorded as attending school in Hartlepool, it has not been possible for the Education Service to corroborate the details in the above table, because of the risk of identifying individual children.

### **Using Census returns for accommodation type to identify Gypsies and Travellers in Hartlepool**

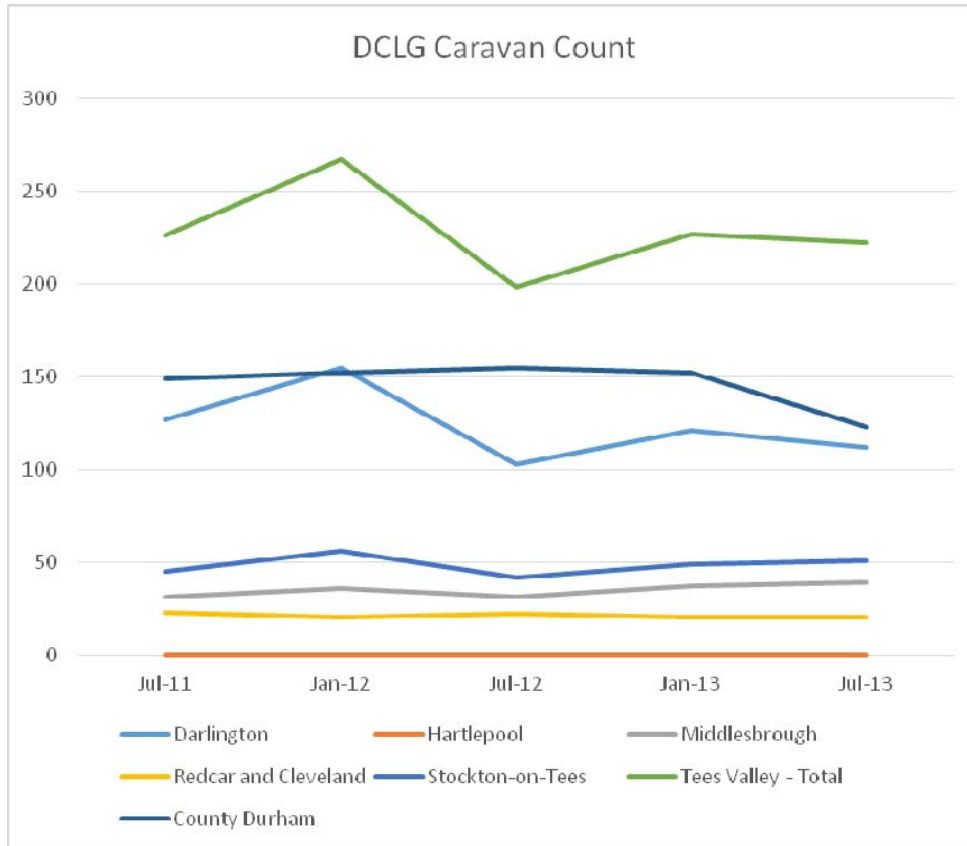
6.13 While a total of 109 households were recorded in the 2011 Census as living in a 'caravan or other mobile or temporary structure', none of these identified as 'White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller'.

### **The twice yearly caravan count as an indicator of the presence in Hartlepool of Gypsies and Travellers**

6.14 Snapshot counts of the number of Gypsy and Traveller caravans were requested by the Government in 1979, and are now made by local authorities on a voluntary basis every January and July. Again there are issues of accuracy around this data with their accuracy believed to vary between local authorities. There is no guarantee that the counts pick up on all private Traveller sites, or on

Gypsies and Travellers living on commercial caravan sites and unauthorised developments.

6.15 No caravans have been recorded in Hartlepool in any of the last five caravan counts, although they are recorded in neighbouring council areas, as the graph below shows:



**The frequency of Unofficial Encampments as an indicator of the presence in Hartlepool of Gypsies and Travellers**

6.16 Hartlepool Borough Council reports that there have been only eight unofficial Gypsy or Traveller encampments in the last three years. In total this represented a minimum of 112 caravan days.

6.17 Unauthorised encampments are in fact relatively infrequent across the whole of Tees Valley. Of the five authorities in this sub-region, Stockton is the only council to have recorded any unauthorised encampments present on land not owned by Gypsies in the last five national twice-yearly caravan counts, recording 13 caravans in total over those last five counts. As for the unauthorised presence of caravans on land owned by Gypsies, Darlington is the only council to have recorded anything at all, with 14 caravans in total over the last five counts.

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Year	Caravans	Duration (days)	Caravan days	Location	Reason
2010/11	1	3	3	Raby Arms, Hart	Unknown
2010/12	4	8	32	B&Q	Unknown
2011/12	3	4	12	B&Q	Unknown
2012/13	Unknown	1	1	* B&Q	Unknown
2012/13	5	1	5	Customs House, Marina	Unknown
2012/13	11	1	11	North Gare, Seaton Carew	Unknown
2013/14	4	6	24	B&Q	Unknown but coincided with horse fair at Blackhall
2014/15	6	4	24	B&Q	Unknown
<b>TOTAL</b>			112		

\*Minimum

6.18 In contrast, unauthorised encampments are common in County Durham with Durham County Council's Traveller Liaison Service recording an average of 350 unauthorised encampments per year on private and council-owned land since 2008. However, the seasonal nature of unauthorised encampments in County Durham and their concentration along routes associated with Appleby Fair or other events of significance to Gypsies and Travellers, suggest they are more to do with the travelling culture itself rather than indicating local accommodation need.

**Using Planning Applications to track past demand for Gypsy & Traveller sites**

6.19 Hartlepool Borough Council has received no applications for private site development either in the period reviewed for the 2009 *Tees Valley Gypsy, Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment*, nor since then. Neither have they had to take any action over unofficial developments. Bearing this in mind the Council has no record of ever receiving a planning application with regard to a Gypsy and Traveller development since records began.

**Travelling Showpeople in Hartlepool**

6.20 There are no records of any Travelling Showpeople's yards in Hartlepool, nor of any planning applications to situate any there. A phone call discussion carried out with a regional representative of the Showman's Guild for this accommodation assessment confirms that no Travelling Showpeople are known to live in the area for which Hartlepool Borough Council is the local planning authority.

## 7. Focus Groups summary

- 7.1 Renaissance Research contacted the Society for the Promotion & Advancement of Romany Culture (SPARC) for help to make initial contact with Gypsies and Travellers living in Hartlepool. SPARC is a community-based, non-profit organisation providing assistance and information to the Gypsy & Travellers community in and around the North-East of England.
- 7.2 On the advice of a Gypsy woman living in Hartlepool whose details were supplied by SPARC, it was agreed that the best way to begin to develop contact with Gypsies and Travellers would be to invite people to a drop-in session at a local community centre. This would offer a low-key, unthreatening opportunity to explain the aims of the Accommodation Assessment and being to identify issues.
- 7.3 Two drop-in sessions were arranged for April 16<sup>th</sup> at the Belle Vue Community Centre, which was recommended by the SPARC contact. The sessions, which took the form of informal focus groups, were held in the afternoon and early evening. Invitations were through a Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Hartlepool-Accommodation-Assessment-for-Gypsies-and-Travellers/1408440952750217>) specially set up to generate interest in the project, and also by word of mouth.
- 7.4 Although only four people attended these sessions, they did seem to succeed in laying the basis for further more detailed work with Gypsies and Travellers in Hartlepool later in the project. The age range of the two women and two men who attended the sessions was from early twenties to late fifties.
- 7.5 Perhaps the most significant point emerging from these initial sessions was simply the confirmation that there was indeed a small indigenous Gypsy and Traveller presence in Hartlepool. Involvement in horses, drives and seasonal travelling to various events all cited amongst numerous examples of the surprisingly vibrant local culture.
- 7.6 Comments made by participants in the session include:
- Any site for Gypsies and Travellers would have to be properly managed, with good facilities.
  - Young people [in Gypsy and Traveller families] might consider living on a site if one was available.
  - Although a proper transit site might be what is needed, rather than a permanent site.
  - But would a transit site just attract trouble?

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- Encampments on the B&Q site occur when people come here to visit relatives.
  - People with Gypsy and Traveller heritage live on caravan sites such as Crimdon Dene, but are probably settled there rather than interested in a permanent Gypsy and Traveller site.
  - There probably are no people on Gypsy and Traveller sites in other Council areas nearby who want to move to Hartlepool.
  - The 2013 consultation about possible Gypsy and Traveller sites in Hartlepool stirred up a lot of bad feeling and is likely to make people think twice about identifying themselves as Gypsies.
  - There are a lot of people locally who are interested in the Gypsy way of life, although they are not fully 'Gypsy blood'.
- 7.7 As well as establishing links with the four people who attended, a number of additional people living locally were suggested as further contacts.



## 8. Findings from interviews carried out in Hartlepool, May and June 2014

### Methodology

- 8.1 As the population of Gypsies and Travellers living in Hartlepool is known to be small, a rolling ball technique was adopted to identify potential survey respondents in Hartlepool. The Darlington-based UK Association of Gypsy Women, the Northern Network of Travelling People and the Society for the Promotion and Advancement of Romany Culture were all approached and asked to provide us with people to contact initially. A Facebook page was set up too, so that social networking could help to identify potential respondents. Further interviews were then set up from these initial contacts.
- 8.2 In total 17 people were approached for interviews and 14 were completed. Interviewees came from 13 different households, one more than the 12 household representatives recorded by the Census. These interviews produced information on 29 separate individuals, representing 64% of Hartlepool's Gypsy and Traveller population as derived from school records (see paragraphs 6.6-6.10 above); school records perhaps offer the best basis for calculating the actual population, given the problems with Census and other data.
- 8.3 As the Gypsy and Traveller population in Hartlepool is small, for the purposes of survey work it is not relevant to provide a confidence interval to estimate sample bias. In order to achieve a confidence interval of +/- 5% (at the 95% confidence level) for the upper population estimate of 43 households it would be necessary to interview all households. However, schools data suggests the actual number of households is likely to be at the lower end of the possible range, i.e. under 20. Fieldworkers therefore sought to interview as many Gypsies and Travellers as could be identified, approaching 17 individuals and interviewing 14 from 13 different households to achieve what is arguably the most representative sample available.
- 8.4 Most respondents were men, which is unusual for surveys on Gypsy and Traveller issues. There was a good mixture of ages:

Survey Respondents by age and gender

	Male	Female	Total
under 25	3	1	4
26 - 40 yrs	2	1	3
41 - 60 yrs	4	2	6
61+	1	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>14</b>

## **Ethnicity and identity**

- 8.5 It rapidly became apparent through the fieldwork that notions of ethnic identity were more complex and nuanced than they have been reported as being in other Gypsy, Traveller Accommodation Assessments. There were, for example, strong family connections between some of those who described themselves as Gypsy or of Gypsy ancestry and those who were descended from showmen or from circus people. Respondents' claims about identity appeared to involve sophistication and sensitivity.
- 8.6 Gypsies and Travellers in the UK are generally divided into three broad groups: English (Romany) Gypsies, Travellers of Irish descent and New Travellers. English Gypsies and Irish Travellers are distinct ethnicities and all the duties on public bodies under Race Relations legislation apply to them.
- 8.7 In the 2009 *Tees Valley Gypsy, Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment* all of the Hartlepool respondents, when given a list of options, identified themselves as 'Romany/Gypsy (English)'. However, in the survey work conducted in May and June 2014 for this study, respondents were careful to make a distinction between having a Gypsy heritage ('coming off Gypsies') and actually being Gypsies themselves.
- 8.8 Others, while distinguishing themselves from Irish Travellers, opted for 'Traveller'. Six described themselves as 'horse people' with varying degrees of Gypsy and Traveller ancestry, even including family histories involving Showpeople and circuses. In the words of one of the respondents, 'Our ethnicity? Anything you want! Horse people, White British'. Or as her sister put it, 'We were down as Travellers of Irish Heritage at school so we could get time off for travelling. My son (5) is down as White British so it doesn't draw attention'.

**Survey respondents by ethnicity**

	Frequency
<b>Gypsy/Romany</b>	2
<b>Traveller</b>	2
<b>Horse Person</b>	6
<b>Gypsy heritage</b>	4
<b>Total</b>	14

- 8.9 As a subsidiary to the ethnicity question, respondents were asked if their answer was the same as that given in the 2011 Census. Several respondents either did not recall completing the Census or could not remember the response that they had given to the ethnicity question. Those that did either opted for 'Gypsy or Irish Traveller' or 'White British'.

8.10 As Judith Okely has noted, self-ascription relates more to group identity than to individual assertions:

*If a group of Gypsies or Travellers recognises as a member a person calling him/herself a Gypsy, then his/her Gypsy identity is a social fact. ... When self-ascription is the primary focus, then only those aspects of culture which the group itself emphasises as important have a bearing upon recruitment and identity. ... Some aspects of Traveller culture and values serve to reinforce the division, for example nomadism, self-employment, dress, language and rituals of cleanliness. But none of these is sufficient (Okely, 1983 p 66).*

8.11 The fact that the ways in which people choose to ascribe their ethnicity may change over time due to various factors is established internationally, with the 25% increase in the self-ascription of Native Americans between the 2000 and 2010 censuses in the USA being one recent well noted example.

8.12 In Hartlepool, connections were apparent between most of the family groups interviewed although doubt was cast upon the authenticity of some identity claims.

8.13 Despite the complexities around self ascription that are such a noteworthy feature of this study, it does seem that on the basis of their personal and family histories, the people interviewed in May and June 2014 could all credibly ascribe a Gypsy or Traveller ethnicity to themselves, if they chose to do so. Hence they are the proper subjects of a Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment.

### **Current accommodation**

8.12 Interviews took place over the summer period (before and after the Appleby Horse Fair). While most of the respondents were living in bricks and mortar accommodation, three respondents indicated that they were living in trailers or horse drawn wagons in and around the Hartlepool area. All three of these respondents were from the Hartlepool area and described themselves as having a Traveller heritage.

**Current accommodation type**

	<b>Frequency</b>
<b>House</b>	11
<b>Trailer/Wagon</b>	3
<b>Total</b>	14

### **Preferred accommodation**

8.13 All three of the respondents currently living in trailers/wagons and three of those living in houses expressed a preference for living in trailers/wagons in the future. The three respondents currently in housing and expressing this preference included people who had previously lived in trailers in Hartlepool

and elsewhere and had wider family members living on sites in adjacent authorities.

8.14 One of the respondents also referred to a previous private caravan site used by Gypsies and Travellers in the Seaton Carew area, which had been sold for housing around 1990.

8.15 While most of those living in houses suggested that they had grown used to the home comforts associated with bricks and mortar these included three cases where the preferences of spouses/partners differed. In one case a non-gypsy spouse was attracted to living in a trailer despite her traveller husband's preference for bricks and mortar. Two older respondents both with partners that were suffering from age related health problems indicated that they would otherwise have preferred to live in trailers and would pursue this option in later years were they to lose their partners.

**Preferred accommodation type by current accommodation type**

	Current accommodation		
	House	Trailer/Wagon	Total
House	8	0	8
Trailer/Wagon	3	3	6
Total	11	3	14

8.16 Five of the six respondents wishing to live in trailers/wagons wanted to remain in the Hartlepool area while one wanted to relocate to the Midlands due to work commitments.

8.17 When asked the reason for accommodation preferences those preferring trailers reported to varying degrees their dissatisfaction with living in houses. Reasons included a preference to be 'free to move around' and for 'fresh air'. One suggested that she had 'never wanted to live in a house'. As she explained:

*I feel closed in living in a house and don't feel comfortable mixing socially with people who aren't family or Travellers*

8.18 Another suggested that living in a house had contributed to various health problems and had affected her mental health.

**Preferred accommodation type by preferred location**

	Preferred Accommodation		
	House	Trailer/Wagon	Total
Not specified	2	0	2
Hartlepool	6	5	11
Midlands	0	1	1
Total	8	6	14

## **Need for a site**

- 8.19 All respondents were asked whether they felt that there was a need for a Traveller site in the Hartlepool area.
- 8.20 Respondents were clearly very aware of how controversial a recent attempt by the Council to identify a site for the town at Hart Village had been. In addition, several respondents indicated a concern that any site that might be developed should be well managed. There were many concerns about the behaviour of non-Travellers and 'irresponsible' Travellers who in their view should be excluded. The most recent unauthorised encampment at the B&Q site in Hartlepool site was mentioned as having been the cause of a considerable amount of anti-social behaviour.
- 8.21 With all this in mind, on reflection two respondents maintained that they could not give a view on whether a site was needed, because 'It was not up to them'. Another believed a transit site was required rather than a permanent one, while ten others suggested a permanent site of some kind was required.
- 8.22 Views about the size of site that they believed to be required varied, ranging from between 6 and 20 pitches, with issues around security and manageability occupying respondents' thoughts as to the viability of any future site.

## **Travelling behaviour**

- 8.23 Nine of the 14 respondents reported that they had a trailer or horse drawn wagon.
- 8.24 Most respondents indicated that their travelling behaviour was now largely restricted to visiting fairs, except for the three respondents living in trailers who mentioned staying at the roadside, particularly near Sedgefield as well as on a parent's drive.
- 8.25 Appleby and Yarm were the most frequently mentioned destinations. Those currently living in trailers/wagons reported that they travelled for most of the summer months. One travelled in connection with circus work while one was unable to travel despite wishing to do so due to personal reasons.

### **Travelling practices**

	<b>Frequency</b>
<b>Fairs</b>	7
<b>Fairs and summer</b>	3
<b>Circus</b>	1
<b>Not at moment</b>	1
<b>Missing</b>	2
<b>Total</b>	14

**Other interviews**

- 8.26 A leading member of the Gypsy community in the North East who also manages a number of permanent sites in the Tees Valley area was interviewed too. He had been born in Hartlepool, and although he had moved away, he still had cousins living in the town with their families. He said that his cousins were now settled in houses with their families, and though proud of their Gypsy heritage, would no longer consider living on sites. He also said he was unaware of anyone on the site he managed in Redcar coming from Hartlepool, although he may have encountered a few over the years from Hartlepool on his Darlington site.
- 8.27 Gypsy Site Wardens were contacted in County Durham and asked to supply details of any applications for pitches that had been received from people from Hartlepool. None could be recalled although Durham County Council responded that the application records were private so this could not be confirmed absolutely. Durham County Council staff dealing with unauthorised encampments could not recall encountering anyone from the Hartlepool area.
- 8.28 Alan Boswell, pastor of the Light and Life Church in Darlington which has many Gypsies in its congregation, confirmed that no one from Hartlepool was a current member of the that Church, although they had been until a few years ago.

## 9. Calculation of pitch requirements

### Pitch Requirements for Gypsies and Travellers

9.1 An assessment of the likely supply and demand for permanent Gypsy and Traveller sites in Hartlepool during the period up to 2031 is set out in the table below, using data collected by the current study.

	Factors	Number	Notes
	<b>Supply</b>		
1	Current supply of local authority pitches	0	There are no LA sites in the Borough.
2	Current supply of authorised privately owned pitches	0	No pitches have been granted permanent permission in the last 5 years (HBC Planning).
3	Alternative provision	0	None known
4	Expected increase in supply of local authority pitches	0	None currently planned
5	Expected increase in supply of privately owned pitches and alternative provision	0	None known – no history
	<b>Flows resulting in increased supply</b>		
6	Older people vacating pitches	0	
7	Younger households likely to move into bricks and mortar	0	
8	Households likely to move from sites into 'bricks and mortar' accommodation or into care homes etc.	0	Sum of 6 and 7
9	Out migrants: Number of households occupying or requiring pitches that are likely to move away	2	From survey
	TOTAL SUPPLY	2	Sum of 1 to 9
	<b>Demand</b>		
10	Number of households occupying authorised local authority pitches	0	
11	Number of households currently occupying authorised privately owned pitches and alternative provision	0	
12	Number of households living on unauthorised developments	0	
13	Number of households living on unauthorised encampments and intending to stay in Hartlepool	3	From survey*
	<b>Flows resulting in increased demand</b>		
14	Households likely to move from bricks and mortar accommodation onto a site (if developed)	3	From survey
15	In migrants: Number of households requiring pitches that are likely to move to Hartlepool	0	
16	Households requiring pitches likely to emerge from existing pitches (family formation)	0	No existing pitches
17	Households requiring pitches likely to emerge from bricks and mortar accommodation (family formation)	1	Schools data - see para 9.2 below
	TOTAL DEMAND	7	Sum of 10 to 17
	Net Demand	5	Demand - Supply

\*i.e. constantly moving between a nearby stop over site in County Durham, various other local outdoor spaces and on parents' driveways in Hartlepool as concealed households.

- 9.2 Due to the very small overall population of Gypsies and Travellers it is difficult to project the precise effects on demand of new household formation, as well as the proportion likely to remain in Hartlepool, or the likely propensity for living on sites for those that do. Survey data from the neighbouring authority of Durham County Council conducted in 2013 suggests that about one tenth of Gypsy and Traveller family formation from households with children in bricks and mortar accommodation might result in demand for a pitch on a site. As the traveller education data in Hartlepool suggests no more than ten households with school age children then it is unlikely that family formation will result in more than one additional pitch over the course of the next 17 years.
- 9.3 The analysis presented in the above table indicates a hypothetical need for five Gypsy and Traveller pitches in Hartlepool between 2016 and 2031. In theory, demand for four of those pitches is likely to occur over the next five years, with the remaining pitch being required at some time in the following five year period.

**Plot requirements for Travelling Showpeople**

- 9.4 There is no requirement to carry out an analysis of plot requirements for Travelling Showpeople because none are living in Hartlepool.



## 10. Meeting the need

- 10.1 Although not a direct qualitative and quantitative comparison, the requirements set out in section 9 show one fewer pitch being needed in Hartlepool now than in the 2009 *Tees Valley Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment*. That earlier study covered the period 2009 to 2026, whereas this 2014 study covers the period 2014-2031.
- 10.2 As no pitches have been provided in Hartlepool since 2009 to meet needs identified by the earlier study, the fact that just five are still theoretically required to make up for any shortfall since 2009 and to cover an extra five years up to 2031, may indicate that the level of need measured by this current study is marginally lower than that projected in the 2009 study.
- 10.3 If so, that would be consistent with the survey carried out for this study which recorded many comments about members of Hartlepool families with a Gypsy and Traveller heritage becoming more accustomed over time to living in bricks and mortar, or even no longer considering themselves as anything other than White British due to a combination of inter-marriage and changed life style (although there are international examples of this process being reversed as rates of self-ascription of certain ethnicities rise again after periods of decline).
- 10.4 This is an important consideration when thinking through how best to prepare for the situation, should it ever occur, of the assumed small need identified in this study turning into an expression of real demand (i.e. a member of the Gypsy and Traveller community in Hartlepool actually approaching the Council to ask to live permanently on a site in their home town). Since this may never happen because so many in Hartlepool's small Gypsy and Traveller population appear settled in bricks and mortar housing, is it necessary to allocate or provide a dedicated site whilst this small need remains theoretical?
- 10.5 It is worthwhile here to clarify the difference between 'need' and 'demand'. In the context of this study, need is simply a normative prediction of the accommodation provision potentially required in future, based on what is known about the local Gypsy and Traveller community today. Therefore need is always hypothetical, being based on the theoretical assumptions and methods used to calculate it. Demand on the other hand is actual; it occurs when hypothetical/theoretical need is expressed by someone actually asking for a particular service or (in the case of this study) form of accommodation.
- 10.6 In Hartlepool, having a need for a pitch, or an intention to live on one in the foreseeable future, appears now to affect only some members of a small number of family groups; perhaps no more than five family groups at most. Again, this is an important consideration when deciding whether there is an immediate necessity to allocate or provide a dedicated site to meet this small theoretical need.

## **Different challenges**

- 10.7 The need for pitches that has been identified over the next five years appears to come from two sources: young men with a Gypsy and Traveller heritage setting up home for the first time whose parents are living in bricks and mortar housing, and people in late middle age who have been living in bricks and mortar housing for some time whilst retaining an intention to return to living on a site. Planning for the needs of each of these groups presents quite different challenges.
- 10.8 The three young men found in this study to be actually involved now in living in trailers and wagons may be at a time of life when it is difficult to be sure about what will happen to each of them in future. Certainly meeting their housing needs entails dealing with exactly the same housing management issues affecting any scheme for young men, including offering a range of appropriate support as well as advice to raise awareness of housing options. But the key point for this accommodation needs assessment is that they are three inadequately-accommodated concealed households, all with an local connection with Hartlepool.
- 10.9 Therefore, any of them could present themselves to the Council as homeless at any time and demand housing appropriate to their Gypsy and Traveller heritage, if they found they could no longer sustain the marginal forms of self-help housing they rely on currently. However, it is difficult to know how far to use their current situation to predict what kind of accommodation they will actually demand in future. Due to their young age, family situation and current economic status, their present way of life may be short lived and not maintained in the medium or long term. Therefore, in the first instance, intervention from the Local Authority with regard to offering alternative accommodation options could possibly prove the best way of meeting their future housing needs, rather than providing a dedicated Gypsy and Traveller site at this stage.
- 10.10 The people in late middle age who say they wish to return to living on a site at some point are most likely to prefer a small quiet location where they can have their family visit them. They are unlikely to choose to live on a site made up of much younger occupants who they do not already know well. Other factors including increased caring responsibilities of various kinds, be it for partners, grand children or other relatives, as well as the onset of illness or infirmity, may further limit how many older people are ever actually able to make such a move. With that in mind, it is also unlikely that this theoretical need would benefit from the provision of a dedicated Gypsy and Traveller site at this stage either.

## **The way forward**

- 10.11 All this raises the question of what a viable response to the needs identified in Hartlepool might be and whether a dedicated site should be planned for at this time.
- 10.12 The level of need means that any likely provision would be on too small a scale to be commercially viable if set up along lease-management lines like some sites elsewhere across Tees Valley. On the other hand research conducted in other parts of England has found that small sites based on family or friendship groups are most popular with Gypsies and Travellers, and least concerning for other residents living nearby.
- 10.13 There is little likelihood that the Hartlepool people with a Gypsy and Traveller heritage identified in this study will have the resources to make private planning applications to develop their own housing solutions. Employment for those of working age appears to be casual, unskilled and there are issues around numeracy and literacy that will hold some young people back. However, Hartlepool Borough Council has already drawn up a criteria-based system for assessing potential sites; through the 2006 Local Plan, so would be well placed to assess any private planning application to provide a site, should one be received. The Council is committed to delivering a robust planning policy approach to compliment this situation in any subsequent Local Plan revision.
- 10.14 As for co-operating with adjoining authorities to provide a site, Hartlepool is perhaps too isolated for such an approach to be acceptable. The nearest site in County Durham is over ten miles away and Durham County Council has no plans to increase its site provision; the River Tees estuary separates Hartlepool from Middlesbrough; and the part of Stockton-on-Tees contiguous with Hartlepool is Port Clarence, which is mainly industrial estate or marshland.
- 10.15 The security of any potential site in Hartlepool would also need to be carefully addressed, especially in the light of the public response to the 2013 consultation that attempted to identify a viable site. In addition, the problems sometimes associated with stop-overs of Traveller groups from outside Hartlepool especially on the land adjacent to Brenda Road suggest that providing any unmanaged stop-over type site as a way of meeting needs could prove to be the worst of all worlds: unpopular locally and an increased attraction to people on the road who have made problems for themselves elsewhere.
- 10.16 Currently the Council would seek to meet the needs of the Gypsies and Travellers identified in this study, if they were deemed actually or potentially homeless, by offering support through its Housing Advice Team at Hartlepool Civic Centre. This would mean offering them advice and assistance with re-housing, and exploring their housing options, including access to currently available bricks and mortar housing, with referral to support agencies if

necessary. This is a relevant consideration bearing in mind any potential homeless applicant would have some experience of living in bricks and mortar housing whilst already living in the Borough of Hartlepool.

- 10.17 Between September 2014 and January 2015, the Council will be consulting on a new housing strategy for Hartlepool to cover the period 2015-20. Workshops with key partners and stakeholders will be held in September, and one of the themes will be to identify issues and priorities around the accommodation needs of all the borough's minority communities. It will be recommended that an engagement protocol should be included in the new strategy to raise awareness of housing services in all sections of the community in Hartlepool.
- 10.18 Communication is a key theme in the Council's current housing strategy, and will remain so in the proposed new strategy. In addition, the prevention of homelessness is a key priority for the Council, and engagement with hard to reach group recognised by it as an important means of achieving this for Gypsies and Travellers in Hartlepool.
- 10.19 Therefore, contacts with Gypsies and Travellers in Hartlepool set up for this study should be maintained too, so that the conversation with the community continues. This would be delivered by the Council's Community Safety and Engagement Team. The Belle Vue Community Centre would be a good venue for any further meetings. This would supplement the Council's other commitments to community involvement such as through its website and programme of Neighbourhood Forums.
- 10..20 Similarly, the Council has a stated commitment to the good governance of its housing service, which includes making use of established links with local and sub-regional partners, and communicating on all these issues with other Council departments such as Public Health, Education, Community Safety & Engagement and Child & Adult Services.

### **Bringing all of the Information Together**

- 10.21 The evidence suggests that in the first instance, the provision of a dedicated Gypsy and Traveller site in the Borough of Hartlepool, whether permanent or stop-over, may not offer the best solution to meeting the small theoretical housing need established through this accommodation assessment.
- 10.22 The various factors discussed above may well mean that no actual demand to live on a site is ever forthcoming, Therefore the recommendation is that the Council commits to proactively support and positively intervene with any member of the Gypsy and Traveller community needing re-housing, to explore their housing options, and does not seek to provide a dedicated site for Gypsy and Travellers in its Development Plan. Support from the Council will include access to currently available bricks and mortar housing, with referral to

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support agencies if necessary, as well as awareness-raising about the full range of accommodation options and how to pursue them.

- 10.23 Should the small theoretical need for a site then be manifested as actual demand through a Gypsy and Traveller member request or through a formal planning application, the Council will positively plan for such a site through the existing planning policy framework and any subsequent Development Plan policy framework.

## References

Okely, J. (1983) *The Traveller-Gypsies*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.