

Assessing local authorities' progress in meeting the accommodation needs of Gypsy and Traveller communities in Scotland - Final Report

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GLOSSARY

The following terms are used in this report.

Term	Explanation
Bricks and mortar	Permanent mainstream housing.
Caravan	Mobile living vehicle used by Scottish Gypsy Travellers. Also referred to as trailers.
Council / Registered Social Landlord (council / RSL) site	An authorised site owned by either a local authority or a Registered Social Landlord.
Private site	An authorised site owned by a private individual (who may or may not be a Gypsy or a Traveller). These sites can be owner-occupied, rented or have a mixture of owner-occupied and rented pitches.
Scottish Gypsy Traveller (as used in this report)	In this report, the term is used to include all ethnic Gypsies and Irish Travellers, plus other Travellers who adopt a nomadic or semi-nomadic way of life. It does not include occupational Travellers such as Travelling Showpeople or New Age Travellers.
Pitch	An area of land on a site / development generally home to one licensee household. It can differ in size and accommodate varying numbers of caravans.
Site	An authorised area of land on which Scottish Gypsy Travellers are accommodated in trailers / chalets / vehicles. It can contain one or multiple pitches.
Transit site	A site intended for short stays. Such sites are usually permanent, but there is a limit on the length of time residents can stay.
Travelling Showpeople	Commonly referred to as Showmen, these are a group of occupational Travellers who work on travelling shows and fairs across the UK and abroad. This report does not include the accommodation requirements of Travelling Showpeople.

Unauthorised development	This refers to a caravan / trailer or group of caravans / trailers on land owned (possibly developed) by Scottish Gypsy Travellers without planning permission.
Unauthorised encampment	Stopping on private / public land without permission (for example, at the side of the road).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

In its 2006 report *Common Ground*, the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) concluded that Gypsies and Irish Travellers are the most excluded groups in Britain today. Advances in social mobility and access to power made by other disadvantaged groups in Britain, such as other ethnic minority groups, have not been matched by Gypsies and Travellers. The research reported here builds on the earlier work done by the CRE.

The aim of this study is to provide data about the extent to which local authorities in Scotland are meeting the accommodation needs of Scottish Gypsy Travellers. There are two main objectives:

- To ascertain the quantity of current Gypsy Traveller site provision, including any recent changes in provision and any imminent plans to develop sites in the future.
- To investigate the timescales of delivery to meet any accommodation shortfalls.

The research is designed to explore the perspective of local authorities and, to a lesser extent, police forces in Scotland and their understanding of the accommodation needs of Scottish Gypsy Travellers. As a result there has been no direct involvement of Scottish Gypsy Traveller communities and it can therefore, of course, give one side of the picture only.

The term 'Scottish Gypsy Traveller' is used in an inclusive manner to comprise **all** ethnic Gypsies and Irish Travellers, plus other Travellers who adopt a nomadic or semi-nomadic way of life. Variants of the term (for example, Gypsy / Traveller or Gypsy and Traveller) are used where they appear in sources being referred to or quoted, for example the term Gypsy / Traveller Sites Grant is used throughout. Caravan sites specifically intended to be occupied by Scottish Gypsy Travellers are referred to as 'Gypsy Traveller sites'.

Approach to the research

The research follows a broadly similar study carried out in England for the Equality and Human Rights Commission (Brown and Niner, 2009) and used the following approaches to gather relevant information:

- An analysis of 2006-08 Caravan Count data.
- A detailed questionnaire sent to all 32 local authorities in Scotland resulting in 26 responses (81 per cent).
- A brief email survey to Police Authorities; the Association of Chief Police Officers Scotland (ACPOS) provided a collective response to this survey.

Policy framework

Accommodation issues impacting on Scottish Gypsy Travellers have been debated by Government and organisations campaigning with and on behalf of Scottish Gypsy Travellers in Scotland over many years. But in post-devolution Scotland, a clear watershed was the Inquiry into Gypsy Travellers and public sector policies by the Equal Opportunities Committee (EOC) of the Scottish Parliament in 2000/01. This Inquiry's recommendations fed into the development of housing policy and legislation, in particular the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, and encouraged the production of thematic studies of provision of services for Gypsies / Travellers. Despite these positive steps, and although some inroads were being made into resolving the shortages of accommodation for Scottish Gypsy Travellers, subsequent reviews identified slow progress on the EOC recommendations and little change in the life chances of Scottish Gypsy Travellers. In 2006, drawing on the 2001 Inquiry, its subsequent review in 2005 and other evidence from related research and consultations, the CRE identified the primary issues relating to accommodation needs of Scottish Gypsies / Travellers as:

- The lack of a network of accessible and acceptable local authority sites.
- The poor physical condition and location of local authority sites.
- The difference in treatment experienced by Scottish Gypsies / Travellers when housed compared with those living on local authority sites.
- The absence of a network of adequate and appropriate temporary transit sites for Scottish Gypsies / Travellers.
- The inappropriate use of powers to evict Scottish Gypsies / Travellers from roadside encampments when no other appropriate provision is available.

- The widely reported harassment of Scottish Gypsies / Travellers in public and private sector housing.

The Scottish Government's Race Equality Scheme and Statement (2008) embeds Gypsy / Traveller issues in its approach to race equality and proposes future resources for services to tackle some key priorities for Scottish Gypsy Travellers by 2011. While positive, this statement comes some 10 years after the first Scottish Parliament's Equal Opportunities Committee inquiry into public sector policies, and further illustrates how slow progress in this area has been.

Caravan Count: findings

Twice Yearly Counts of Gypsies / Travellers (undertaken each year in January and July) were introduced in Scotland in 1998 by the Scottish Executive (now Scottish Government). The purpose of the Count is to establish standardised and consistent estimates as to the size and characteristics of the Scottish Gypsy Traveller community living on sites and encampments across Scotland to assist and inform the development of public policies and services nationally and locally. The Count is carried out by local authorities and reported by the Scottish Government.

The Count has been criticised for its accuracy and consistency. Most importantly it can give only a partial picture of the Scottish Gypsy Traveller community because it omits people living in housing. Despite this, it is important because it is the only source of reasonably consistent, time-series information on numbers and locations of Scottish Gypsy Travellers living in caravans and is thus useful as context. Information from the Counts cannot be used directly as a basis for accommodation needs assessment since they ignore needs arising from Scottish Gypsy Travellers in housing.

The main findings from an analysis of the Caravan Count, including a comparison with other parts of the United Kingdom, are:

- Caravan numbers in Scotland are relatively low and numbers have changed little since 2006. Unlike England, there is no clear evidence of growing numbers of Scottish Gypsy Travellers living on Council / RSL, private or unauthorised sites to support presumptions of widespread major shortfalls in pitch provision. However, there were around 100 caravans on unauthorised

sites in January 2008 suggesting a round-the-year shortfall in the current provision of authorised sites.

- The great majority of caravans on authorised sites in Scotland are on council / RSL sites; the private site sector is relatively undeveloped.
- There is a marked variation between January and July figures suggesting seasonal travelling in summer. Numbers of caravans on unauthorised sites and, to a lesser extent, on private sites rise in summer. The Counts do not indicate reasons for travelling, nor do they indicate where summer travellers spend winter – for example, in bricks and mortar housing and / or outside Scotland.

Police: findings

Police Authorities are often involved in managing unauthorised encampments and are ideally placed to offer informed views on how the accommodation situation of Scottish Gypsy Travellers is working out 'on the ground'. For this reason each of the eight Police Authorities was approached to explore their views and practice on Scottish Gypsy Traveller accommodation issues and needs. ACPOS produced a collated response to this survey. Their response acknowledged that:

- Gypsies and Travellers have an historical place in Scotland and a continuing desire to travel.
- The lack of appropriate site provision and loss of traditional stopping places leads to greater awareness of unauthorised encampments, and their impact, on the part of the settled community.
- Internal conflicts within the Scottish Gypsy Traveller communities have some impact on site use and levels of site occupancy.
- There are no simple answers given the nature of the Scottish Gypsy Traveller communities involved, the presence of entrenched views, and the complex historical context of Scottish Gypsy Traveller accommodation and travelling needs.

Questionnaire: findings

A survey questionnaire was sent to all 32 local authorities in Scotland to explore the steps that they have taken since 2006 in meeting the accommodation needs of Scottish Gypsy Travellers. Twenty-six local authorities completed the survey, representing a response rate of 81 per cent. The survey looks at how much

progress is being made in a number of different areas. The key findings for each area are given below.

Needs assessment

- Seventeen out of the 26 local authorities responding to the survey said that they had completed an assessment of the accommodation needs of Scottish Gypsy Travellers.
- Only five of the 17 local authorities with a completed accommodation assessment said that it gave them a numerical assessment of present and future pitch needs.
- A total of eight local authorities were able to provide an estimate of the number of additional residential pitches required in their area over the next five years; this ranged from zero to 50 pitches.
- Seven local authorities were able to provide an estimate for transit or short stay need for the next five years; this ranged from zero to six pitches.
- Just one local authority making an estimate for additional pitches – either transit or residential – thought that these requirements would be met.

After analysing the responses around needs assessments, two main conclusions can be drawn. These are:

- It is highly probable that there are accommodation requirements which are currently either unquantified or unacknowledged across the country.
- In comparison to England, where Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments (GTAAAs) have identified and quantified requirements virtually everywhere, Scotland is potentially less advanced in preparing for additional site provision both nationally and locally. The first step – identifying the scale of the shortfall to be met – is not yet in place.

Housing strategies

- Scottish Gypsy Travellers are referred to in the great majority of local housing strategies.
- Widespread references to general service provision, site conditions and site management suggest that Scottish Gypsy Traveller issues are embedded in wider housing policies.

- There is little apparent recognition in the strategies of any significant shortfalls in site provision, nor indications that authorities are well prepared to move towards increasing site provision.

Gypsy and Traveller sites and planning

- Just over half of responding local authorities reported that they had identified or were working towards identifying suitable locations for Gypsy Traveller sites.
- The majority of local authorities do not have approved formal planning policies on Gypsy Traveller site provision or for dealing with applications for small privately owned sites. Three main reasons were given:
 - Gypsy Traveller site provision was not identified as a priority by local authorities, and / or they had developed their planning policies before specific national guidance existed on the inclusion of Scottish Gypsy Traveller communities in this process.
 - Some local authorities thought specific planning policies around Scottish Gypsy Travellers were unnecessary as new sites were not needed and / or no planning applications had been submitted.
 - A few authorities commented that there is no need for a specific policy for dealing with applications for private sites from Scottish Gypsy Travellers because other general planning policies can be applied.

Progress on pitch provision

- The number of council / Registered Social Landlord (RSL) pitches in the responding authorities has decreased by 32 since 2006.
- 14 private pitches have been created since 2006.
- Six council / RSL pitches are currently in development (apparently transferred from the private sector) and four private pitches have planning permission but have not yet been completed.
- Overall there has been a net decrease in the number of pitches available to Scottish Gypsy Travellers since 2006 among authorities responding to the survey.

Council / RSL site quality and site occupancy

- Seventy-three per cent of responding authorities with a council / RSL site expressed at least one concern over the quality of sites in their area. The physical condition and state of repair of the sites was the issue most

frequently mentioned, followed by site management issues. These are perceptions of local authority officers and may not be matched by Scottish Gypsy Travellers living on, or familiar with, the sites.

- The majority of local authorities responding to the survey reported that some pitches were currently vacant on their sites; three sites were totally vacant or closed.
- Local authorities most often saw vacancies as evidence of a lack of demand from Scottish Gypsy Travellers for site places.

Gypsy / Traveller sites grant

- The Gypsy / Traveller Sites Grant, provided by the Scottish Government to local authorities to meet up to 75 per cent of approved costs of site development or refurbishment / improvement, has been an important driver in upgrading council / RSL sites. All but one of the responding site-owning authorities have applied for the grant. Eighty-six per cent of the authorities which have applied were successful on at least one occasion.
- A total of 321 pitches across 16 authorities have benefited from grants awarded for site upgrading or refurbishment.
- Just five local authorities have applied for grants to develop new sites and, of these, three applications were successful.
- A lack of evidence of demand for site accommodation was given as the main reason for not applying for a grant by authorities currently without a council / RSL site.

Views on progress and perceptions of barriers to progress

- The survey asked local authorities to award marks out of 10 for their progress on the provision of accommodation for Scottish Gypsy Travellers since 2006. The average assessment was 6.65.
- How 'progress' is defined is complex and relative to the circumstances and perceptions of each local authority.
- The survey suggests that local authorities' assessments of progress commonly relate to improving conditions and management on existing council / RSL sites and not to making additional provision whether in the social or private sectors.
- Local authorities noted a number of barriers to moving forward with the provision of Gypsy / Traveller accommodation. These can be grouped as:

- finding suitable land
- resistance from local communities
- lack of demand from Scottish Gypsy Travellers for accommodation
- finance
- unwillingness or opposition from Scottish Gypsy Traveller community members to site development
- complexity of the issue

Concluding comments

This study suggests that 'progress' in relation to Gypsy Traveller site accommodation is complex and the situation in Scotland is far more difficult to interpret, at this point in time, than that in England. The survey shows an overall decrease in the number of authorised pitches available to Scottish Gypsy Travellers since 2006. At the same time, there is a lack of emphasis on quantifying any additional pitch needs by local authorities. The data tells us that a number of pitches are currently unoccupied on council / RSL sites but the reasons for these vacancies are not well understood. As a result, it is unclear whether local authorities' 'progress' on site provision has been adequate or inadequate. Pitch reductions and / or lack of pitch increases might be seen to reflect the actual level of demand for accommodation by Scottish Gypsy Traveller communities. The overarching conclusion from this study is that more work needs to be done at both a local and national level in order to better understand the current use of sites and what need (if any) there is for further site / pitch provision.

There are several other points to note from the findings:

- Given the extent of seasonal travelling in Scotland and associated unauthorised encampments, transit site provision can be seen as a more obvious priority than residential sites. Concerns have been expressed about how transit sites should be designed and managed, and local authorities might welcome guidance on these issues.
- There has been significant investment in site upgrading with the support of the Gypsy / Traveller Sites Grant, and several authorities would make further bids if the grant continues. The survey found that there are a few sites with serious and multiple problems. Apart from these extreme cases, however, local authority respondents to the survey were generally reasonably confident

about the location, design and quality of their sites. It is not clear whether these perceptions are always shared by Scottish Gypsy Travellers.

- The predominance of council / RSL sites raises issues around lack of choice for Scottish Gypsy Travellers. Greater variety of site tenure and size would potentially increase choice.
- Most needs assessments undertaken to date and local authority initiatives to involve Scottish Gypsy Travellers focus predominantly on council / RSL site residents. There is a need to engage more fully with Scottish Gypsy Travellers in housing and on unauthorised encampments, as well as on sites, if the community's needs are to be met.
- Finally, where additional sites are needed, it is difficult to find suitable land for their development. A major factor in this is resistance by local settled communities to site development. There is still hostility and fear, often based on stereotype and ignorance, to the idea of site development. Overcoming this barrier will be very important in future. Local authorities should be reminded of their general duty to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between different racial communities. This is also an area where the Equality and Human Rights Commission can take a lead.

1. INTRODUCTION

In 2006, in its report *Common Ground* (CRE, 2006a), the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) concluded that Gypsies and Irish Travellers are the most excluded groups in Britain today. Advances in social mobility and access to power made by other disadvantaged groups in Britain, such as other ethnic minority groups, have not been matched by Gypsies and Travellers. The research reported here builds on earlier work by the CRE and looks at the steps being taken by local authorities to meet site accommodation needs of the Scottish Gypsy Traveller community in Scotland.

Aims and objectives

The aim of this study is to provide hard data about the extent to which each local authority in Scotland is identifying and meeting the accommodation needs of Scottish Gypsy Travellers. Within this there are two objectives:

- To ascertain the quantity of current Gypsy Traveller site provision, including any recent changes in provision and any imminent plans to develop sites in the future.
- To investigate the timescales of delivery to meet any accommodation shortfalls.

This research follows a broadly similar study carried out in England on behalf of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (Brown and Niner, 2009). As in that study, the main emphasis is on assessment of accommodation needs, the resulting shortfalls of pitches on caravan sites for Gypsy Traveller communities, and how / when these shortfalls will be met. Less emphasis is placed on changes occurring in the management of existing sites, or the development of general policies, approaches or initiatives under the heading of equality and diversity. The research is designed to explore the perspective of local authorities and police forces in Scotland and their understanding of the accommodation needs of Scottish Gypsy Travellers. As a result there has been no direct involvement of the Scottish Gypsy Traveller community.

Research approach

The study brings together secondary data sources and the results of a survey of local authorities across Scotland. The key activities involved in producing this study were:

- Analysing the bi-annual Caravan Count between 2006 and 2008.
- Carrying out a postal / email survey of all 32 local authorities across Scotland to establish their view of their progress on assessing, planning for and delivering accommodation provision for Scottish Gypsy Travellers. A total of 26 questionnaires were analysed – a response rate of 81 per cent. Full details of the survey methodology are in Appendix 1, and the covering letter and questionnaire used can be found in Appendices 2 and 3.
- Contacting each Police Authority with a brief e-mail survey to establish their views on accommodation shortages, uptake issues and examples of local good practice. The Association of Chief Police Officers Scotland (ACPOS) provided a collective response to this survey. Full details of this response are in Appendix 4.

Structure of the report

This report is intended to help the Equality and Human Rights Commission and others understand the steps that local authorities have taken since 2006 in meeting the accommodation needs of Scottish Gypsy Travellers. The report begins by setting out the context against which this work is happening. It then looks at the progress being made by local authorities under a number of different headings and looks at some of their views on barriers to progress and how these can be overcome. A fuller breakdown on the focus of each chapter is given below:

Chapter 2 sets out the context for the study by looking at significant and relevant publications on Scottish Gypsy Traveller accommodation issues. It also looks at other policies and support mechanisms related to the Scottish Gypsy Traveller community.

Chapter 3 analyses the Caravan Count as a background indicator of progress in site provision, and includes some comparison with other countries in the United Kingdom.

Chapter 4 reports the results of the survey of police forces.

Chapter 5 starts the analysis of the questionnaire survey of local authorities and looks at progress with the assessment of Scottish Gypsy Traveller accommodation needs and local housing strategies.

Chapter 6 considers planning policies towards Gypsy Traveller sites.

Chapter 7 reports changes in the supply of council / Registered Social Landlord (RSL) and private pitches since 2006.

Chapter 8 notes the number and nature of concerns expressed by survey respondents about existing council / RSL sites, and looks at the take-up of the Gypsy / Traveller Sites Grant and its contribution towards site improvement and development.

Chapter 9 shows the responding local authorities' assessments of their own progress on the provision of Gypsy Traveller sites since 2006. It also looks at their perceptions of the main barriers to site provision and how they are being overcome.

Chapter 10 offers some concluding remarks based on the findings of the research.

The Glossary (page iii) explains the use of terms in this report. We use the term Scottish Gypsy Traveller in an inclusive manner to comprise **all** ethnic Gypsies and Irish Travellers, plus other Travellers who adopt a nomadic or semi-nomadic way of life. It does not include occupational Travellers such as Travelling Showpeople. New Age Travellers are also not considered here. Variants of the term (for example, Gypsy / Traveller or Gypsy and Traveller) are used where they appear in sources being referred to or quoted, for example the term Gypsy / Traveller Sites Grant has been used throughout. Caravan sites specifically intended to be occupied by Scottish Gypsy Travellers are referred to as 'Gypsy Traveller sites'.

2. CONTEXT

Scottish Gypsy Travellers

Although some work was done earlier (Scottish Office, 1974), accommodation issues impacting on Scottish Gypsy Travellers have, since the late 1990s, been particularly debated by Government (Scottish Office, 1998; Scottish Executive, 2000) and organisations campaigning with and on behalf of Scottish Gypsy Travellers (Bancroft et al, 1996). In post-devolution Scotland, a clear watershed came in 2001 with the reporting of an inquiry on 'Gypsy Travellers and public sector policies' by the Scottish Parliament's Equal Opportunities Committee (EOC) and with the development of housing policy and legislation, in particular the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.

In Scotland, Gypsy Traveller issues have been viewed, particularly since the EOC inquiry, within an equal opportunities framework despite the uncertainty of the status of Scottish Gypsy Travellers as an ethnic group under the Race Relations Act (1976). Clark (2006a) argued the cultural and legal case for Scottish Gypsy Traveller ethnicity, even though there had, at that date, been no recognition in law that Scottish Gypsy Travellers were a racial group as were Romani Gypsies after 1988 (CRE v. Dutton) and Irish Travellers from 2000 (O'Leary v. Allied Domecq). An Employment Tribunal Judgement in October 2008 concluded that the main characteristics set out in *Mandla v. Dowell Lee* had been satisfied in the case of Scottish Gypsy Travellers, confirming the protection of the Race Relations Act 1976 (Case No: S/132721/07).

The counting of Gypsy Travellers in Scotland, other than two one-off counts in 1974 and 1992, was a new development when the bi-annual Caravan Count (January and July) was introduced in 1998. Despite concerns about the methodology used and the Count's accuracy (Clark, 2006b), it is still used to underpin accommodation assessments, policies and services. The Caravan Count does not include Scottish Gypsy Travellers staying in housing and thus presents a partial picture of the Scottish Gypsy Traveller community. Scottish Gypsy Travellers themselves estimate that their community includes more than 15,000 people (CRE, 2006c).

The latest figures available are for January and July 2008. The Count Report for January 2008 identified a total of 455 households and around 1,547 people: 276

households (61 per cent) were on council / Registered Social Landlord (RSL) sites, 81 (18 per cent) on private sites and 98 (22 per cent) on roadside encampments (Craigforth, 2008:1). The Count report for January 2008 notes:

'In January 2006 for the first time a higher percentage (23 per cent) of Gypsies / Travellers stayed on unauthorised encampments rather than private sites (20 per cent). This pattern has been repeated in this latest count...' (Craigforth, 2008: 6/7)

Differences between the summer and winter Counts reflect seasonal travelling and the July 2008 Count Report records a greater number of households on sites and camps: 313 households on council / RSL sites, 162 on private sites and 269 on roadside camps. The report notes that these figures are the highest recorded for a summer Count since July 2001 but also notes the first decrease in the number of roadside camps in July for four years (Craigforth, 2009).

Nonetheless, the long-term pattern of greater numbers of caravans or households staying on roadside camps rather than on private sites suggests a lack of access to adequate and appropriate site provision for Scottish Gypsy Travellers (see Cemlyn et al, 2009).

A detailed analysis of trends from the Caravan Counts and a comparison with other countries of the United Kingdom is provided in Chapter 3.

The Scottish Parliament Equal Opportunity Committee Inquiry, 2001

Reporting in 2001, the Equal Opportunities Committee of the Scottish Parliament undertook an *Inquiry into Gypsy Travellers and Public Sector Policies*. This Inquiry examined policies relating to the provision of accommodation, education, health and social services for Gypsy Travellers. It also looked at the issues of policing and criminal justice and the promotion of good relations between the Gypsy Traveller and settled communities (Scottish Parliament, 2001a and 2001b).

The Inquiry report made 37 recommendations in total, a number of which focused on principles, such as the use of the term Scottish Gypsy Traveller. The Inquiry also recommended that legislation and policies should be framed on the understanding that Gypsy Travellers in Scotland are covered as a racial group

under the Race Relations Act and therefore should be clearly identified as a specific community of interest for the Scottish Government's Equality Strategy.

Eleven recommendations on accommodation were made. These covered local authority sites (at this time there were no sites managed by Registered Social Landlords), private sites, unauthorised camping and housing; and notably said that services for Gypsy Travellers should be included under the new single regulatory framework to be established under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.

While the Scottish Executive's response to the report (2001 and the updated response in 2004 – *Delivering for Scotland's Gypsies / Travellers*) may have been somewhat cautious, the implementation of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 certainly raised expectations of improvement to local authority provision of site services. For example, the Act required the development of local housing strategies (LHS), and the guidance on these strategies specified that Scottish Gypsy Travellers should be included in assessments of accommodation needs. An update in March 2006 reminded local authorities that:

'This guidance lists gypsies / travellers (sic) as one of the groups whose accommodation needs should be covered in the LHS. Local authorities should therefore include details of any progress they have made in assessing or meeting the accommodation needs of Gypsies / Travellers in their areas.' (Communities Scotland, 2006a)¹ .

The role of Communities Scotland as an inspection agency was extended to include local authorities in addition to Registered Social Landlords. Following a recommendation from the Equal Opportunities Committee Inquiry (Recommendation 14), an activity standard on site services was developed, alongside a range of housing and homelessness performance standards for inspection (AS6.1 Sites for Gypsies / Travellers for local authorities only) and guidance on self-assessment and good practice.

¹ Earlier guidance detailing the expectations are no longer accessible electronically.

Activity Standard 6.1, states:

‘We plan and provide or arrange good quality serviced stopping places for Gypsies / Travellers. We let pitches in a way that ensures fair and open access for all. We take Gypsies’ / Travellers’ views into account in delivering our services, and we are responsive to their needs.’

(Communities Scotland, 2002: 1)

The basis of this activity standard was developed through a thematic study of Gypsy Traveller site service provision (Communities Scotland, 2002) and was included in early Pathfinder Inspections (such as that for East Lothian Council, Communities Scotland, 2004). As in previous studies (Lomax et al, 2000; Bancroft et al, 1996), fundamental problems were identified for site quality and management. These problems were:

- Site nuisance or hazards (landfill, pylons, flooding) impacting on sites, out-of-town locations and inadequate transport; concerns about design, poor insulation of amenity chalets, layout and size.
- Costs of pitch rental, fuel costs, lack of planned maintenance and lack of secure tenancy when compared to council house costs and agreements.
- Difficulty in accessing funding for disabled facilities for adaptations and provision of accessible chalets for older and disabled residents.

Later inspection reports, after the Pathfinders, do not consider site planning and management when assessing progress by local authorities on this standard. As a result, the quality of services to Scottish Gypsy Travellers is only assessed periodically through the thematic study approach.

Policy and progress reviews

The review of progress (Scottish Parliament, 2005) following the 2001 Scottish Parliament Equal Opportunities Committee (EOC) Inquiry, found that progress in meeting a range of the Inquiry’s recommendations was slow. This was confirmed by evidence to the EOC’s own Review, including a report from a project with young Gypsy Travellers (Save the Children, 2005). Meanwhile, sites and pitches were still being lost to Gypsy Travellers on both local authority and private sites (Research Consultancy Services, 2006).

The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE, 2006b), drawing on the 2001 policy inquiry, the 2005 review and evidence from other related research and consultations, identified the primary accommodation issues as:

- The lack of a network of accessible and acceptable local authority sites.
- The poor physical condition and location of local authority sites.
- The difference in treatment experienced by Scottish Gypsies / Travellers when housed compared with those living on local authority sites.
- The absence of a network of adequate and appropriate temporary transit sites for Scottish Gypsies / Travellers.
- The inappropriate use of powers to evict Scottish Gypsies / Travellers from roadside encampments when no other appropriate provision is available.
- The widely reported harassment of Scottish Gypsies / Travellers in public and private sector housing.

(CRE, 2006b: 5)

Scottish planning policy since 2001

In 2003, government guidance for planning authorities, *Scottish Planning Policy 3: Planning for Housing (SPP3)*, referred to the role of local planning strategies in addressing the needs of Gypsies / Travellers:

‘Planning authorities should continue to play a role through development plans, by identifying suitable locations for Gypsies / Travellers’ sites where need is demonstrated, and setting out policies for dealing with applications for small, privately-owned sites.’ (Scottish Executive, 2003, p 5)

SPP3: Planning for Homes (Revised 2008a), following consultations, reiterated the previous guidance on the inclusion of Gypsies and Travellers in both housing need and demand assessments and in local housing strategies. Local authorities were also asked to identify suitable locations for sites and set out policies on applications for small, privately owned sites.

The revised SPP3 also noted ‘the existing policy framework for assessing and meeting the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers’: referring back to much earlier guidance from the Secretary of State’s Advisory Committee on Scotland’s Travelling People guidance on site provision (Scottish Executive,

1997) and the Ninth Term Report 1998-99 (Scottish Executive, 2000). It also referenced the guidance from the Department of Communities and Local Government on Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments (CLG, 2007a).

Accommodation needs assessments

These requirements have led to the inclusion of Scottish Gypsy Travellers in research commissioned by local and national government, such as studies undertaken to identify housing needs or access to housing services. These studies are either specifically focused on Scottish Gypsy Travellers, or alternatively Scottish Gypsy Travellers are included in studies aimed at the housing needs of ethnic minority communities more generally (Craigforth, 2007; Lomax et al., 2004; Netto et al., 2004).

The Scottish Government's *Housing Need and Demand Guidance* (2008b) makes specific reference to Gypsies and Travellers in the section on 'Minority and hard to reach groups'. The guidance notes the importance of local level research and qualitative research techniques, with directions to good practice from Communities Scotland research and community profiles (such as the profile for Gypsies / Travellers in Falkirk) and the Communities and Local Government Guidance on needs assessment (2007a).

Unlike in England, Gypsy Traveller accommodation needs assessments in Scotland have not, to date, been quantitative in approach. They provide broad indicators of need rather than precise numbers of sites and / or pitches required at the local authority level. For example, the West Central Scotland accommodation needs assessment identified a best estimate 'that there may be a need for 50 pitches across West Central Scotland over the next 5-6 years' (Craigforth, 2007: 6), identifying priority areas in Lanarkshire and West Dunbartonshire.

Other research on the accommodation needs of Scottish Gypsy Travellers

Studies of accommodation needs of Scottish Gypsy Travellers have been limited in terms of the previously collected data available to researchers. Scottish Gypsy Travellers have not been included in the UK census as a distinct ethnic group; the only opportunity to self-identify their ethnicity on the census forms was under the category 'Other'. But a new tick box 'Gypsy / Traveller' was included in the

2006 test census in Scotland (Clark, 2006b) and has been recommended as a category for Scotland's 2011 census (The Scottish Government and General Register Office for Scotland, 2008).

The Caravan Count 'Gypsies / Travellers in Scotland' undertaken in January and July each year since 1998 provide a snapshot on one day of the number of caravans, the locations of sites used and the type of site. More detailed information on households is collected but only for those living on local authority or Registered Social Landlord managed sites (Research Consultancy Services, 2006). Local authorities currently have little or no information about the needs of Scottish Gypsy Travellers from previous housing needs research in their areas (Lomax et al., 2004) whether they live in housing, on caravan sites or on roadsides. Also, as Niner (2002; 2004) has noted for England, few agencies identify this group in their record-keeping systems, including for housing management.

There is a limited amount of research which bears on Scottish Gypsy Travellers who live in bricks and mortar housing. Fundamentally, there is no authoritative estimate of numbers although there are indications that the housed population significantly exceeds those staying on sites or encampments. Some accommodation needs assessments (for example Lomax et al, 2008) include interviews with people in houses and / or with Scottish Gypsy Travellers on the roadside with a house elsewhere. For some, moving to a house is clearly a last resort when they cannot find accommodation on a Gypsy Traveller site. Some young Scottish Gypsy Travellers living in housing want to experience travelling or living on a Gypsy Traveller site. 'Latent' need for Gypsy Traveller site places is likely to exist in housing, but its extent is unknown and very difficult to assess.

Research is also very limited on Scottish Gypsy Travellers who do not travel at present, some of whom stay on Gypsy Traveller sites, as well as people in housing. Again, there is some information from needs assessment studies which reveal a range of reasons for not travelling including lack of sites and safe places to camp, and being harassed and moved on while on the roadside, as well as a desire for greater stability because of old age, ill health or children's education. For some, travelling is seen as a much too 'hard life'. There is no information to show how many Scottish Gypsy Travellers who do not travel at present would do so if more sites were available.

Scottish Gypsy Traveller accommodation and accommodation needs have proved difficult areas for study. Reflecting on the research process for a study of accommodation needs, Lomax et al. (2004) identified some limitations and made recommendations for such studies in the future, including one key lesson:

‘Sufficient time needs to be given to developing the study and ideally this would be in conjunction with Gypsies / Travellers themselves, either through representation on local liaison groups which need to be fully aware of the research in developing the remit and as it is commissioned, or through representation on a project advisory group.’ (Lomax et al., 2004, p 55)

Yet opportunities for involvement in resident or tenant participation and consultation by this community have also been limited to date, which means that finding representatives is a necessary first step in the commissioning process and in setting up a study of accommodation needs. Even when Scottish Gypsy Travellers are present at liaison group meetings, the experience of some of them is that, in practice, their views are not listened to. A review of services for Gypsies / Travellers noted that although most local authorities had arrangements for consultation, this was mainly limited to residents on sites and even here key issues were not consulted on. Not surprisingly:

‘Gypsies / Travellers spoken to expressed dissatisfaction with consultation methods.’ (Communities Scotland, 2006b, p 45)

This leaves researchers and local authorities with the challenge of convincing Scottish Gypsy Travellers that their engagement with needs assessments and participation in planning consultations might influence decisions and lead to resources to meet their accommodation needs. Qualitative research (Lomax and McPhee, 2008; Lomax et al., 2008) has provided a fuller understanding of the needs, aspirations and preferences of Scottish Gypsy Travellers and has developed an understanding of models of provision that will meet their future requirements for culturally sensitive accommodation. However, this qualitative focus in the research has resulted in a lack of precision around the exact level of accommodation shortfall arising on Gypsy Traveller sites and among the housed community.

Gypsy / Traveller Sites Grant

In June 2005, the Scottish Executive announced a site development grant of £3 million over three years for new residential or transit sites and for refurbishment of existing local authority sites. Consultations with local resident Gypsy / Traveller communities were required when putting applications together and before submission for funding. Refurbishments following grants awarded from the first applications were on site in 2007, for example in Edinburgh (where pitches were upgraded) and Perth (where the installation of twin units / chalets to replace the former caravans and amenity unit configuration was completed in 2008).

A survey of local authorities' views on the 'use and role of the site grant funding provided so far' was undertaken by the Scottish Government (2007). Questions were asked about their views on: the quality of site provision; engagement with site residents; issues in the bidding process for the grant; the relationship between site provision and local unauthorised encampment, and future priorities on-site provision. However, as yet, there has not been a full evaluation of the impact of the site grant funding on the quality of refurbishments to current sites and the extent to which the grant has improved the provision of adequate and appropriate accommodation for Scottish Gypsy Travellers.

Funding of the Gypsy / Traveller site grant has continued and £1 million has been made available each financial year in 2008/09 and 2009/10. In August 2008, local authorities were invited to submit bids for Gypsy / Traveller Site Grant funding for both 2008/09 and 2009/10. The deadline for bids was 30 October 2008.

The Site Grant has been offered for funding up to 75 per cent of the total project costs. The grant is available for developing new residential or transit sites and for improvements to existing sites. Applications were required to demonstrate that the project will meet one or more of the following criteria:

- To provide good-quality, sustainable facilities on any new residential / transit sites.
- To extend significantly the useful life of the site.
- To bring unused or underused sites back into full use.

- To improve the quality of life of residents by modernising or improving sub-standard facilities.

In total, 21 bids were received from 15 local authorities. Seventeen of the bids were for refurbishment to existing sites and three were for new site provision. From 2010/11, funding for Gypsy / Traveller sites will be rolled into the local government settlement (email communication 26 February 2009, SL / Scottish Government).

While this limited grant funding for new local authority sites and the refurbishment of current sites is available from the Scottish Government, to date there is little innovation or wider consideration of other funding mechanisms to provide support for Scottish Gypsy Travellers in accessing affordable accommodation, whether on sites or in appropriate models of housing, across different tenures.

Scottish Government Race Equality Schemes

The Scottish Executive's Race Equality Scheme (RES) 2005 *Working Together for Race Equality* commented that, at that time, not all Gypsy / Traveller communities were recognised for the purposes of the race relations legislation but acknowledged the need for protection from discrimination and abuse (section 3.43). In following up the Scottish Parliament's Equal Opportunity Committee's 2001 Report and 2005 Review, the RES notes the setting up of a short-life Gypsy / Traveller Steering Group, planned to meet through late 2005 to early 2006 and to include Gypsy / Traveller representatives. Six meetings were proposed for this group but minutes of only three meetings are available, possibly indicating that the Steering Group did not complete its work². A report back on the priorities identified by the Steering Group was due in summer 2009.

The Race Equality Statement (December 2008), drawing on the latest Race Equality Scheme (Scottish Government, 2008c), refers to people 'from minority ethnic (including Gypsy / Traveller), refugee, asylum seeker and faith communities'.

² The Scottish Government website provides minutes from three meetings of the Gypsy / Traveller Steering Group:
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Equality/gypsiestravellers/strategy>

‘We should also make very clear that we include Gypsies / Travellers in this statement. During the period of the current Spending Review, i.e. to March 2011, we will commit significant resources towards improving the position of Scottish Gypsies / Travellers where it is in our powers to do so.’ (Scottish Government, 2008d: p 4)

While acknowledging that race legislation is a reserved matter, the statement again notes recognition of Gypsies / Travellers as an ethnic group for the Scottish Government’s own work and encourages this approach from other agencies. Reference is made to the employment tribunal judgment (K. MacLennan v Gypsy Traveller Education and Information Project) as:

‘...an important step forward for this community, which is particularly marginalised and discriminated against.’ (p 4)

The Statement goes on to propose the provision of resources for education, transit sites and community development, with an unspecified number of transit sites in place by March 2011. It notes that these were priorities in the 2005 Equal Opportunity Committee Interim Report and from the Gypsies / Travellers Steering Group (from 2005-06).

Conclusions

The Scottish Parliament started well with its Equal Opportunity Committee 2001 Inquiry, the Communities Scotland thematic studies and the inspection activity standard for local authorities. Expectations from the Scottish Gypsy Traveller community for improvements in service provision were encouraged yet subsequent reviews identified slow progress on the recommendations and little change in the life chances of Scottish Gypsy Travellers (Communities Scotland, 2006; Scottish Parliament, 2005). This situation is unlikely to be resolved until Scottish policy on accommodation for Scottish Gypsy Travellers is further developed.

The Scottish Government’s Race Equality Scheme and Statement (2008) emphasises the embedding of Scottish Gypsy Travellers in its approach to race equality and proposes future resources for services to tackle some key priorities for this group by 2011, some 10 years after the first Scottish Parliament’s Equal Opportunities Committee inquiry into public sector policies.

Since the action taken by the Scottish Parliament EOC in undertaking the Inquiry on public sector policies in 2000/01, England has now 'caught up' in terms of policy and planning and overtaken Scotland in the provision of a framework of legislation and guidance requiring local authorities to assess needs and plan for the provision of appropriate accommodation.

Each local authority in England is required to produce a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA). These have revealed significant shortfalls in pitch numbers – around 6,000 residential pitches being required over a five-year period (Brown and Niner, 2009). Following arrangements outlined in Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Circular 01/2006 *Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites*, each local authority will get a target for the number of pitches it must plan for through the Regional Spatial Strategy, primarily based on needs revealed by the GTAAs. Local Plan Documents are to allocate sufficient suitable land for sites to meet these pitch targets. This framework provides a clear national, regional and local focus on the provision of additional pitches in a context of acknowledged shortage. The approach is not, however, without its drawbacks, specifically the time the formal planning process takes (Brown and Niner, 2009). In comparison, the Scottish policy framework is less directive and less oriented specifically to site provision. Gypsy and Traveller accommodation issues in England are primarily set within a planning and, to a lesser extent, a housing context with community cohesion overtones. In Scotland, the equalities framework appears potentially stronger with, arguably, more comprehensive reference to management and service issues. It remains to be seen which framework will prove more successful in achieving progress on the ground.

3. ANALYSIS OF THE CARAVAN COUNTS

In July 1998, the former Scottish Executive (now Scottish Government) introduced a series of Twice Yearly Counts of Gypsies / Travellers in Scotland (undertaken each year in January and July) to establish standardised and consistent estimates of the number of Scottish Gypsy Travellers staying on sites and encampments across Scotland. The purpose of the Count is to understand more fully the characteristics of this community and to assist and inform the development of public policies and services for Scottish Gypsy Travellers, both nationally and locally. Each local authority has responsibility for the Count within their area and this information is then submitted to the Scottish Government and a report compiled.

Caravan Counts have been criticised, and their accuracy and completeness has been challenged by groups concerned that they misleadingly understate the size of the community (Clark, 2006b). The Scottish Government has commissioned a review of the Count to be undertaken in late 2009. A significant shortcoming is the omission of Scottish Gypsy Travellers living in housing which, of course, means that the picture of the community can only be partial, leading to widely divergent estimates of population numbers – the July 2008 Caravan Count estimated a population of about 2,455 people living on sites and encampments (Craigforth, 2009) while Scottish Gypsy Travellers themselves estimate that their community includes more than 15,000 people (CRE, 2006c). Because of the omission of Scottish Gypsies and Travellers in housing, the Counts cannot be used as a direct basis for accommodation needs assessment. However, it is worthwhile to examine Count information as contextual material since it provides the only reasonably consistent, time-series information on numbers and locations of the section of the population living in caravans.

This chapter looks at the Caravan Count information for Scotland, presents this within a wider context and identifies ways in which Scotland resembles or is different from other parts of the United Kingdom. The chapter looks specifically at:

- Caravan numbers on different types of site to identify any distinctive patterns in the sites 'market'.
- Changes in caravan numbers between 2006 and 2008.

The data

There are important differences between the data collected and published in the countries of the UK, and this has implications for making cross-country comparisons:

- **England:** The Caravan Count was introduced in 1979 and has been published continuously since, albeit with some amendments over time in what is published (for example, distinguishing now between caravans on unauthorised sites on Gypsy and Traveller owned land and on other land) and the background guidance. The main units counted are caravans (including mobile homes) rather than individuals or households.
- **Wales:** The Caravan Count in Wales was discontinued in 1997 and only re-introduced in July 2006. The Count form is identical to that used in England although the style of report is different. The units counted are caravans. It may be that local authorities are still becoming familiar with local sites and populations; and this could affect the consistency of the Count. The Count return is voluntary and to date one or more authority has not submitted a return each time meaning that the count is always incomplete. Unlike in England, the Welsh Assembly Government does not impute figures for missing returns. For the analysis below, where there are missing figures these have been filled using the figures from the local authority's returns made at the same month in the next or previous year.³
- **Scotland:** The twice yearly Count of Gypsies / Travellers in Scotland is more than a basic statistical return as in England. It includes much more information on council / Registered Social Landlord (RSL) sites and site management. Most fundamentally for comparative purposes, the basic unit counted in Scotland is a 'household' and there is information about household composition on council / RSL sites. On private and unauthorised sites, the basic count is of caravans, and the household number reported assumes that households occupy a single caravan. These figures are, therefore, directly comparable with England and Wales. Pitches on council / RSL sites can accommodate up to two caravans or mobile homes. The Count does not provide figures for the number of caravans per household or pitch. The West Central Scotland needs assessment (Craigforth, 2007) comments that most

³ This affects: Wrexham and Monmouthshire (July 2007 figures used for July 2006); Powys and Monmouthshire (January 2007 figures used for January 2008); and Rhondda Cynon Taff and Merthyr Tydfil (July 2007 figures used for July 2008).

families keep more than one trailer on a pitch (no average given). As a result, comparing household numbers in Scotland with caravan numbers in England and Wales would be highly misleading. For the purposes of this analysis, it was estimated that households on council / RSL sites have an average of 1.5 caravans and all household figures on council / RSL sites have been multiplied by 1.5 in the tables below. The 1.5 multiplier is to an extent arbitrary. In England a multiplier of 1.7 caravans per pitch or household, based on empirical findings from Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs assessments, is commonly used (CLG, 2007b). This has been reduced to 1.5 for Scotland given the contention in the Count report that, on private and unauthorised sites the assumption that one caravan is equivalent to one household will be accurate in the majority of cases suggesting that rates of caravan use may be lower than in England (Craigforth, 2009: 18).

- **Northern Ireland:** There is no regular Count in Northern Ireland, but needs assessments were carried out in 2002 and 2008 which provide some potentially similar information. There are big differences, however. The assessments include all identified Travellers in Northern Ireland, including those living in bricks and mortar. The basic unit is the household rather than 'caravan'. The differences are such that it is impossible to incorporate Northern Ireland fully into this analysis.

Caravan numbers 2008

Including the adjustment described above to convert household figures to caravans, 593 caravans were counted in Scotland in January 2008 and 901 in July 2008. This shows an extremely large difference over six months. Two factors contributed to this:

- The January 2008 Count total appears unusually low relative to previous years. On the Count's own measure of households, there were 455 households in January 2008, compared with 551 in 2007 and 525 in 2006. Fewer households were counted in 2008 on both council / RSL and private sites than in 2006 and 2007. July 2008 figures were more in line with earlier years although lower than the unusually high figure in 2007.
- There is always a significant difference in Scotland between January and July Count figures. The four-year average of published household numbers 2005-08 shows a January figure of 490 and a July figure of 756. Thus July is, on average, 54 per cent higher than January.

Table 3.1 shows caravan figures for England, Scotland and Wales for 2008.

	January 2008	July 2008
England	17,844	17,626
Scotland	593	901
Wales	813	829

Note: Scottish figures have been amended to facilitate comparisons

Caravan numbers are much higher in England than in Scotland or Wales, not only in an absolute sense, as would be expected in a larger country, but also in a relative sense. If caravan numbers (January 2008) are expressed in relation to 2008 taxable dwelling units, the following emerges:

In England there are eight caravans per 10,000 dwellings

In Wales there are six caravans per 10,000 dwellings

In Scotland there are three caravans per 10,000 dwellings

A further difference between the countries is in the relationship between January and July figures. As noted above, in Scotland, July figures are regularly significantly higher than the January figures. Despite the pattern in 2008, July figures in England have also generally been higher than January figures but to a much lesser extent. The time period available in Wales is short, but the pattern seems closer to the situation in England than in Scotland. This suggests a much more marked seasonality to caravan dwelling in Scotland than in England and Wales, perhaps attributable to the climate. Insofar as this reflects a desired pattern of living, there are implications for the type of sites to be provided. Seasonal or transit sites might be expected to be relatively more important in Scotland than in England and Wales.

Type of site: 2008

Table 3.2 shows the number and percentage of caravans (amended as described above) in Scotland on different sorts of site in January and July 2008.

Table 3.2: Caravan Numbers by Type of Site: Scotland: 2008		
	January 2008	July 2008
Council / RSL sites number	414	470
<i>Council / RSL sites %</i>	70	52
Private sites number	81	162
<i>Private sites %</i>	14	18
Unauthorised sites number	98	269
<i>Unauthorised sites %</i>	17	30
Total number	593	901
<i>Total %</i>	100	100

Note: Council / RSL figures have been amended to convert from households to caravans

In January 2008, seven out of 10 caravans were on council / RSL sites. This shows the great importance of council / RSL sites in providing for year-round caravan dwelling among Scottish Gypsies and Travellers. Only about one caravan in seven was on a private site.

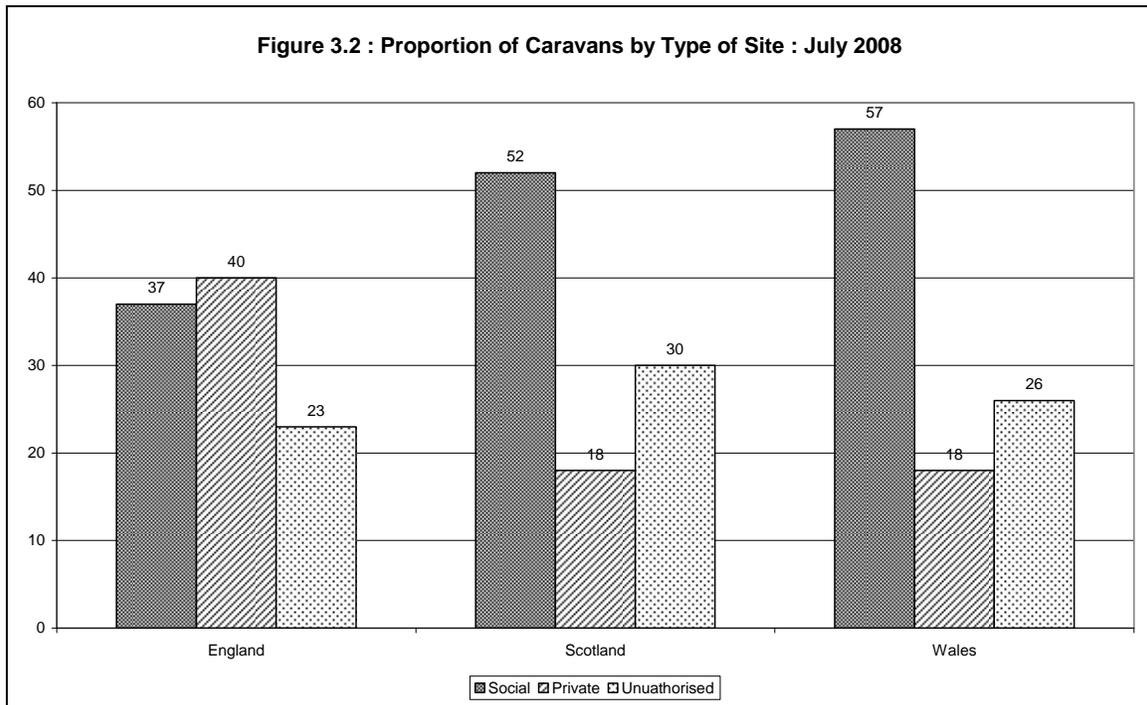
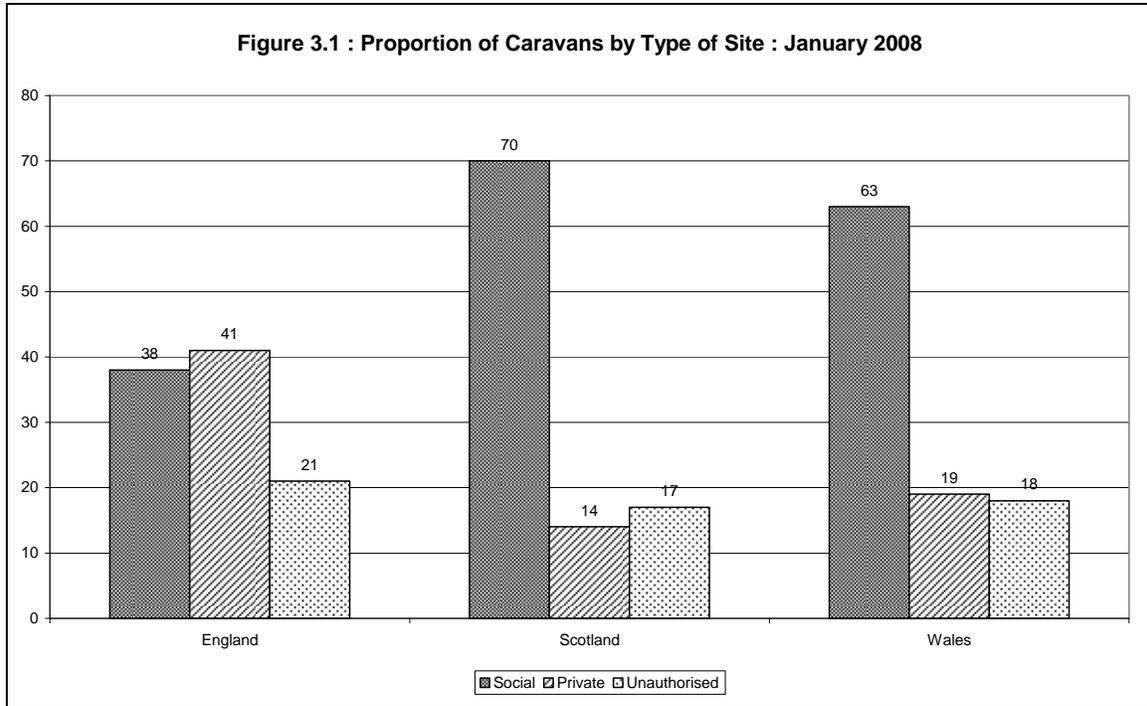
In July the picture is very different. Caravan numbers increased on all types of sites, but to a much lesser degree on council / RSL sites. Numbers on private sites doubled January to July, and on unauthorised sites they almost tripled. This appears to reflect the use of private caravan sites and, especially, the roadside to accommodate seasonal travel.

Looking at the Count figures at local authority level and averaging years between 2005 and 2008 shows that the following local authorities averaged more than 20 caravans on unauthorised sites in July:

- Fife (also relatively high in January)
- Moray
- West Lothian
- Aberdeen
- Highland
- North Ayrshire

The list includes urban and rural areas, but apart from Aberdeen does not include major population or employment centres such as Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee. This suggests travelling may be particularly oriented to social reasons and holidays alongside seasonal employment out of school term time.

The distribution of caravans across types of sites is different in England, Scotland and Wales. Figures 3.1 and 3.2 show the patterns for January and July respectively.



The January distributions show the clear contrast between England on the one hand, and Scotland and Wales on the other in terms of the relative importance of private sites. This is a major difference which is probably also true of Northern Ireland where a re-calculation of 2008 figures for Traveller households living on sites suggests that 72 per cent are on social sites of some kind, 12 per cent on privately owned sites and 16 per cent on unauthorised sites (a pattern quite similar to Scotland). The proportion of caravans on unauthorised sites is highest in England at 21 per cent; this probably reflects the relative importance of unauthorised developments – that is the development of private sites by Gypsies and Travellers without planning permission.

There is little difference in the pattern of site usage in England between January and July. However, in both Scotland and Wales the relative importance of social sites decreases somewhat in July and the importance of unauthorised sites increases, especially in Scotland.

It is not clear from the figures alone whether differences in preferences underlie these site tenure differences between Scotland and England. The lesser contribution of private sites could perhaps be the result of different aspirations, or planning policies, or levels of affordability. Whatever the underlying factors, however, it does suggest that there are dangers in automatically assuming that the situation in England is replicated elsewhere and that English policy approaches will necessarily work elsewhere.

Trends since 2006

Comparing caravan figures for 2006 and 2008 reveals a degree of variability in Scotland which is hard to account for. It might be dangerous to try to make too much of these variations, however, as they may be caused by the way the data has been collected. As the Count report for July 2008 notes in relation to private sites 'while figures suggest a decline, the difficulties in collecting accurate data means that what is available can be unrepresentative of what is actually happening on these sites' (Craigforth, 2009: 6). Difficulties are likely to include identifying and gaining access to private caravan sites and unauthorised sites where Scottish Gypsy Travellers are staying (see also Clark 2006b).

Figure 3.3 shows percentage change in caravan numbers from January 2006 to January 2008 in Scotland and England (there are no January 2006 figures in Wales). Over the period, total caravan numbers in Scotland apparently fell by -12 per cent from 675 to 593. This contrasts with an increase of 13 per cent in England. Caravan numbers were lower on every type of site in 2008 than in 2006 in Scotland, while they were higher on all types of site in England. It is easier to account for growth (through natural population increase) than for decline.

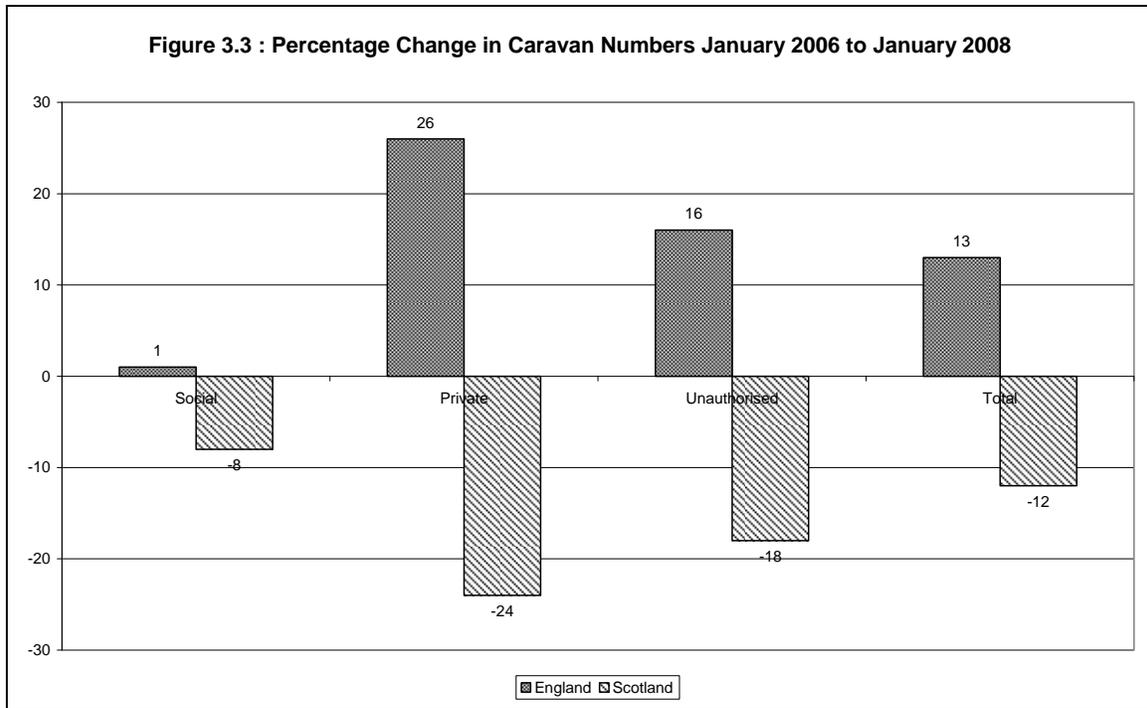
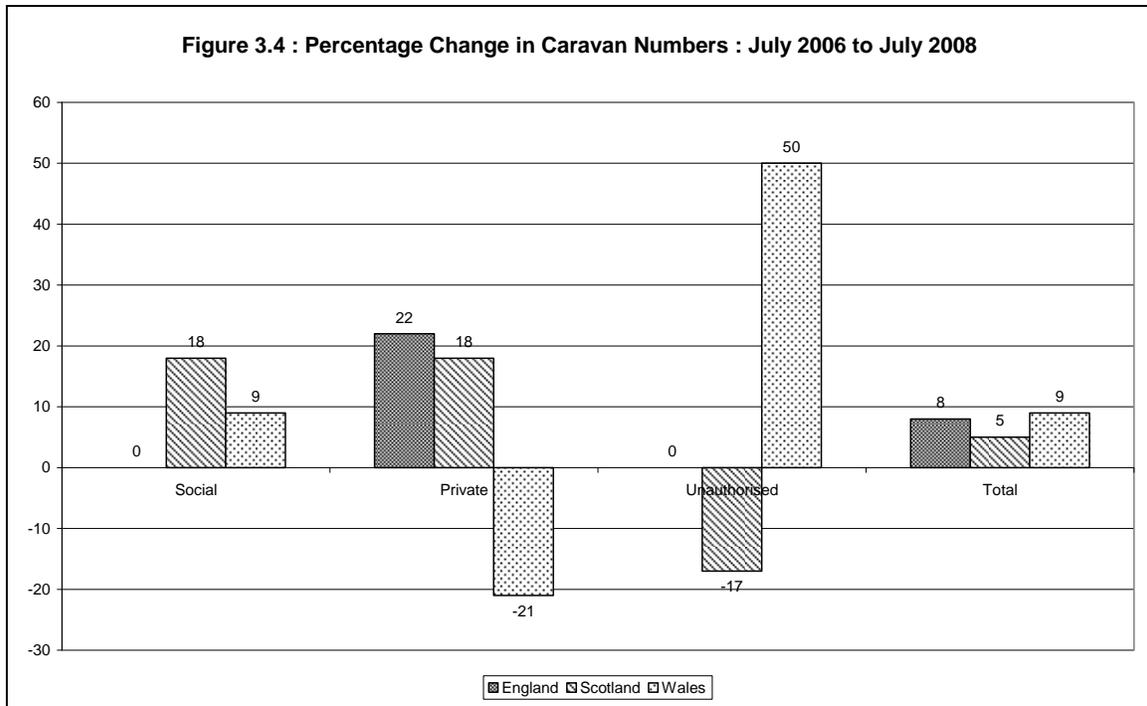


Figure 3.4 shows percentage change in caravan numbers by type of site between July 2006 and July 2008. In this case, Scottish caravan numbers increased by five per cent from 861 to 901; increases on council / RSL and private sites more than made up for a decrease on unauthorised sites. The rate of increase recorded is lower than in England or Wales.



It is not clear whether caravan numbers in Scotland are increasing or not. However, as will be seen in Chapter 7, local authorities recorded a net loss of pitches on council / RSL sites not fully offset by increases in pitches on private sites. This gives a rather different context to that of England where growth and need are widely accepted as the proper objective of policy.

Council / RSL sites in Scotland

The Scottish Count for July 2008 gave details of pitch numbers and occupancy of 32 council / RSL sites spread across 23 local authorities (Craigforth, 2009: 30). Three sites are seasonal and open only in summer.

Most local authorities have a single site only:

- No site: nine authorities
- One site: 18 authorities
- Two sites: two authorities (Dumfries & Galloway and South Lanarkshire)
- Three sites: two authorities (Argyll & Bute and Fife)
- Four sites: one authority (Highland)

While Scottish Gypsy Travellers are potentially able to live on council / RSL sites in most parts of Scotland, there is little choice of site available.

The 32 sites had a total of 499 pitches, which equates to an average size of 16 pitches. Most sites had 15 or more pitches:

One to 10 pitches: five sites
10 to 14 pitches: six sites
15 to 19 pitches: nine sites
20 pitches and over: 12 sites

There are relatively few 'small' sites among the current council / RSL site stock.

In July 2008, 70 per cent of pitches on council / RSL sites were let, 22 per cent were available for letting and eight per cent were not available. This suggests an under-use of the stock which is explored in more detail in Chapter 8.

Comment

This analysis of Caravan Count figures across the UK has highlighted distinctive Scottish features which form a backdrop to the survey of local authorities on the accommodation needs of Scottish Gypsy Travellers. The main features are:

- Relatively low caravan numbers and small and somewhat indeterminate changes in numbers since 2006. Unlike England, there is no clear evidence of growing numbers to support presumptions of widespread major shortfalls in pitch provision.
- Having said that, there were around 100 caravans on unauthorised sites in January 2008 suggesting a round-the-year shortfall in sites.
- July figures are significantly and consistently higher than January figures, suggesting seasonal travelling in summer. Simply from the Counts, the evidence for some form of transit provision is more marked than for additional residential provision. The Counts do not indicate reasons for travelling, whether for employment, social purposes or holidays. Nor do they indicate where summer travellers spend winter – for example, in bricks and mortar housing and / or outside Scotland. The nature of the areas showing a particular summer peak on unauthorised sites suggests a mix of underlying factors may be in play.
- A significant difference from England is the relative unimportance of private sites in terms of caravan numbers. It is unclear why this difference exists.

Some needs assessments (for example in Perth & Kinross) have found Scottish Gypsy Travellers prefer private family sites, as do their counterparts in England. This preference is supported by a number of planning applications for private sites reported by a small number of local authorities replying to our survey – but the survey also shows the difficulties applicants face in getting Gypsy Traveller sites approved, especially without resorting to the expense and stress of a planning appeal (see Chapter 7). There is no information to show whether Scottish Gypsy Travellers would find it more difficult to afford to buy and develop land than their English counterparts.

4. POLICING ISSUES

Police Authorities are particularly active in managing unauthorised encampments in a number of areas of Scotland and are ideally placed to offer informed views as to how the accommodation situation of Scottish Gypsy Travellers is working out 'on the ground'.

Each of the eight Police Authorities was approached to explore their views and practice via a short email survey. The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPOS) in Scotland produced a collated response to the nine separate questions asked. The questions, together with detailed responses, are presented in Appendix 4. We also sought the views of Ian Taggart (a former police officer who is now a researcher) and these are also presented alongside those of ACPOS in Appendix 4. Main themes emerging from the responses can be summarised as follows:

- There is an acknowledgement that Gypsy Travellers have an historical presence within Scotland and have a continuing desire to travel. There was no indication that there had been an increase or a decline in numbers of Scottish Gypsy Travellers or their desire to travel.
- Features of the current accommodation situation for Scottish Gypsy Travellers across the country include a lack of appropriate site provision and the loss of traditional stopping places. This leads to greater awareness of unauthorised encampments, and their impact, on the part of the settled community.
- Tensions within and between Scottish Gypsy Traveller groups were seen to have impacted on the use of some sites and therefore on the levels of occupancy on these sites, often resulting in an increase in vacancies.
- There is a recognition that there are no simple answers given the nature of the Scottish Gypsy Traveller communities involved, the presence of entrenched views and the complex historical context of Scottish Gypsy Traveller accommodation and travelling needs.

5. NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND HOUSING STRATEGIES

'Local authorities are to consider the needs of all Gypsies and Travellers for appropriate accommodation within their housing need and demand assessment and take these into account in preparing their local housing strategies' (Scottish Planning Policy 3 *Planning for Homes*, 2008, para 83)

Chapter 2 outlined the policy approach towards the provision of accommodation for Scottish Gypsy Travellers. The first section of the questionnaire sent to local authorities examined progress made in terms of carrying out accommodation needs assessments for Scottish Gypsy Travellers, and the extent to which these are taken into account in local housing strategies as required by SPP3 (see box above). The figures in this chapter relate to the 26 survey responses (81 per cent of local authorities) received and analysed by 10 July 2009.

Accommodation needs assessments

Seventeen of the 26 responding authorities (65 per cent) said that they had undertaken an assessment of the accommodation needs of Scottish Gypsy Travellers in their area. These assessments had been completed between 2003 and 2008. One authority (Perth & Kinross) has carried out two assessments, one as part of a sub-regional study in Tayside in 2003, and a further study focusing on Scottish Gypsy Travellers on private sites and unauthorised encampments in 2007. A further six authorities (23 per cent) said that an assessment was in progress at the time of the survey; all but one of these was expected to be complete by the end of 2009.

Only three authorities (Eilean Siar, Highland and North Lanarkshire) had not embarked on an assessment. An assessment is planned to commence in Highland in 2009/10. No assessment has been carried out in Eilean Siar because of the reported absence of Scottish Gypsy Travellers, attributed to the expense of travelling to the islands. In North Lanarkshire, lack of demand for access to the existing Gypsy Traveller site in the area and the provision of support in accessing both temporary accommodation and permanent accommodation, were given as reasons for not carrying out a recent needs assessment. It is also apparent from

answers elsewhere in the survey that North Lanarkshire is planning to carry out an assessment at some point.

The great majority (94 per cent) of authorities with completed assessments had been part of a sub-regional study (West Central Scotland; Tayside; and East Lothian, Midlothian, Edinburgh and Scottish Borders). Only West Lothian had undertaken a single-authority assessment. However, four of the six studies in progress are single-authority assessments.

The 2008 revised guidance from SPP3 quoted at the head of this chapter refers to the guide *Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessments* issued by the Communities and Local Government department in 2007 in England (CLG, 2007). However, the majority of the completed studies in Scotland pre-date this guidance and show significant differences from their English counterparts. In particular, while almost all English assessments make a quantitative estimate of requirements for additional pitches over the next five or 10 years, only five of the 17 Scottish authorities with a completed study said that it provided a numerical estimate of requirements. All were part of the West Central Scotland study which made somewhat tentative estimates of pitch requirements (50 additional pitches across the study area qualified by the need to take account of pitch turnover) and their distribution (priority areas for additional official sites in Lanarkshire and West Dunbartonshire). Three of the responding authorities from the West Central Scotland grouping that were not in these named priority areas interpreted their requirement as zero, others were apparently uncertain about what the assessment meant for their area.

Pitch requirements

In the light of the largely non-quantified nature of needs assessments in Scotland, it is not surprising that only eight authorities were able to give an estimate of the number of additional residential pitches required over the next five years. Answers were:

Zero: Argyll & Bute, Dundee, East Dunbartonshire, East Renfrewshire and South Ayrshire

20 pitches: West Dunbartonshire (from the West Central Scotland assessment)

40 pitches: Perth & Kinross (from their more recent study which recommended that there were at least 37-42 Scottish Gypsy Traveller households requiring alternative accommodation preferably residential trailers, pitches or chalets)
50 pitches: Fife (source of estimate unknown)

Only seven authorities were able to give an estimate of transit or stopping places need over the same period:

Zero: Argyll & Bute, East Dunbartonshire, East Renfrewshire, South Ayrshire and West Dunbartonshire
One pitch: Dundee (possibly one site rather than pitch intended)
Six pitches: Fife (source of estimate unknown)

Where authorities felt able to give an answer, they indicated that most of the requirements identified were for social (local authority and registered social landlord) provision rather than private provision. This may reflect the status quo in which most provision takes the form of council / Registered Social Landlord (RSL) sites rather than local authorities fully understanding what Scottish Gypsy Travellers desire or need.

Question A8 of the survey asked whether identified shortfalls would be met during the next five years. Of the authorities acknowledging a positive requirement, only Fife thought that it would probably be met. The others thought it unlikely that it would be met and gave the following reasons:

Dundee (one transit pitch/site): 'There is a shortage of suitable land to provide transit sites within Dundee City's boundaries. There are also no funds available to create a transit site.'

Perth & Kinross (approximately 40 residential pitches): 'It is very difficult to make provision for Gypsy Travellers. Local Authorities would be required to fund such provision from the General Fund which is already very stretched in maintaining Council Services. There are also many problems in getting planning provision for developments of this nature.'

West Dunbartonshire (20 residential pitches): 'The Gypsy / Travellers Action Group, who represent the residents living on the permanent site, have stated clearly that they do not want an additional site located in West

Dunbartonshire. They have advised that if the Council were to go ahead (land has been identified) the site would be either unused or destroyed.'

These answers illustrate some of the barriers to site provision explored in more detail in Chapter 9 below. The final point from West Dunbartonshire is somewhat unexpected and counterintuitive to Scottish Gypsy Traveller accommodation needs and research more widely.

The figures given in the survey for pitch requirements are hard to interpret. From eight authorities providing estimates (31 per cent of survey respondents and 25 per cent of all Scottish authorities) there is a requirement for over 100 additional residential pitches – located in just three areas. However, the general lack of numerical estimates of requirements to date suggests that it would be very unsafe to attempt to scale this figure up to make a national estimate. Two rather different conclusions can be drawn:

- It is highly improbable that requirements are confined to three areas. It is highly probable that there are requirements currently either unquantified or unacknowledged across the country.
- In comparison to England, where Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments (GTAAAs) have identified and quantified requirements virtually everywhere, Scotland is potentially less advanced in preparing for additional site provision both nationally and locally. The first step – identifying the scale of the shortfall to be met – is not yet in place.

While we have concentrated here on the (lack of) quantified elements in Gypsy and Traveller accommodation assessments, the overall usefulness of the studies must not be understated. The production of a pitch requirement figure to address accommodation shortfall is only part of the story. The studies completed so far provide a wealth of qualitative information in terms of the characteristics of Scottish Gypsy Travellers and their wider needs. There is also valuable detail about site quality and management issues and much material to assist local authorities in developing policies towards improved service provision and equalities issues for Scottish Gypsy Travellers.

Local housing strategies

The majority of authorities (65 per cent) said that there is a specific policy or action in their local housing strategy aimed at providing or facilitating the provision of accommodation for Scottish Gypsy Travellers. A further five authorities (19 per cent) said that such policies / actions were in preparation, usually with a completion date in 2009. Three of the four authorities answering 'no' (Dundee, East Renfrewshire and Falkirk) appear to have been very precise in their interpretation of the question. All their local housing strategies include references to Scottish Gypsy Travellers, including, for example, an action to assess needs, but no specific policy / action aimed at providing or facilitating the provision of accommodation for Scottish Gypsy Travellers. Very similar statements / policies / actions appear in the strategies of those authorities answering 'yes' to the question. Only Eilean Siar among the responding authorities neither makes, nor plans to make, reference to Scottish Gypsy Travellers in their local housing strategy because of the reported absence of Scottish Gypsy Travellers on the islands.

Examination of local housing strategies provided by responding authorities or from the internet suggests that most policies / actions relate to assessing needs and developing action plans in line with the findings, improving service provision, upgrading the condition and / or management of existing council / RSL sites and developing communications and consultation with Scottish Gypsy Travellers. Specific references to **additional** site provision are sparse and include:

Angus: the shortfall in transit sites is acknowledged

Fife: there is a shortfall of sites and existing sites are overcrowded

Renfrewshire: ongoing discussion with neighbouring authorities to see if joint site provision is justified

Several local housing strategies explicitly comment on the lack of need locally for (additional) site provision.

This brief consideration of local housing strategies suggests:

- Scottish Gypsy Travellers are referred to in the great majority of local housing strategies. In this regard, guidance has been followed.

- References to general service provision, site conditions and site management suggest that Scottish Gypsy Traveller issues are embedded in wider housing policies.
- There is little apparent recognition in the strategies of any significant shortfalls in site provision, nor indications that authorities are well prepared to move towards increasing site provision.

6. GYPSY TRAVELLER SITES AND PLANNING

‘Planning authorities should identify suitable locations for sites for Gypsies and Travellers and set out policies for dealing with planning applications for small privately-owned sites. Planning authorities should ensure that Gypsy and Traveller communities are involved in decisions about sites for their use.’ (Scottish Planning Policy 3 *Planning for Homes*, 2008, para 83)

This chapter looks at how local authorities are responding to the above guidance. It is based on Section B of the questionnaire completed by 26 local authorities.

Looking for locations for sites

Eleven authorities (42 per cent) said that they had identified suitable locations for sites for Scottish Gypsy Travellers. Given the apparently low acceptance of need for additional sites, in some instances at least this may include existing sites. A further four authorities (15 per cent) said that they were actively working towards identifying suitable locations.

Nine authorities (35 per cent) are not working towards identifying suitable locations (two did not answer this question). The most important reason given was lack of need beyond an existing site. For example:

‘By providing a permanent site, we have met our requirements. The accommodation needs assessment and current waiting lists would suggest that there is no need for additional permanent site provision.’
(South Ayrshire)

‘There is no identified need for additional provision.’ (South Lanarkshire)

‘Several years ago the predecessor authority (Dundee District Council) undertook an assessment of potential sites for the provision of Gypsy / Traveller accommodation within its area. Following the identification of a suitable site, approval was obtained and the site was developed. The facility has operated, apparently successfully, for many years and seems

to be meeting the local requirement for this type of accommodation. Given this situation there was not felt to be a requirement for policy guidance on additional provision.’ (Dundee)

Other authorities were awaiting the outcome of ongoing needs assessments:

‘Suitable locations have yet to be identified and will be influenced by the outcome of the planned Gypsy / Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment and Planning Policy.’ (Highland)

A rather different form of answer was given by East Ayrshire:

‘It was found to be extremely difficult to identify and agree suitable sites for this use.’

Development plan policies

Informal working towards identifying suitable locations for sites is not necessarily reflected in formal planning policies. A minority of local authorities (eight out of 26, or 31 per cent) said that their approved Development Plan includes a specific policy relating to the provision of Gypsy Traveller caravan sites. A further authority (accounting for four per cent) said such a policy was in preparation with an expected completion date of September 2012.

Question B6 asked whether authorities have policies for dealing with planning applications for small privately owned sites for Scottish Gypsy Travellers. Only five authorities out of the 26 (19 per cent) said that they had, while a further four (15 per cent) said that such a policy is in preparation. All five with a policy also said they had specific policies relating to the provision of Gypsy Traveller caravan sites; an earlier question in Section B. Examination of the policies themselves shows considerable overlap between the general policies and those for dealing with applications for small private sites.

The most common form of policy is a list of criteria which must be met before a site will be approved. Box 6.1 provides examples of a relatively simple and a more complex policy from Angus and West Lothian.

Two Development Plan policies refer to specific sites:

East Dunbartonshire: Policy HMU5: The Council will implement a site for travelling persons at Auchenhowie Road, Milngavie for 12 pitches (which has conditional planning consent).

West Dunbartonshire: Finalised Draft of the West Dunbartonshire Local Plan is referred to in the Local Housing Strategy 2007 Update.
Policy PS3 Public Service Opportunities: The schedule of opportunity sites includes two Traveller sites:

PS 3(1) Site north of Dalmoak Farm, Renton 0.86 hectares

PS 3(2) Dennystoun Forge Caravan Park, Dalreoch, Dumbarton
0.82 hectares for extension of site

The policy says these sites will be supported by the Council for development subject to conformity with other Local Plan policies.

Neither specified new site appears to have been developed to date.

Box 6.1: Examples of Criteria-based Policies for the Approval of Gypsy Traveller Sites

Angus: Finalised Angus Local Plan Review

Policy SC13: sites for Gypsies / Travellers

Angus Council will support existing sites and consider the development of new sites for Gypsies / Travellers where they satisfy an identified local demand and:

- are compatible with surrounding land uses
- provide a good residential environment for the people living there, including the provision of public utilities for each pitch or in amenity blocks as appropriate, and
- are well located for access to the local road network.

West Lothian: West Lothian Local Plan

Policy HOU 11

Proposals to establish private sites for the accommodation of Gypsy Travellers will be supported provided that they:

- a) do not conflict with environmental protection policies ENV 2 (Local

Biodiversity Action Plan species), ENV 3 (European designated sites), ENV 4 (nationally designated sites, ENV 5 (local sites) and ENV 11 (woodland and trees)

- b) will not result in the loss of prime agricultural land (ENV 7)
- c) do not conflict with landscape protection polices ENV 19 (Areas of Great Landscape Value), ENV 21 (Areas of Special Landcsape Control), ENV 22 (Countryside Belts), ENV 26 (Rights of Way), ENV 27 (Core Paths)
- d) would not have an adverse environmental impact on neighbouring uses and, in particular, housing through an increase in noise, road traffic movements and other disturbances
- e) are not located within or adjacent to an established residential area, strategic employment land or recreational area
- f) can be made compatible with the character and appearance of the surrounding area through appropriate landscaping and screening
- g) can reasonably access local services and facilities eg shops, hospitals, schools and public transport
- h) can achieve appropriate access and parking, and
- i) do not create a danger to the health and safety of gypsy travellers.

In addition, the site must be easily accessible, but not conspicuous from any view from a major road.

The majority of local authorities do not have approved formal planning policies on Gypsy Traveller site provision or for dealing with applications for small privately owned sites. Three main reasons were given:

- Gypsy Traveller site provision was not identified as a priority and / or there was no specific national guidance at the time the approved Development Plan was produced. For example, Renfrewshire noted: 'There was no requirement, statutory or otherwise, for the provision of such policy in DP [Development Plan] at the time of the Structure and Local Plans for this area. In the preparation of the next round of Strategic and Local Development Plans due regard will be had to any relevant guidance or policy in force at that time.' This illustrates the importance of guidance in encouraging authorities to consider issues which might otherwise be accorded lower local priority.
- Perceived lack of need for a policy because of lack of need for sites and / or planning applications being submitted. For example, from South Ayrshire: 'There was no need to include it within the Local Plan, as we already provide

access to a permanent site for Gypsies / Travellers.’ Explaining why there is no policy for dealing with planning applications for small privately owned sites, North Ayrshire comments: ‘Never had any approach for such sites.’

- A few authorities commented that there is no need for a specific policy for dealing with applications for private sites because other general development control policies can be applied: ‘Any planning application would be considered within Planning Policy similar to that for new build housing or that of a new caravan park’ (South Ayrshire).

This suggests the need for action on the part of most authorities if they are to meet the guidance in Scottish Planning Policy 3 *Planning for Homes* outlined at the head of this chapter.

Involvement of Scottish Gypsy Travellers

Question B9 asked authorities to outline the steps taken to involve Scottish Gypsy Traveller communities in decisions about sites for their use. It is clear from answers that authorities vary widely in the extent to which they involve Scottish Gypsy Travellers, and in the means used. This may well be an area where perceptions of local authorities and Scottish Gypsy Travellers would diverge.

Twenty-two authorities answered the question. Five answers were to the effect that there had not, to date, been any such involvement. In the case of North Ayrshire, this was said to be because: ‘The Gypsy and Traveller communities in North Ayrshire do not want to engage with the Council in such matters.’ Two further authorities noted that the Local Plan had been subject to general consultation procedures, but that these were not specifically geared to Scottish Gypsy Traveller needs.

About two-thirds of respondents reported some means of involving Scottish Gypsy Travellers locally. A number of respondents referred to the process of carrying out the Gypsy and Traveller accommodation assessment. For example, Glasgow noted that consultation and involvement of Scottish Gypsy Traveller communities was an important element in the brief of the West Central Scotland study. North Lanarkshire, in describing their planned assessment, note:

‘It is intended, as part of the planned assessment, to conduct one-to-one interviews with gypsy travellers to gather information on their views on our

current site provision and future possible locations for site development. This will include other aspects, such as, the type of support and site facilities that they view as integral in achieving successful site development.'

Other authorities noted that they regularly involve Gypsy Traveller site residents on matters to do with the site and its management, for example:

'The Gypsies / Travellers from St Christopher's site are consulted in any decision taken by the council: allocation policies, new leases, modernisation of the site etc.' (Angus)

This has not always proved straightforward:

'We talk to the residents on the site, but have found that they do not wish to talk as representative for anyone other than their own immediate family. The improvements to the Council owned site in recent years have come from ideas and requests put forward from the site residents.' (Stirling)

Some answers suggest well-developed involvement arrangements with regular meetings and / or specific working groups. It is apparent that some authorities are in the process of developing approaches, having recognised the importance of the issue. Box 6.2 gives some examples. It is apparent that site-based Scottish Gypsy Travellers are most commonly involved in consultations rather than Scottish Gypsy Travellers in bricks and mortar accommodation or using unauthorised encampments.

Comments

It is clear that authorities do not yet fully comply with the guidance in SPP3 regarding identifying suitable locations for sites and including policies for site provision in Development Plans.

To some extent this appears attributable to uncertainties about the extent of need for further site provision and often assumptions are made around this without clear information. The following quotation sums this up. It has been edited to preserve the anonymity which was promised to respondents for the final section of the questionnaire.

‘The overwhelming reality appears to be a decline in demand for permanent gypsy / traveller site accommodation in []. . . . We are aware that this position is different from that in the south of England. There was an upsurge in demand in the 1970s and 1980s which the authority responded to by providing at one stage two sites, in different parts of the city, but the situation is different now. The fall off in demand may reflect changing needs within the community itself. Recent comprehensive national research in Northern Ireland highlighted that increasingly the community prefer settled accommodation, only a minority continue to travel and mainly during the summer months. This latter aspect fits with the pattern of unauthorised encampments experienced by [] and neighbouring local authorities.’

Box 6.2: Examples of Arrangements for Involving Scottish Gypsy Traveller Communities	
Dumfries & Galloway	
	Currently have a Travelling Person’s liaison group which includes representatives from the travelling community and meets on a quarterly basis.
Fife	
	Fife Council’s Travelling People Working Group (TPWG) involved people from the Travelling community and had representatives from Save the Children and FRAE Fife (Fairness Race Awareness and Equality), who advocated on behalf of the Travelling People. There were members from the Council’s sites’ Tenants Associations on the TPWG.
West Dunbartonshire	
	West Dunbartonshire supports the Gypsy / Traveller Action Group. Regular meetings have been held with local councillors, the MP and the MSP. There is an established history of consultation.
West Lothian	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with Travellers both on sites and on unauthorised sites when applying for funding from Scottish Government to upgrade site.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with Travellers on permanent site on individual kitchens and bathrooms. • Two volunteer consultants from Travelling Community who are involved in Focus Group, Race Forum and advising on education work with young people.
Perth & Kinross	
	<p>We are working with Planning Aid and hope to run a pilot public consultation exercise with them on hard to reach groups, including gypsy travellers.</p>
Scottish Borders	
	<p>We are looking to set up focus groups around the management of our one official site in the Borders, again only recently identified as an objective and priority, in partnership with our equality and diversity departments.</p>

7. PROGRESS ON PITCH PROVISION

Section C of the survey questionnaire deals with progress on pitch provision since the beginning of 2006. It asks first about gains and losses of council / Registered Social Landlord (RSL) pitches, then about planning applications for private pitches. The perspective is that of the local authorities. There is, for example, no information on perceptions of the planning application system or problems in negotiating its requirements held by Scottish Gypsy Travellers.

Council / RSL pitches

The survey shows that, among the 26 responding authorities, the number of pitches on council / RSL sites decreased over the period. The only report of pitches on a new residential site was from Perth & Kinross where a chalet project is being developed at Pitlochry. This is for people currently living on a site owned by a local private estate which is now leased by the Council. This 'new' site will provide six timber chalets. While representing an increase to the stock of council / RSL pitches, it presumably also represents a loss of private provision and cannot be seen as a net gain overall.

The only other reported 'positive' change is the re-opening in 2006 of four pitches on the existing site in Glasgow. These were re-occupied but have subsequently become vacant again along with the other six pitches on the Rodney Street site. The site is still available for occupation but, in view of continuing non-use, permanent closure is now under consideration.

Council / RSL site closures were reported by:

North Ayrshire: 12 pitches on the island of Aran. There was no demand for the site over a long period prior to its closure.

Scottish Borders: access to 10 pitches is no longer available to the Council following the closure of a commercial site in Galashiels in 2007/08.

Highland: five pitches were closed at Kentallen, one of the sites in Lochaber. There were a number of reasons for this decision:

- vacancy levels over a period of time
- no new demand

- certain families achieving social housing solutions in nearby rural communities
- health and safety – fences had been erected around the unused pitches, and
- site upgrade - a successful bid for the Gypsy / Traveller Site Grant 2007/2008 included the proposed demolition of the unused and inaccessible pitches. A consultation with residents was undertaken as part of the grant application submission.

Falkirk: two pitches were closed when they were damaged beyond use in 2007. These are scheduled for re-build in 2009 which will bring the site back to full capacity.

West Lothian: the chalets on two pitches were developed using funding from the Education Department to make a Resource Centre for internal/external agencies to use to deliver services to Travellers.

South Lanarkshire: one pitch has been closed to provide on-site community facilities.

In total, 32 council / RSL pitches have been lost, of which seven might be seen as contributing to site improvements, and two as temporarily lost. Beyond this, there has been a fairly significant loss of council / RSL pitch provision albeit sometimes in response to evidence of low demand for the sites in their current location and / or condition.

Change since 2006 appears to represent somewhat negative progress in regard to council / RSL site provision. The extent of loss appears to be greater than indicated by the Caravan Counts analysed in Chapter 3.

Private sites

In contrast, reported changes in provision of private pitches – while modest – are positive since 2006. Box 7.1 summarises planning applications and grants of planning permission reported by the 26 responding authorities. In total, 12 applications were received by six local authorities (23 per cent of respondents), involving at least 26 pitches. There were no applications to extend existing private sites. Only one application (four pitches) received full planning permission and one (four pitches) was given a personal planning permission limited to the applicant only. In addition, three permanent permissions were granted on appeal involving 10 pitches. The following points can be made:

- A minority of authorities received applications. Only Perth & Kinross received more than one application in the period (although two permissions fell into the period in Falkirk).
- A crude 'success' rate, calculated by expressing permissions as a percentage of applications, is 42 per cent including permissions granted on appeal and 17 per cent excluding appeal decisions.
- The appeal system is obviously very important in achieving permissions for Scottish Gypsy Travellers.
- Most permissions were full rather than personal or temporary.

Box 7.1: Details of Planning Applications and Permissions for Private Gypsy Traveller Sites since 2006	
Planning applications for site development or expansion	
	Perth & Kinross: 7 sites, 12 pitches Falkirk: 1 site, 2 pitches West Lothian: 1 site, 4 pitches South Lanarkshire: 1 site, 4 pitches Aberdeenshire: 1 site, 3 pitches Angus: 1 site, unknown number of pitches
Applications to renew temporary planning permissions	
	Nil
Permanent planning permissions granted for site development or expansion	
	Falkirk: 1 site, 4 pitches
Temporary of personal planning permissions granted for site development or expansion	
	South Lanarkshire: 1 site, 4 pitches
Permanent permissions for site development or expansion granted on appeal	
	Falkirk: 1 site, 2 pitches Perth & Kinross: 1 site, 4 pitches West Lothian: 1 site, 4 pitches
Temporary permissions for site development or expansion granted on appeal	
	Nil
Completed new residential pitches on private sites since 2006 with full planning permission	
	Perth & Kinross: 6 pitches Falkirk: 4 pitches

Completed new transit pitches on private sites since 2006 with full planning permission	
	Nil
Completed new residential pitches on private sites since 2006 with personal or temporary planning permission	
	South Lanarkshire: 4 pitches
Completed new transit pitches on private sites since 2006 with personal or temporary planning permission	
	Nil

Not all these permissions are known to have resulted in completed sites / pitches on the ground as can be seen from Box 7.1. Over the period, two sites (10 pitches) have been completed with full and one site (four pitches) with restricted personal planning permissions. These might be regarded as a net increase in provision since no local authority was aware of any loss of private Gypsy Traveller sites in their area⁴. However, the response from Perth & Kinross suggests that this conclusion may perhaps be over-optimistic since it draws attention to the fact that some caravan sites previously available to Scottish Gypsy Travellers may be catering for other groups such as migrant workers thus diminishing accommodation opportunities on sites not specifically designed for Scottish Gypsy Travellers.

Overall change

Looking at both council / RSL and private pitches suggests a decrease in national provision since 2006. The loss of 32 council / RSL pitches is not fully offset by the gain of 14 private pitches. Six council / RSL pitches were in development (but may not represent a total net gain), and a further four private pitches have permission but have not yet been completed. Pipeline developments will not offset the national loss over the period.

There has been a small qualitative change over the period since the development of small / family sites through the planning system has increased the diversity of overall provision. Some council / RSL pitch loss was associated with site improvements.

⁴ The apparent transfer of pitches from the private sector to the council / RSL sector in Perth & Kinross was not identified as a private pitch loss in the response.

8. COUNCIL / RSL SITE QUALITY AND GYPSY / TRAVELLER SITES GRANT

The Count of Gypsies / Travellers in Scotland for July 2008 (Craigforth, 2009) showed a total of 32 council / Registered Social Landlord (RSL) sites, three of which are seasonal and operate in summer only. Together they provided 499 pitches. Eight local authorities (accounting for 25 per cent) do not have a site.

All but four respondents to the survey (East Ayrshire, East Renfrewshire, Eilean Siar and Renfrewshire) had at least one council / RSL site (85 per cent). Seventeen responding authorities have a single site, two (South Lanarkshire and Dumfries & Galloway) have two, and three (Argyll & Bute, Fife and Highland) have three. Authorities with sites were asked about any concerns they have with the quality of those sites and about their occupancy. All authorities were asked about applications made for Gypsy / Traveller Sites Grant for site upgrading and / or development. Site quality is obviously an area where perceptions differ. It must be stressed again that this report looks at local authority perceptions only, and not those of Scottish Gypsy Travellers.

Concerns over quality of council / RSL sites

The survey asked about concerns respondents have over five aspects of quality of their council / RSL sites. Most respondents gave some comments under each heading, sometimes describing the site, sometimes saying that there had been a concern since remedied. Some answers were slightly ambiguous as to whether or not concern was being expressed – for example from West Dunbartonshire under the heading **neighbouring land uses and environment**: ‘The site is adjacent to a scrap yard and farm land’. A certain amount of interpretation has been made to produce the summary incidence of concerns shown in Table 8.1. As noted above, these are answers from landlords / site managers rather than residents.

The table shows that concerns over **physical condition / state of repair** are most prevalent. Concerns were expressed in different ways and levels of detail, but the answer from East Lothian is fairly typical: ‘The site now requires to be upgraded as a result of inappropriate, unsuitable and outdated facilities and general wear and tear’. In some instances, damage was said to be the result of vandalism as well as wear and tear.

Concerns over **site management issues** were next in frequency. There were two themes here: feuds between families and repeated fly tipping.

Concern	Number of local authorities (LAs)	% of LAs with a site
Physical condition / state of repair	9	41
Site layout or design	2	9
Site location /access to services	4	18
Neighbouring land uses and environment	4	18
Site management issues	6	27
Number of concerns		
None	6	27
One	11	50
Two	1	5
Three	2	9
Four	2	9

Fewer than one respondent in five identified concerns with **site location / access to services** and **neighbouring land uses and environment**. The following answers illustrate the very varied sorts of concern being expressed:

‘Set in a rural village access to services etc can be an issue.’ (Scottish Borders)

‘The site is surrounded on three sides by a river. When the river is in spate, the site is more susceptible to flooding, with four floods in the past three years. An application was submitted in October 2008 to the Scottish Government for funding to rebuild protective embankments, however this was refused due to an over-subscription to the fund. As such, the local authority is currently investigating alternative flood defence mechanisms.’ (South Ayrshire)

‘The site is bounded by commercial land, public open space and a public non-vehicular access way separates it from the seashore. Some Travellers have previously expressed concerns about privacy.’
(Aberdeenshire)

‘Location of current site may present some issues due to fraught relationships with neighbouring communities following repeat vandalism of the site.’ (North Lanarkshire)

Only two respondents expressed concern about **site layout or design**, and these were not very specific.

Several respondents took the opportunity to make positive rather than negative comments about their sites. The examples in Box 8.1 illustrate some of the considerable positives within the current stock of sites.

Box 8.1: Examples of Positive Comments Made about Council / RSL Sites	
Physical condition / state of repair	
	‘Excellent. Fully modernised in 2008.’ (Angus)
	‘Investment in upgraded amenity blocks was completed in 2006/07 and the Needs Assessment in 2007 highlighted positive feedback from residents in respect of quality and involvement.’ (Argyll & Bute)
	‘The current local authority site has recently been refurbished and provides 20, 3 bed roomed chalets for residents. All are in a good state of repair.’ (Perth & Kinross)
Site layout or design	
	‘There are 18 pitches each with an amenity unit which has a kitchen, bathroom and storage area. There is room on the pitch for 2 caravans and a vehicle for towing. There is a children’s play park with play equipment. A portacabin has been installed for use by tenants, Social Work, Health, Education, Police and other social groups. There is also a toddlers playgroup.’ (Fife)
	‘Residents on the site are very pleased with the site layout and design.’ (South Ayrshire)
Site location / access to services	
	‘Doctors, dentists, school, public transport are all accessible. Extra

	services such as Library, Police, and Health all operate from the site using the Community facility.’ (Falkirk)
	‘The site is located just outside the small town of Bathgate, West Lothian. It is located in a nice setting surrounded by woodlands. Bathgate has everything you would possibly need to live within a local community with a good range of shops, education, leisure and work opportunities.’ (West Lothian)
Neighbouring land uses and environment	
	‘The Torlochan site is well situated with no significant environmental issues or problems arising from neighbouring land use. The area is rural in nature but also adjoins a small Business Park.’ (Argyll & Bute)
	‘Idyllic setting.’ (Scottish Borders)
Site management issues	
	‘There is a published charter for the management of the site. A site manager is based on the site Monday through Friday 9am until 5pm. All new arrivals are issued with a welcome pack listing all services and telephone numbers. The manager is supported by the out of hour’s service.’ (Falkirk)
	‘None – our Site Manager produces a monthly newsletter to advise residents of issues on the site or to highlight new health, literacy or educational resources being arranged. Feedback is regularly received from residents, which is then used to improve policies and procedures. In June 2008, steps were taken to provide greater rights to the tenancy by improving opportunities to succeed and assign the tenancy at the request of residents.’ (South Ayrshire)

The second part of Table 8.1 shows the number of concerns about site quality expressed by each respondent local authority with a council / RSL site. A minority (27 per cent) expressed no concerns on any aspect of the quality of council / RSL sites in their area. Just half expressed a single concern only. The more problematic sites with more than one concern are:

- 4 concerns: Glasgow and North Lanarkshire; both these sites are either unoccupied or closed.
- 3 concerns: Argyll & Bute and Highland; each of these authorities has three sites and the concerns expressed do not focus on a single site.
- 2 concerns: Edinburgh and West Dunbartonshire.

The relatively favourable assessment of council / RSL sites given by local authorities appears to conflict rather with the less favourable comments reported in Chapter 2 (see page 7).

Council / RSL site occupancy

A majority of authorities (13 out of 22, or 59 per cent) reported that there were pitches currently vacant (not let) on a council / RSL site in their area at the time of the survey. Three sites (East Dunbartonshire, Glasgow and North Lanarkshire) were totally vacant or closed. This pattern is similar to that revealed by the July 2008 Caravan Count when 70 per cent of pitches were let, 22 per cent were vacant but available to let and eight per cent were not available to let (Craigforth, 2009).

Because site occupancy is shown to be an issue in Scotland by the Count and needs assessments, our survey asked about reasons for pitches being vacant. This was a prompted question with respondents asked to tick as many of the seven given reasons as appropriate and / or to write in other reasons. In order of importance, the reasons given by the 13 authorities with vacant pitches are:

1. Lack of demand for site places: 7 authorities
2. Catering for a transient population – vacancies are inevitable: 4 authorities
3. Poor physical condition of the pitch or site: 4 authorities
4. Friction / potential friction with other site residents: 4 authorities
5. Pitches held for major repairs or decanting: 3 authorities
6. Between lettings – expect to re-let within a month: 2 authorities
7. Lack of demand for pitches on social rented sites: 2 authorities
8. Vandalism: 1 authority
9. Poor location of site: 0 authority

Lack of demand is clearly the single most significant issue, for council / RSL sites generally. It was mentioned by Argyll & Bute, Dundee, East Lothian, Glasgow, North Ayrshire, Scottish Borders, Stirling and West Lothian. There is little clear geographical pattern. However, if taken together, issues around the appropriateness of sites for Scottish Gypsy Travellers – poor physical condition, friction with other site residents, pitches held for major repairs – are also significant. Eleven authorities cite these as reasons for pitch vacancies.

It is probably the case that low demand is sometimes exacerbated by site condition and / or friction or potential friction between site residents (a point emerging also from the ACPOS response reported in Chapter 4). Of the eight authorities referring to demand issues, three also reported either site condition or friction as reasons. However more generally, there is a clear relationship between pitch vacancies and the number of concerns expressed by respondents. The average number of concerns for authorities with vacant pitches is 1.77, compared with 0.44 for authorities with no pitch vacancies.

When asked about the steps being taken to restore site occupancy rates, several authorities referred to site upgrading or repair programmes. Where vacancies were attributed to turnover or a transient population, no action was being taken. Box 8.2 illustrates some of the more innovative steps being taken by a few authorities. Glasgow’s comments are most pessimistic:

‘In view of the negative experience following partial refurbishment, and of the assessment by Craigforth consultants, we do not think the Rodney Street site can be restored to use unless there is an unexpected upturn in demand.’

This suggests that this site, currently unoccupied, will be lost.

Box 8.2: Examples of Steps being Taken to Restore Site Occupancy Rates	
Argyll & Bute	
	In general, there is only a limited waiting list for the social rented sites in Argyll and Bute. Occupants tend to be fairly settled, long-term residents, usually comprising single, extended families on individual sites. Recently, Argyll Community Housing Association has been pro-actively engaged in promoting site occupancy rates through, for example, posters in local doctor surgeries and other service points used by Gypsies and Travellers. The Association is also considering the use of adverts in the <i>Travellers’ Times</i> . In addition, the association is currently considering the development of a specific Gypsy / Traveller’s policy.
Scottish Borders	
	Refurbishment completed April, 2009 meetings with site management around site management issues etc, meetings to continue.
Stirling	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advert in <i>Travellers’ Times</i>.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaflets sent to all other local authority sites in Scotland. • Recent successful bids for funding to improve the amenities available on the site.
West Lothian	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrading site. • Reviewing policies and procedures. • Developing information / leaflets. • Using Focus Group. • Volunteer consultants.

Gypsy / Traveller Sites Grant

The Gypsy / Traveller Sites Grant has been important in upgrading council / RSL sites. All but one of the site-owning responding authorities (Dumfries & Galloway; no reason given for not applying) has applied for the grant; 86 per cent of the authorities which applied have been successful on at least one application. The great majority of grant-aided work has been completed. In all, 321 pitches across 16 authorities have benefited from grants awarded for site upgrading or refurbishment.

Descriptions of the works carried out with grant aid suggest quite extensive improvement programmes, sometimes spread over several phases. Amenity units have been improved; chalets installed; hardstandings, roadways and fences improved; and play-space and / or community building introduced or extended. Box 8.3 shows examples of both extensive and less extensive works that have been carried out.

Not all the grants awarded were taken up:

‘A funding bid for improvement works was made in 2006 but funding only awarded for a play area. This did not proceed due to opposition from Gypsy / Travellers on-site.’ (East Lothian)

In the great majority of instances (82 per cent), the grant-aided work left the number of pitches unchanged. In two cases (Highland and South Lanarkshire), pitch numbers decreased by six pitches overall. In one case (Perth & Kinross),

pitch numbers for council / RSL sites⁵ increased by six suggesting that the effect was numerically neutral.

Box 8.3: Examples of Upgrading Works Carried out with Gypsy / Traveller Sites Grant	
Dundee	
	There was an extension to the site office and a children's play area which received funding in 2007. In 2008 we received funding to improve 10 utility units, and we have received funding to refurbish the remaining 10 units. Dundee City Council has match funded these grants.
East Dunbartonshire	
	CCTV installed.
Fife	
	Children's play parks with play equipment on each of the 3 sites. Upgrading and insulating and upgrading heating in amenity units. Concreted all pitches, new gates, fencing. Security camera systems, chalets for 2 families with disabled children. Five-aside football / netball court with safety base and floodlights. Portakabins on each site for use by tenants, Social work, education, health, police and other community groups.
Scottish Borders	
	General improvements, hard standing site development, refurbishment to DDA standard.
South Lanarkshire	
	<p><u>Springbank, East Kilbride:</u></p> <p>2009/10:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Upgrade of internal facilities within the amenity blocks by refurbishing kitchens and bathrooms including upgrading heating and ventilation, flooring and decoration. ▪ Upgrade bulkhead lighting and replace with low-energy bulkhead security lights. <p>2008/09:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improve the surfaces of the pitches and the drainage of the site. <p>2007/08:</p>

⁵ This scheme appears to have involved transfer of a private site to the council / RSL sector and thus cannot be seen as an overall net gain in pitches.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Landscaping. <p>2005/06:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Installation of new boundary fencing, divisional fencing and gates. <p><u>Swinhill, Larkhall</u></p> <p>2007/08:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Resurfacing pitches. ▪ Installation of boundary fencing. ▪ Traffic calming measures. <p>Upgrade work funded from other sources in 2007/08:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Upgrade of play area (Changing Places/Regeneration funding). ▪ Formation of Community Centre (funded from various sources). <p>2006/07:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Installation of CCTV. ▪ Installation of new timber doors, uPVC windows and canopies. <p>2005/06:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Upgrading of amenity blocks comprising renewal of kitchen unit, WC and wash hand basin and upgrade of electrics.
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Grants for new sites

There had been many fewer applications for grants to develop new sites. In all, five authorities had applied (Aberdeen, Fife, Perth & Kinross, Scottish Borders and South Ayrshire), of which three (Fife, Scottish Borders and South Ayrshire) had been successful. However, to date, none of these has resulted in a completed new site. South Ayrshire is planning to provide six transit pitches. In Fife:

‘The search for suitable land has been unsuccessful for different reasons. Either the land was unsafe or the Travelling People did not approve of the area and on some occasions planning permission was not available. A transit site was due to open last year but a mineshaft was identified on the grounds which, because of health and safety, prevented this from happening.’

In Scottish Borders subsequent analysis of demand was said to have shown no real need, and monies were returned.

Lack of evidence of demand was given as the main reason for not applying for the grant by authorities currently without a council / RSL site. Some councils in West Central Scotland referred to inter-authority discussions around possible transit site provision on a shared basis. East Ayrshire suggested that Scottish Gypsy Travellers arriving there might be referred to the proposed transit site in South Ayrshire.

Plans for future grant applications

The majority of respondents (18 local authorities, or 69 per cent) plan to apply for the grant in the next two years, or are considering doing so. The most frequent intention (nine authorities) is to apply to improve or refurbish an existing residential site. Four authorities (Aberdeenshire, Falkirk, Fife and Perth & Kinross) plan to apply for the grant to develop a new transit site. Eight other authorities are considering intentions in the light of needs assessments or are waiting for the position on the future availability of the grant to be clarified. In some instances, inter-authority discussions are taking place.

This suggests that, in future, grant aid may facilitate new site provision. In line with perceived requirements, transit rather than residential sites are likely to be developed.

9. PERCEPTIONS OF PROGRESS, BARRIERS TO SITE PROVISION AND HOW THEY CAN BE OVERCOME

At the beginning of the final section of the questionnaire, authorities were asked to mark themselves out of 10 in terms of how satisfactory their progress has been since the beginning of 2006 on the provision of Gypsy Traveller sites.

Respondents were guaranteed anonymity in order to encourage open answers to this section of the questionnaire. All but three responding authorities replied to the question.

Marks awarded ranged from 2 to 10, with an average of 6.65. This is higher than the average mark (5.1) self-awarded by English authorities in the comparable study (Brown and Niner, 2009). The range was as follows:

2 out of 10: 1 authority
3 out of 10: 1 authority
4 out of 10: 2 authorities
5 out of 10: 3 authorities
6 out of 10: 2 authorities
7 out of 10: 5 authorities
8 out of 10: 5 authorities
9 out of 10: 2 authorities
10 out of 10: 2 authorities

One authority pointed out the difficulties and dangers of making such an assessment, and they spelled out their reasoning:

'We are not sure that this is the most meaningful way for us to measure our progress. It is very subjective and perhaps over-simplified for what is a complex and multifarious issue. Since this is the method we have been presented with, we have given a score of 8. This is based on the following:

- We have participated in research to help us understand the accommodation needs of Gypsy Travellers.
- This research confirms that we have well-managed sites with high levels of occupancy.

- We have made a number of successful applications to the Gypsy / Traveller Sites Grant to improve the sites and facilities.
- We have undertaken a number of significant improvements to the site funded from other sources, including a community centre and play area.
- We have on-site managers who can provide a range of advice and services to residents.
- We have revised our pitch allocation policy, tenancy agreement and application form.
- We are developing our methods of engagement and plan to hold consultation / information sessions on-site in the near future.'

Perhaps not surprisingly in light of the above, there is no simple relationship apparent between marks awarded and indicators of progress explored in this study (assessing needs, having policies, granting planning permission, upgrading sites and so on). Slightly above average marks were awarded by authorities currently preparing local housing strategy or Local Plan policies and thus, presumably, actively considering related issues at present. Authorities with council / Registered Social Landlord (RSL) sites awarded themselves higher marks (average 6.8) than those without (average 5.7). Among those with a council / RSL site, marks were slightly higher where there were no pitches currently vacant (average 6.9) than where pitches were vacant (average 6.7). However, perceptions of progress appear to also reflect local circumstances not revealed in the survey and local expectations. It is clear that much perceived progress relates to improving conditions and management on existing council / RSL sites and not to making additional provision whether in the social or private sectors. There are no indications, of course, as to how local Scottish Gypsy Travellers would grade their local authorities.

Barriers to site provision

Authorities were asked what, in their experience, are the main barriers to provision of Gypsy Traveller sites in their area. All but two authorities gave an answer. Again, responses have been anonymised.

Replies can be grouped into six main categories; several respondents mentioned factors in more than one of these categories.

Numerically most significant were barriers around difficulties in **finding suitable land**, especially for transit sites (mentioned by eight authorities). For example:

'[] City council has very little open space which could be utilised to provide transit sites.'

'The provision of stopover / transit sites. The search has been unsuccessful despite advertising for private landowners and farmers to make land available for rent. The planning department were active in the searches.'

Resistance from local communities and the media contributes to difficulties in finding suitable land (mentioned by five authorities):

'The Council is committed to providing sites for Gypsy / Travellers, however opposition from local communities and the media have been the main barriers.'

An interesting and potent barrier identified is **lack of demand** especially for residential sites (mentioned by four authorities):

'Present provision adequate.'

'Currently, both the Council and the site landlord, believe that the provision of social rented Gypsy / Traveller sites actually exceeds demand across the authority area. The main requirement comes from well-established and long-term settled families who are integrated within the local communities. Qualitative and anecdotal evidence suggests a decline in the level of transient Travellers seeking temporary or seasonal work in [] and consequently there is low demand for existing pitches and no demand for additional provision.'

In some answers a slight distinction appears in that under-occupied existing sites **appears** to make further provision risky:

'Low occupancy rates on Council site means it looks like there is not a need for any more sites / pitches in [].'

'The main barriers experienced in the [] area are:

- Understanding what the identified regional need means in terms of need within the [] Council area.
- Having the confidence that a site(s) provided would be well used. (This is based on past experiences within this and neighbouring authorities.)
- Resource implications given the uncertainty of the two points above.'

Three authorities mentioned barriers related to **finance** for site development. Three authorities mentioned barriers in terms of the **local Gypsy Traveller communities** themselves and their perceived unwillingness to engage with the local authority:

'The site suggested as transit site was rejected by travellers.'

'The principal barrier is the inability to communicate with the Travelling community. They are unwilling to co-operate with the Council and resist any attempts at contact.'

'The main barrier to further development is opposition from the Gypsy / Travellers themselves. The site residents would like chalets – similar to the site in Perth. They are not prepared to consider any other development options.'

Answers from three authorities illustrate barriers presented by **complexity of issues** and doubts around commitment or skills:

'There is a lack of demand for permanent sites. The main demand which could be met in theory is for transit accommodation. However, the experts in the field unanimously advise against providing a transit site which they do not believe is manageable. Hence we continue to see occasional temporary unauthorised encampments, which are managed sensitively.'

'The main barriers can include perceptions by neighbouring communities of the Gypsy Travelling Community; relationship dynamics and tensions

within the Gypsy Travelling Community itself; provision of appropriate site management to enable safe, sustainable sites, and resource implications.'

'Lack of corporate or political buy-in, lack of funding, lack of understanding on the needs and rights of ethnic minority groups specific to the gypsy travellers group, lack of quality in the management standards that currently dictate gypsy traveller provision (authorised) in [], lack of partnership understanding of all of the above.'

Finally, as a contrast to the barrier of low demand, one authority identified a barrier from **localised high demand**:

'The Research pointed to the importance of key sites across the region. The high demand area in [] is at [], which we feel has a level of provision appropriate to the population. While our involvement in the accommodation needs research is clearly positive, there are limitations in applying the housing needs analysis model to the Gypsy Traveller population and difficulty in projecting need based on a very small population. We will continue to work with other Local Authorities to consider the demand and accommodation needs of the Gypsy Traveller communities in the [] region.'

Steps being taken to tackle the barriers

Steps being taken by responding authorities reflect the nature of the barriers identified. Three authorities felt that they had no need of steps because current site provision was adequate. Among positive answers, four main themes emerge:

Gaining **greater understanding of the needs** of the Scottish Gypsy Traveller community. For some authorities, this involves carrying out a needs assessment for the first time; for others, it means refining or developing assessments.

For example:

'The Council, with [] and [] Councils are about to complete an Accommodation Needs of Gypsy / Travellers when it is hoped this will show the true needs.'

‘As above, we will continue to work with other Local Authorities to consider the needs of the Gypsy Traveller communities. Locally we will continue to develop our understanding of accommodation needs.’

The second theme is **reviewing and developing policies, procedures and protocols** including local housing strategies and management policies on existing sites.

The third theme is continuing to **search for suitable land** for sites:

‘The search continues.’

‘The search is continuing. The Travelling People Working Group is committed to finding suitable stopover / transit sites.’

‘Suitability assessments complete on all available land in the region. Consultation and good practice on working with communities for the provision of sites being adopted from English examples. Site design being based on models of good practice and taking account of planning policies. Consultation sessions to take place with existing communities to discuss proposals prior to Planning Application.’

The fourth main theme is developing better **communications and joint working** with other authorities, agencies working with Scottish Gypsy Travellers, and with Scottish Gypsy Traveller communities. For example:

‘Joint discussions with our neighbouring local authorities.’

‘Better partnership working around gypsy travellers and their needs, [], NHS, [] Police Equality and Diversity Departments. Agreed action points specific to partnership priorities and objectives that will tackle some of the issues raised in this questionnaire. Meetings agreed with current site providers around management issues and lack of rent books appropriate lease agreements etc as identified in our independent study of 2008.’

‘Continue to try and engage in dialogue. Work closely with our partners on the Gypsy / Traveller Corporate Forum.’

It is interesting that, of the five authorities referring to resistance from local communities as a barrier to site provision, only two included actions being taken to overcome this. In both instances, the approach appears indirect, beginning with the media and elected members.

‘To work with the media to give a more positive representation of the Gypsy / Travellers’ life style and culture.’

‘Awareness raising with elected members regarding responsibilities in relation to the duty to promote race equality and in assessing and making provision for Gypsy / Travellers.’

A final quote illustrates a comprehensive approach with clearly marked actions towards achieving site provision:

‘Trying to identify sites which would be suitable for transit sites. Bidding for any funds made available by Scottish Government. Researched the aspirations and need for future provision. Formulating policies to be included in Local Development Plans and Local Housing Strategy.’

10. CONCLUDING COMMENTS

In 2000/01 the Scottish Parliament, under the auspices of the Equal Opportunities Committee (EOC), brought the various needs of Scottish Gypsy Travellers up the agenda of public policy in Scotland. This was accompanied by the development of relevant housing policy and legislation, in the form of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, and guidance which ensured that Scottish Gypsy Travellers are included in local housing strategies and under the new single regulatory framework. A thematic study carried out by Communities Scotland increased understanding of Gypsy Traveller site planning and management and underlaid an Activity Standard in the regulatory framework. Progress towards meeting the recommendations of the EOC was reviewed in 2005. The following year, in 2006, the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) published the report *Common Ground: Equality, good race relations and sites for Gypsies and Irish Travellers*, which made a number of recommendations aimed at improving accommodation provision for Gypsies and Travellers across Britain. Three years have now elapsed since the publication of this report, and it is useful to take stock of progress achieved thus far.

What seems clear from this study is that 'progress' is complex and multi-faceted. The situation in Scotland is far more difficult to interpret at this point in time than that in England. The reasons for drawing this conclusion are as follows. Our survey, involving all but six local authorities, has shown that provision of pitches on authorised Gypsy Traveller sites appears to have decreased since 2006, with a net loss of around 18 pitches. Although a number of private pitches have been developed, these have been outweighed by the number of council / Registered Social Landlord (RSL) pitches lost. However, there is currently no way of knowing how closely the number of pitches available matches actual need / demand for pitches because of the lack of quantification of any shortfall (or excess) in many local authority areas and the number of pitches currently unoccupied on council / RSL sites. As a result, it is unclear whether progress has been 'inadequate' – as suggested by the literature reviews in Chapter 2 and the opinions expressed by the Association of Chief Police Officers Scotland (ACPOS) (Chapter 4) – or 'adequate' in that the reduction in pitch numbers reflects actual demand as is suggested by the responses of several local authorities in the survey. The overarching conclusion from this study is that more work needs to be done at both national and local levels in order to better

understand the current use of sites and what need (if any) there is for further site / pitch provision. Further work is required to resolve the apparent lack of consensus between the literature and local authorities about the extent and nature of any shortage of site accommodation in Scotland. It is essential that Scottish Gypsy Travellers, including those currently living in housing and those involved in unauthorised sites, are fully engaged in such research and that their needs, demands and aspirations are taken into account. This is essential to supply the Scottish Gypsy Traveller perspective which is missing from our study and which is vital to the formulation of appropriate and sustainable policies.

Such research must also of course involve, and be owned by, local authorities. Only five local authorities responding to our survey were able to give a quantitative estimate of the number of additional pitches required in the future. Without a clearer view of the accommodation circumstances of Scottish Gypsy Travellers and outstanding issues concerning the number and quality of sites, it will be hard to generate the commitment needed to act. It will be particularly hard – where additional sites are found to be required – to find land and develop sites and / or work with Scottish Gypsy Travellers to help them provide for themselves. Information is an essential first step to action.

There are several other points to note from the findings:

- A distinctive feature, evident from the Caravan Count, is the extent of seasonal travelling in Scotland and associated unauthorised encampments, especially in summer. Local authorities appear to anticipate the development of transit sites as opposed to sites for residential use. In this context, and mirroring the view expressed by the CRE in 2006 (see page 7), transit sites can be seen as the main obvious provision priority. At the same time, concerns have been expressed about the design and management of transit sites. Local authorities might welcome guidance on these issues to reassure them that transit sites are feasible and likely to be effective in reducing unauthorised encampment.
- An aspect of 'progress' by local authorities considered briefly in this study is the quality of council / RSL sites. There has been significant investment in site upgrading with the support of the Gypsy / Traveller Sites Grant, and several authorities would make further bids if the grant continues. There are clearly a few sites with serious and multiple problems, and apparent lack of demand

(certainly for the sites in their current condition). Apart from these extreme cases, local authority respondents to the survey were generally quite confident about the location, design and quality of their sites. This appears to be somewhat at variance with reports referred to in Chapter 2, and there may be some divergence of perception as to the extent and nature of priority issues. This is another where the views of Scottish Gypsy Travellers are essential.

- The Caravan Count (Chapter 3) shows the relatively overwhelming importance of council / RSL sites within authorised pitch provision at present. In addition to any concerns over quality, there is perhaps an issue around relative lack of choice for Scottish Gypsy Travellers. While not quantified, several needs assessments noted a desire for small family private sites to be developed. Another aspect of lack of choice relates to site size; the great majority of council / RSL pitches are provided on sites with 15 or more pitches. Again, softer information from needs assessments suggests a desire for smaller sites which can provide variety and flexibility, and run less risk of having to accommodate incompatible families.
- The emphasis in this report, and in the needs assessments undertaken to date, is on Gypsy Traveller sites, and Scottish Gypsy Travellers who live on sites. Local authority initiatives to involve Scottish Gypsy Travellers appear to focus predominantly on site residents too. However, while numbers are unknown, it is likely that the majority of Gypsy Travellers in Scotland live in bricks and mortar housing. There is a need to engage more fully with Scottish Gypsy Travellers in housing as well as on sites if the community's needs are to be met.
- Finally it is clear that, where additional sites are needed, it is difficult to find suitable land for their development. A major factor in this is resistance by local settled communities to site development. There is still hostility and fear, often based on stereotype and ignorance, to the idea of site development and this can put pressure on officers and elected members in a planning system which involves public consultation and where councillors can lose their seats. Overcoming this barrier will be very important in future. Local authorities should be reminded of their general duty to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people from different racial groups. The Scottish Government has a role in line with their Race Equality Scheme and Statement. Countering stereotype and ignorance of Scottish Gypsy Travellers is an area where the Equality and Human Rights Commission can also take a lead.

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APPENDIX 1: THE SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The local authority survey was the main source of primary information for the research and the findings are fully presented in this report in Chapters 5 to 9.

A questionnaire was developed, with the involvement of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (the Commission). The starting point was a recent study in England which looked at progress on needs assessment and pitch provision (Brown and Niner, 2009); the questionnaire used there was tailored to local circumstances and the policy framework in Scotland. The questionnaire has sections on:

- Assessing the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers, needs identified, and specific policies / actions in local housing strategies aimed at providing or facilitating the provision of accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers.
- Policies relating to Gypsy and Traveller sites in Development Plans, and involvement of Gypsy and Traveller communities.
- Council / Registered Social Landlord (RSL) site provision and private site provision facilitated by the planning system.
- Views on the quality of council / RSL sites in the area and site occupancy.
- Gypsy / Traveller Sites Grant applications and plans.
- An assessment of local progress.
- Reported barriers to moving forward with site provision.

A copy of the questionnaire and the covering letter used are presented in Appendices 2 and 3.

In the great majority of cases (all but three authorities), the letter and questionnaire were sent by email to the officer thought to take the lead on Gypsy and Traveller issues. This contact point was established from pre-existing information held by the researchers and the Commission, and from telephone calls made to local authorities where such information was lacking. A copy of the letter, but not the questionnaire, was sent to Chief Executives for information which led to further requests for the questionnaire to be sent electronically.

The questionnaire was sent out on 26 March, with an initial deadline for return of 17 April 2009. In order to achieve as high a response rate as possible, the deadline was extended several times to facilitate chasing by the researchers and Commission. The final cut-off point for the receipt of completed questionnaires was 10 July 2009.

Response rate

Questionnaires were sent to all 32 local authorities; 26 were completed and returned – a response rate of 81 per cent. Table A1.1 shows which authorities responded.

Aberdeen City	Yes
Aberdeenshire	Yes
Angus	Yes
Argyll & Bute	Yes
Clackmannanshire	Received after final deadline; not included in analysis
Dumfries & Galloway	Yes
Dundee City	Yes
East Ayrshire	Yes
East Dunbartonshire	Yes
East Lothian	Yes
East Renfrewshire	Yes
Edinburgh City	Yes
Eilean Siar	Yes
Falkirk	Yes
Fife	Yes
Glasgow City	Yes
Highland	Yes
Inverclyde	No
Midlothian	No
Moray	No
North Ayrshire	Yes
North Lanarkshire	Yes
Orkney Islands	No
Perth & Kinross	Yes
Renfrewshire	Yes
Scottish Borders	Yes
Shetland Islands	No
South Ayrshire	Yes
South Lanarkshire	Yes
Stirling	Yes
West Dunbartonshire	Yes
West Lothian	Yes

In order to give an impression of geographical representativeness, Table A1.2 expresses the response in terms of Communities Scotland (as was) area offices.

Area office	Number of LAs	Response	% response
Glasgow	1	1	100
Grampian	3	2	67
Highland and Islands	4	2	50
Lothian, Borders and Fife	6	5	83
Argyll and Clyde	6	5	83
South West Scotland	6	6	100
Tayside and Forth Valley	6	5	83
Total	32	26	81

APPENDIX 2: COVERING LETTER FOR THE SURVEY

******EHRC HEADED PAPER******

26th March 2009

Dear Colleague

Research into Scottish Local Authority Accommodation Provision for Gypsies and Travellers – questionnaire for completion by 17 April

The Equality and Human Rights Commission Scotland has commissioned a team of researchers from the University of Salford, University of Birmingham and Heriot-Watt University to investigate Scottish Local Authority provision of accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers.

We are keen to gather this information in order to build a comprehensive picture of the Local Authority accommodation and progress towards increasing provision of accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers across Scotland. We also anticipate that the report may inform our discussions with the Scottish Government about its strategy for Scottish Gypsy Travellers, bearing in mind the commitments set out in the Scottish Government's Race Equality Statement.

This is an important study that will play a significant role in informing the work of the Commission. It represents the first co-ordinated attempt to investigate accommodation provision for Gypsies and Travellers nationally in Scotland.

We are keen to encourage a high response rate to ensure that the analysis and assessment undertaken by the researchers is as comprehensive as possible. By completing this questionnaire, you will be providing us with important information that will ensure that this research is informed by data from as many Local Authorities in Scotland as possible.

Included with this letter you will find a short questionnaire from the research team, together with details of how to complete and return it.

We would be very grateful if you could return the attached questionnaire to Pat Niner p.m.niner@bham.ac.uk at the University of Birmingham by **17 April 2009**.

The results of the survey will be analysed by the research team. The Commission will then publish the research results in a Commission research report. All local authorities in Scotland are being invited to take part in this research.

The EHRC Scotland Directorate contact for this work is Dr Suzi Macpherson. Please contact her on 0141 228 5948 if you need further information about this project.

Thank you in advance for your co-operation in assisting us with this important work, which we hope will help us to support and inform policy and funding decisions at both Scottish Government and Local Authority levels.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ros Micklem". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R'.

Ros Micklem
National Director Scotland

cc Chief Executive (issued with letter only)

APPENDIX 3: QUESTIONNAIRE TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MONITORING PROGRESS IN MEETING GYPSY / TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION NEEDS

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) wishes to assess the progress that local authorities in Scotland have made in assessing and meeting the accommodation needs of Gypsies / Travellers. This survey forms an important part of the research evidence.

Details of how to complete the questionnaire are given on the next page. Please complete and return it by **Friday 17 April 2009**. Please return it by e-mail to P.M.Niner@bham.ac.uk or in hard copy by post to:

Pat Niner Centre for Urban and Regional Studies University of Birmingham Edgbaston Birmingham B15 2TT
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If you have any queries about completing the questionnaire, please contact Pat Niner (P.M.Niner@bham.ac.uk and 0121 414 5024) or Phil Brown (P.Brown@salford.ac.uk and 0161 295 3647)

Local authority	
Contact name	
Telephone number	
E-mail address	

**EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
MONITORING PROGRESS IN MEETING GYPSY / TRAVELLER
ACCOMMODATION NEEDS**

INTRODUCTION AND INSTRUCTIONS

This questionnaire survey is an important element of research commissioned by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) to monitor local authority progress in assessing and meeting the culturally-specific accommodation needs of Gypsies / Travellers.

The focus of the survey is provision of caravan sites / pitches for **Gypsies / Travellers** as defined for policy purposes in Scotland, excluding New Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

The questionnaire is being sent to all local authorities in Scotland. Information provided in the questionnaire will be analysed, along with any available material from secondary sources including accommodation needs assessments and the Twice-yearly Count of Gypsies / Travellers in Scotland, at individual local authority level. **This will be reported to the EHRC and may appear in published reports. The EHRC will be informed which authorities have responded and not responded to the survey and a list may be published in the final report.**

In order to better understand the current position, some opinion information is requested in Section F. **Answers to these questions (Section F only) will be reported on a non-attributed basis only and the anonymity of responding authorities will be maintained.**

We have tried to keep the questionnaire as short as possible. For clarity, it is divided into sections:

- A. Gypsy / Traveller Accommodation Assessments and Local Housing Strategies
- B. Gypsy / Traveller Sites and Planning
- C. Progress on Pitch Provision
- D. Social Site Quality
- E. Gypsy / Traveller Sites Grant
- F. Views and Comments

We recognise that it may be necessary to involve planning, housing and Gypsy / Traveller officers in completing the survey.

Instructions about how to complete the questionnaire are normally in ***bold and italics***. There may be questions where the options given for answers do not adequately express your views – in such cases please write in to provide a more appropriate answer or to explain the answer you have given. Most of the questions ask for a box to be ticked – if completing this electronically use an X in the box if that is easier. Where there is a write-in answer, please provide as long an answer as you wish.

A. Gypsy / Traveller Accommodation Assessments and Local Housing Strategies

This Section asks about the assessment of accommodation needs of Gypsies / Travellers, including the extent and nature of any requirements identified. It also asks about Gypsy / Traveller policies in the Local Housing Strategy

'Local authorities are to consider the needs of all Gypsies and Travellers for appropriate accommodation within their housing need and demand assessment and take these into account in preparing their local housing strategies' (Scottish Planning Policy 3 *Planning for Homes*, 2008, para 83)

A1. Have the accommodation needs of Gypsies / Travellers been assessed in your local authority? ***Please tick one box***

Yes		<i>Go to A4</i>
No but assessment is in progress		<i>Go to A3</i>
No		<i>Go to A2</i>

A2. Why has no assessment been undertaken? ***Please write in then skip to A10***

A3. Please give details of the expected completion date and the geographical area covered by your assessment. ***Please write in then skip to A10***

Expected completion date :

Geographical area covered :

A4. Please give details of your assessment. ***Please write in***

Completion date :

Geographical area covered :

Please provide a copy of the report, or give a link for internet access

A5. Does the assessment provide a numerical estimate of pitch requirements for your local authority? ***Please tick one box***

Yes		<i>Go to A6</i>
No		<i>Go to A10</i>

A6. How many additional pitches does your authority need to provide / allocate in the first five year planning period (e.g. 2006-2011)? Please distinguish between pitches for residential (permanent) use and transit pitches or stopping places. **Note : In this section and throughout the questionnaire a 'pitch' means the area of a site occupied by a single family – broadly equivalent to a dwelling-house.**

Type of pitch	Pitches required (enter number)	Don't know (please tick)
Residential (permanent)		
Transit or stopping place		

A7. How are these requirements split between social (local authority or registered social landlord) and private provision?

Tenure of provision	Requirements (enter number or proportion)	Don't know (please tick)
Social provision		
Private provision		

A8. Will the identified shortfalls be met during the first five year planning period (e.g. by 2011)? **Please tick one box**

Yes – certainly		Go to A10
Yes – probably		Go to A10
No – unlikely		Go to A9
No – certainly		Go to A9

A9. Why not? When will the identified shortfalls be met? **Please write in**

A10. Is there a specific policy or action in your authority's Local Housing Strategy aimed at providing or facilitating the provision of accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers? **Please tick one box**

Yes		Go to A11
In preparation – please give estimated completion date below		Go to B1
No		Go to A12

A11. Please provide a copy of the Local Housing Strategy, or give a link for internet access **Now go to B1**

A12. Why not? **Please write in**

B. Gypsy / Traveller Sites and Planning

This Section asks about land use planning policies towards Gypsy / Traveller caravan sites, and the involvement of Gypsies / Travellers in decisions about sites.

'Planning authorities should identify suitable locations for sites for Gypsies and Travellers and set out policies for dealing with planning applications for small privately-owned sites. Planning authorities should ensure that Gypsy and Traveller communities are involved in decisions about sites for their use.' (Scottish Planning Policy 3 *Planning for Homes*, 2008, para 83)

B1. Does your authority's approved Development Plan include a specific policy relating to the provision of Gypsy / Traveller caravan sites? ***Please tick one box***

Yes		<i>Go to B2</i>
In preparation – please give estimated completion date:		<i>Go to B4</i>
No		<i>Go to B3</i>

B2. Please provide a copy of the Policy, or give a link for internet access ***Now go to B4***

B3. Why not? ***Please write in***

B4. Has your authority identified suitable locations for sites for Gypsies and Travellers? ***Please tick one box***

Yes		<i>Go to B6</i>
Actively working towards identifying suitable locations		<i>Go to B6</i>
No		<i>Go to B5</i>

B5. Why not? ***Please write in***

B6. Does your authority have policies for dealing with planning applications for small privately-owned sites for Gypsies and Travellers?

Yes		Go to B7
Actively working towards developing policies		Go to B9
No		Go to B8

B7. Please provide a copy of the policies, or give a link for internet access **Now go to B9**

B8. Why not? **Please write in**

B9. Please outline the steps taken by your local authority to involve Gypsy and Traveller communities in decisions about sites for their use. **Please write in**

C. Progress on Pitch Provision

This Section asks about sites and pitches developed or lost since the beginning of 2006. It includes social Gypsy / Traveller sites (local authority and registered social landlord) and private sites.

C1. How many **new** pitches have been provided on **social Gypsy / Traveller sites** (local authority and registered social landlord) in your authority area since the beginning of 2006? How many pitches on social Gypsy / Traveller sites which were closed at the start of the period have been re-opened? Please enter the number of pitches in the appropriate cell in the grid below.

If none have been provided / re-opened please tick here and leave the grid blank

None	
------	--

Please enter number of pitches affected

Type of pitch	In the planning process	In development (being built)	Work complete and let / ready to let
Residential: new site			
Residential : expanded site			
Residential : existing pitch re-opened			
Transit : new site			
Transit : expanded site			
Transit : existing pitch re-opened			

C2. How many pitches on **social Gypsy / Traveller sites** have closed or otherwise ceased to be available since the beginning of 2006, and are closed / unavailable now? How many pitches on social Gypsy / Traveller sites have been sold or transferred from social ownership since the beginning of 2006 but remain available for use by Gypsies / Travellers?

If none have been closed / lost / transferred please tick here and leave the grid blank and go to C4

None	
------	--

Please enter number of pitches affected

	Residential pitches	Transit pitches
Pitches closed / ceased to be available		
Pitches sold / transferred still available for use by Gypsies and Travellers		

C3. What were the reasons for pitch closure / loss / transfer? **Please write in**

C4. Please complete the grid below to provide information on the number of sites and pitches involved in planning applications and approvals relating to **private Gypsy / Traveller sites** since the beginning of 2006.

Please enter numbers

	Number of sites	Number of pitches
Planning applications received for site development or expansion		
Applications received to renew temporary planning permissions		
Permanent planning permissions granted for site development or expansion		
Temporary planning permissions granted for site development or expansion		
Permanent permissions for site development or expansion granted on appeal		
Temporary permissions for site development or expansion granted on appeal		

C5. How many pitches with permanent planning permission on **private Gypsy / Traveller sites** have been completed (occupied or ready for occupation) in your area since the beginning of 2006? Please include any previously unauthorised private pitches granted permanent planning permission during the period.

Type of pitch	Pitches (<i>enter number</i>)	Don't know (<i>please tick</i>)
Residential (permanent)		
Transit or stopping place		

C6. How many pitches with temporary planning permission on **private Gypsy / Traveller sites** have been completed (occupied or ready for occupation) in your area since the beginning of 2006? Please include any previously unauthorised private pitches granted temporary planning permission during the period.

Type of pitch	Pitches (<i>enter number</i>)	Don't know (<i>please tick</i>)
Residential (permanent)		
Transit or stopping place		

C7. Have any pitches on **authorised private Gypsy / Traveller sites** (i.e. with planning permission) closed or otherwise ceased to be available for use by Gypsies / Travellers since the beginning of 2006? **Please tick one box**

Yes		Go to C8
No		Go to D1
Don't know		Go to D1

C8. How many pitches have been lost?

Type of pitch	Pitches (<i>enter number</i>)	Don't know (<i>please tick</i>)
Residential (permanent)		
Transit or stopping place		

C9. Please give the background (as you understand it) to the loss of authorised private pitches for use by Gypsies / Travellers (e.g. site transferred to mobile home use or migrant workers; land sold for housing). **Please write in**

D. Social Site Quality

This Section asks about concerns about the quality of any social Gypsy / Traveller site in your area, and about pitch vacancies on social sites.

D1. Is there one or more social (local authority or registered social landlord) Gypsy / Traveller site in your area? ***Please tick one box***

Yes		<i>Go to D2</i>
No		<i>Go to E1</i>

D2. Please describe any significant outstanding concerns over the quality of any social Gypsy and Traveller sites in your area. ***Please write in in the grid below; if there is more than one site in your area, please repeat the grid for each site.***

Physical condition/ state of repair	
Site layout or design	
Site location/access to services etc	
Neighbouring land uses and environment	
Site management issues	
Other	

D3. Are any pitches currently vacant (not let rather than vacant because the occupier is travelling) on a social site in your area?

Yes		Go to D4
No		Go to E1

D4. What are the main reasons for pitches being vacant? **Please tick all that apply**

Catering for a transient population – vacancies are inevitable	
Between lettings – expect to re-let within a month	
Lack of demand for site places	
Lack of demand for pitches on social rented sites	
Poor physical condition of the pitch or site	
Poor location of the site	
Friction / potential friction with other site residents	
Other – please write in:	

D5. What steps is your authority taking to restore site occupancy rates? **Please write in**

E. Gypsy / Traveller Sites Grant

This Section asks about applications made for Gypsy / Traveller Sites Grant by your authority for refurbishment and new site development. It also asks about Grants received.

Gypsy / Traveller Sites Grant has been available since 2005/06. It is currently available for either developing new transit and residential sites or for improving existing sites.

E1. Has your authority, at any time, submitted an application for Gypsy / Traveller Sites Grant?

Yes		Go to E2
No		Go to E3

E2. Why has no application been made? ***Please write in, then skip to E11***

E3. Has your authority, at any time, made an application for Gypsy / Traveller Sites Grant to improve / refurbish and existing site?

Yes		Go to E4
No		Go to E8

E4. Was the application successful?

Yes		Go to E5
No		Go to E8

E5. What improvement / refurbishment works were undertaken? ***Please write in***

E6. Did the work involve any change in the number of pitches available on the site?
Please tick one box and write in the number of pitches involved if appropriate

		No. pitches
Pitch numbers increased		
Pitch numbers remained same		
Pitch numbers decreased		

E7. How many pitches, in all, have benefited from Grant awarded for site improvement or refurbishment?

Number	
--------	--

E8. Has your authority, at any time, made an application for Gypsy / Traveller Sites Grant to develop a new site?

Yes		Go to E9
No		Go to E11

E9. Was the application successful?

Yes		Go to E10
No		Go to E11

E10. How many pitches have been or will be created through Grant-aided site development? **Please complete the grid below**

Type of pitch	New pitches opened	New pitches planned
Residential		
Transit		

E11. Does your authority plan to apply for Gypsy / Traveller Sites Grant in the next 2 years? **Please tick as many boxes as required**

To develop a new residential site	
To develop a new transit site	
To improve / refurbish an existing residential site	
To improve / refurbish an existing transit site	
Other – please write in:	

F. Views and Comments

This Section asks about your views on progress on provision of Gypsy / Traveller sites in your area and perceived barriers to provision. Any answers provided in this Section will be treated as confidential to the research team and reported only in a generalised, non-attributed manner

F1. In your view, has your authority made satisfactory progress since the beginning of 2006 on the provision of Gypsy / Traveller sites? Please give your authority a mark out of 10, where 1 is not satisfactory and 10 is highly satisfactory.

	Mark out of 10
Authority's progress	

F2. In your experience, what are the main barriers to provision of Gypsy / Traveller sites in your area? ***Please write in***

F3. What steps are being taken by your local authority to tackle these? ***Please write in***

F4. Any other comments you would like to make about Gypsy / Traveller site requirements and/or provision. ***Please write in***

THANK YOU VERY MUCH

APPENDIX 4: POLICING ISSUES – FULL RESPONSE

<p>1. What in your view are the main issues in relation to Scottish Gypsy Traveller (SGT) accommodation in Scotland?</p>	
<p>Association of Chief Police Officers Scotland (ACPOS)</p>	<p>The main issue in relation to site provision is the loss of traditional sites used by Gypsy and Travellers, often for the development of retail / business parks. This, combined with a lack of provided pitches on Authorised sites and the absence of Interim or Stopover site by Local Authorities, leads to the necessity for Gypsy and Travellers to establish unauthorised encampments. This in turn brings the GT community into conflict with the settled community, agencies and the Police none of which enhances relationships.</p> <p>Further, there are significant levels of harassment, intimidation and violence between different family groups within the Gypsy Traveller community often meaning that many families will flee from authorised sites as a result of threats received, whereby there are a number of vacant sites in Scotland.</p> <p>The absence of definitive guidance, which places a mandatory imposition on Local Authorities to provide accommodation means that there is an inconsistent approach across Scotland. The existing Guidance from the then Scottish Executive owes its origins to work conducted in 2004 and requires to be updated.</p>
<p>Ian Taggart (IT)</p>	<p>Lack of available and appropriate sites.</p>
<p>2. In your view, has the SGT accommodation situation in Scotland improved or become worse over the past few years? Please give a reason for your answer.</p>	
<p>ACPOS</p>	<p>It was the opinion of the members that the status quo prevails and that there has been no discernible difference in recent years in terms of accommodation provision. This picture is however somewhat distorted by the fact that there have been significant tensions between Irish / English Gypsy Travellers and Scottish Gypsy Travellers, causing vacancies within the recognised encampments. In addition, the long term imprisonment of a significant number of members from a specific family group, has caused significant power struggles and inter-family feuds again causing vacancies in recognised encampments.</p>
<p>IT</p>	<p>Accommodation has become worse with a reduction in available sites.</p> <p>For national figures see The Scottish Executive. <i>Gypsies/Travellers in Scotland. The Twice Yearly Count, January 2007.</i> (The Scottish Executive, Edinburgh 2007).</p>
<p>3. What, in your view, are the main explanations for 22 per cent of SGT households staying on unauthorised sites across Scotland?</p>	
<p>ACPOS</p>	<p>The key reasons identified in relation to the continued use of unauthorised sites were the lack of adequate site provision, intimidation within peer group and the affordability of permanent site pitches.</p>
<p>IT</p>	<p>Lack of appropriate accommodation and in the case of Aberdeen, at the time of my research, the condition of the site.</p> <p>Additionally it was evident there is a substantial number of Travellers (34 per</p>

	cent of interviewees) did not use private or local authority sites and did not intend doing so for various reasons.
4. Do unauthorised encampments have an impact on the local area? In what way?	
ACPOS	Given the previous comment that many of the traditional sites have been developed into commercial parks, there are frequent tensions / conflict between both parties. Invariably, such issues are picked upon by the media and a significant level of negative press is published, which heightens tensions further. This can on occasions manifest itself in hate related types crimes and incidents towards the Gypsy Traveller Community.
IT	Yes. Inevitably there is increased inter-community tension that is undoubtedly the reason for increased prejudice towards Travellers leading to racially motivated incidents in many occasions. Increasingly environmental issues, surrounding waste originating in encampments, fuel this tension. Whilst there are occasional instances of fly tipping by the settled community around these encampments the majority originates with Travellers. Despite the provision of minimal services to these encampments in Aberdeen I was informed by word of mouth recently that when originally provided several years ago cleanups occurred in approximately 10 per cent of cases however this figure has risen to approximately 90 per cent. During my research on large encampments, Travellers often advised me that a few identified families were responsible for this on each encampment. These issues result in stereotyping with resolution lying with Travellers themselves.
5. Can the number of unauthorised encampments be reduced? If so, what in your view is the most effective means to achieve this? If not, why not?	
ACPOS	This particular issue has been of some concern to ACPOS members for a considerable period of time. Given the circumstances outlined in question 1, members were unsure that there is a readily identifiable solution. Issues proposed but not progressed, included UK-wide legislation, greater accountability imposed on Local Authorities and the introduction of more effective partnerships.
IT	Introducing appropriate planning and management techniques can reduce them. It however remains the case that a substantial number of Travellers will continue to use unauthorised encampment however this can be managed. (See Taggart, I., <i>Gypsy Travellers – A Policing Strategy: “Why don’t you just move them on?”</i> (2003).
6. What in your view encourages good relations between SGT and Travellers and non-SGT?	
ACPOS	A difficult question for the Police, given that in many instances they are called upon to address unauthorised encampments in the absence of a Local Authority representative or in circumstances where dialogue has failed and matters have escalated to the extent that Police intervention is necessary. There are many aspects of social cohesion, which may be more effectively delivered by the key partners within Local Authority structures.
IT	Awareness raising regarding Traveller culture, equalities and human rights issues.

	<p>There is also an onus on Travellers themselves to understand the settled communities' concerns and understand these. It is a two-way street effectively however at present the relationship between the settled community and Travellers is very strained to almost non-existent in some areas.</p>
<p>7. Are there challenges you face when dealing with SGT? If so, what are these and how are these challenges managed?</p>	
ACPOS	<p>The main challenge faced by the Police is that of a lack of trust on the part of the Gypsy Traveller community. The appointment of Local Police Liaison Officers has done much to improve that relationship, whilst regular engagement is necessary if the relationship is to be developed. The production of various advisory materials has proved beneficial, however the itinerant nature of the Gypsy and Traveller Community means that in reality there is little time to develop the relationship. Furthermore, the absence of any truly representative national group on behalf of Gypsy and Travellers is a barrier to developing informed policies and strategies which reflect the needs of the community.</p>
IT	<p>Personally I have had few problems if any in dealing with Travellers. Whilst commonly described as a hard to reach community, my experience has, in the great majority of cases, been very positive. I have concluded that it is the case that those that should engage with Travellers find it hard to reach out to them.</p> <p>It is however apparent that Travellers resist engagement with public bodies as they have a lack of confidence in any positive outcomes. This can be overcome.</p>
<p>8. What is your view of the role residents' groups play in managing community relations where there are SGT on authorised or unauthorised sites?</p>	
ACPOS	<p>The experiences related across Scotland are invariably negative, with a significant element of 'not in my back yard' being expressed by community groups and Elected members. The media invariably pick up on the political aspects surrounding environmental / pollution and the associated cleaning up costs.</p>
IT	<p>In my experience I have found residents groups to be very difficult to deal with regarding issues surrounding Travellers as they invariably take cognisance of the majority viewpoint taking little or no interest in Travellers issues. Some in the North East have actively engaged in anti-Traveller activities.</p>
<p>9. Are you aware of any leadership strategies being used to manage and promote good relations between SGT and long term resident communities?</p>	
ACPOS	<p>Presently ACPOS are about to launch their revised Equality and Diversity Strategy for Scotland of which a key component is effective community engagement and the development of effective networks with Gypsy and Travellers.</p>
IT	<p>The current ACPOS strategy on unauthorised encampment is holistic in nature and has been implemented fully in the North East of Scotland. It is undoubtedly resulted in improved Police / Traveller relations in this area.</p>

Contacts

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This report explores the perspective of local authorities and, to a lesser extent, police forces in Scotland and their understanding of the accommodation needs of Scottish Gypsy Travellers. There are two main objectives: to ascertain the quantity of current Gypsy Traveller site provision, including any recent changes in this provision and plans to develop sites in the future; and to investigate timescales in meeting any accommodation shortfalls for Scottish Gypsy Travellers.