

# APPENDIX

## CAMBRIDGESHIRE SUB-REGION GYPSY/TRAVELLER NEEDS ASSESSMENT 2005 – SUMMARY

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This summary brings together some key points from the Cambridgeshire sub-Region Gypsy/Traveller Needs Assessment. It is intended to be for a general audience and to present the main findings and messages that can be distilled from those findings. The Assessment centred on running 313 interviews - the largest survey of Gypsies/Travellers undertaken in the UK to date - and worked with Gypsies/Travellers to make that survey a success.
- 1.2 The assessment was carried out by academics from Anglia Ruskin University and Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College for a consortium of local authorities - Cambridgeshire County Council and nine councils with housing responsibilities: Cambridge City Council; East Cambridgeshire District Council; Fenland DC; Forest Heath DC; Huntingdonshire DC; King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council; Peterborough City Council; South Cambridgeshire DC; St Edmundsbury BC. Huntingdonshire Primary Care Trust also contributed.
- 1.3 The full report has over 90 pages of detailed information. That detail is necessary to do justice to the study. Facts about Gypsies/Travellers often need to be understood in the context of a detailed picture of facts about the modern travelling lifestyle and the interaction with the settled communities.
- 1.4 The term 'Gypsy/Traveller' is used in this report to distinguish between the main two different ethnic groups in the study area.

### 2 Background

- 2.1 A considerable amount of work has been carried out in the Cambridgeshire area relating to Travellers. Examples In Cambridgeshire include:
  - The Cambridgeshire Travellers Review, 1998
  - Crime Audits – 2004 fear and experience of crime
  - Work by the Cambridgeshire Race Equality and Diversity Service Traveller Team (Traveller Education)
  - Work by the Ormiston Children and Families Trust Travellers Initiative
- 2.2 Most research or consultation with Gypsies/Travellers is essentially qualitative. This survey attempted to be more quantitative. Gathering information to put planning for Gypsies/Travellers more on a par with planning for the settled communities should allow planning for Gypsies/Travellers to be improved. And that should be to the benefit of everyone in the study area – the settled community as well as Gypsies/Travellers.

### 3 Aims

- 3.1 The aims of the study were:

- To assess the current and potential future need within the Travelling communities in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough for learning, health services and other services provided by local authorities and their partner organizations.
- To understand the demographic profile of the Travelling Community, household formation within it, accommodation and housing needs and routes into accommodation and housing.
- To increase understanding of how services might best be provided to meet Gypsies/Travellers' needs, such as how to make services and accommodation accessible to Gypsies/Travellers.
- To meet the requirements of the Housing Act 2004 - assessing housing needs

3.2 The second of these is the most important in this study.

## 4 The Approach

4.1 The following approach was taken to the Assessment:

- A Reference Group of nationally known Gypsies/Travellers was recruited.
- The statutory bodies devised a list of questions (councils, Health and Police). This was passed to the Reference Group to ensure that the form of the questions was relevant to Gypsies/Travellers so as to gather the most accurate responses possible.
- Nine Gypsies/Travellers were trained as interviewers. Not all were literate and tapes and transcriptions were used successfully. The academics also interviewed, both to increase the number of interviews and as part of the quality testing.
- 313 interviews were completed. Each interview was with one or more members of each family. This has much in common with the Census approach. Interviews were run with Gypsies/Travellers on all kinds of sites as well as those in housing and some on the roadside.
- Existing data was analysed, particularly the ODPM 6-month caravan counts from 1980 to 2004. School role data was also analysed and used to identify Gypsies/Travellers living in houses.
- Some focus groups were run to explore more detailed issues.
- Each housing authority in the study area had a "Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment" in line with the Housing Act 2004 and ODPM guidelines. Importantly, the Act requires an assessment of the accommodation needs of "Gypsies and Travellers residing in *or resorting* to their district".

## 5 Key Findings

### *The Gypsy/Traveller Population*

- 5.1 There are significant numbers of Gypsies/Travellers in the study area.
- There are an estimated 6,500 to 7,000 Gypsies/Travellers in the study area, including those living in houses.
  - Around 5,000 to 5,500 of these are in Cambridgeshire.
  - Of those in Cambridgeshire, around 2,800 are in Fenland, 1,300 in South Cambs and 1,000 in East Cambs.

- 5.2 When counted as a single group, Gypsies/Travellers constitute one of the largest minority ethnic groups in the study area. However, it is important to realise that there are different ethnicities within the travelling communities. The two major groups identified here are:
- English Gypsies formed around 72% of respondents to the survey. These tend to be 'born and bred' in the region
  - Irish Travellers formed around 23% of respondents to the survey. Some of these are recent in-migrants.
- 5.3 The Irish Traveller population appears to be younger than the English Gypsy population.
- 5.4 The size of families may be decreasing, although *this tentative conclusion is not based on robust demographic methods*. Three generations can be broadly identified in the survey responses and the number of siblings appears to decrease in each generation:
- Older respondents (aged over 50) averaged 6.2 siblings.
  - Younger respondents (aged around 20 - 50) averaged 5.2 siblings.
  - The average number of children born to respondents averaged 3.6, or each child having around 3 siblings. This is probably lower than the final figure for siblings in this generation as some of these families will grow.
- 5.5 Despite the evidence of smaller families, the Gypsy/Traveller population is young and increasing. This conclusion from the survey is in line with other research and presumably the growth is partly due to increasing life expectancy along with the in-migration.

*Accommodation and the changing numbers of caravans*

- 5.6 The total number of caravans in the study area almost doubled between 1980 and 2004 from around 900 to around 1,600. In the eight years 1996 to 2004 there was an increase of 600 caravans<sup>1</sup>. This reflects natural population growth as well as in-migration.
- 5.7 The distribution of caravans is not even across the districts:
- Since 1980 the total numbers have risen in five districts and fallen in four.
  - South Cambridgeshire and Fenland each have over 400 caravans.
  - East Cambridgeshire, King's Lynn and Peterborough each have 100 to 200 caravans.
  - Cambridge City, Forest Heath, Huntingdonshire and St Edmundsbury each have under 100 caravans
- 5.8 There was a particularly large in-migration to South Cambridgeshire between 2002 and 2004, increasing the number of caravans on unauthorised encampments in that district.
- 5.9 Other work has estimated that as many as 50% of Gypsies/Travellers live in houses<sup>2</sup>. The survey and local education data suggest a smaller percentage in this area, with figures varying considerably between districts from around 12% to 52% of the district Gypsy/Traveller population.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: ODPM caravan counts

<sup>2</sup> Niner, P. (2003). *Local Authority Gypsy/Traveller Sites in England*, Centre for Urban and Regional Studies, University of Birmingham. This was a major national study for the ODPM

### *Existing and future sites*

- 5.10 Gypsies/Travellers in the survey expressed a preference for providing their own site. Forty-nine percent of those who do not currently own their site said they wanted to own their own site, although the other 41% of this group said they did not want to own their site. Transit sites were not popular for reasons such as not knowing who else will be on the site. Instead, Gypsies/Travellers would prefer visiting pitches on permanent sites.
- 5.11 When asked where they needed sites, Travellers tended to be flexible, such as: "*More sites anywhere around here*".
- 5.12 A number of Gypsies/Travellers reported that they lacked services – including on some existing council sites. The most important of these are: 20% lacked toilets; 53% lacked fire prevention; 78% lacked play space; 28% lacked a reliable postal service; 87% lacked mains gas. On the positive side, only 7% lacked mains electricity and 4% lacked running water (probably explainable by unauthorised encampments).

### *Work and travel*

- 5.13 Work and travel are major reasons why Cambridgeshire is attractive to Gypsies/Travellers. Family networks are important for economic activity and many families have lived in the area for a considerable time. However, it is increasingly difficult for Gypsies/Travellers to find work in traditional occupations. A good example is agricultural work, where the increased use of migrant workers from Eastern Europe has cut the number of jobs available to Gypsies/Travellers.
- 5.14 The A14, M1, and routes to London such as the M11 are key routes. Some Gypsies/Travellers use them routinely for business, one notable example being a family using the A14 to access trade on the continent.

### *Health*

- 5.15 Life expectancy for English Gypsies appears to be comparatively high in the study area. The situation regarding Irish Travellers is less clear. The survey estimates that over 17% of English Gypsies in the study area are over 65. The proportion of Irish Travellers over 65 was considerably lower (under 4%). The difference between the two populations is partly explained by English Gypsies being based in the area for many years while the Irish Travellers include a number of in-migrants who tend to be younger. Other studies have shown a much lower proportion of Gypsies being over 65 – typically between two and three percent. This higher life expectancy in the Cambridgeshire area probably reflects better access to health services and living with other family members, particularly those living on council sites. However, a considerable number of Gypsies/Travellers in the 55 and over age group reported having poor health.
- 5.17 Obviously, like the settled population, accommodation is a major factor in health:
- Authorised sites – 55% report good health, 28% poor health
  - Council sites - 39% reported good health, 48% poor health (possibly because they moved there because of poor health)
  - Unauthorised sites – 37% reported good health, 49% poor health

- 5.18 The major health conditions experiences by at least one member of a family were:
- Asthma or other chest problems – 50% of families
  - Back problems – 38% of families
  - ‘Nerves’ – 30% of families
  - Cardio-vascular problems – 18% of families
- These are just some of the common conditions found by other surveys<sup>3</sup>.
- 5.19 Health visitors were considered the most helpful service of any mentioned (54% said they found them helpful) with GP surgeries the second most helpful (14% found them helpful).

### *Education*

- 5.20 There is considerable information available on education from the Traveller Education services. This survey confirms generally known problems which the Traveller Education services are already addressing such as:
- Lack of motivation in some parents to send children to secondary school, preferring to concentrate on preparing to equip their children for the modern Gypsy/Traveller world.
  - Low (but rapidly increasing in some cases) educational achievement.
  - Gypsy/Traveller children feeling alienated at school and sometimes being bullied.
  - There is considerable interest in vocational training for young people and adults.

## **6 Key Messages**

- There are around 6,500 to 7,000 Gypsies/Travellers in the study area.
- Family sizes appear to be decreasing.
- Incoming Irish Travellers are a younger population than the English Gypsies.
- Cambridgeshire is attractive to Gypsies/Travellers for family, work and travel.
- There is a need for more pitches in the study area – the figures are being assessed.
- Working in partnership on a planned approach to providing these pitches is a key element in easing tension between the Gypsy/Traveller and the settled populations.
- Accommodation is a key element in improving health and educational opportunities.
- Gypsies/Travellers prefer smaller, private, family sites.
- There is a much higher proportion of older English Gypsies in the Cambridgeshire area than is usual, probably due to access to health care and living with families
- Poor health remains a problem for the 55-plus age group.
- There are some prevalent health problems such as asthma.
- Gypsy/Traveller children may still feel isolated at school.

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<sup>3</sup> e.g. Parry, G., Van Cleemput, P., Peters, J., Moore, J., Walters, S., Thomas, K., and Cooper, C. (2004) *The Health Status of Gypsies and Travellers in England*, University of Sheffield

## **Appendix: Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments**

The Housing Act 2004 places a duty on each local housing authorities to run a "Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment" (GTAA), in line with their duty to run a general Housing Market Assessment every three years. The survey provided each district with a GTAA in line with the Housing Act and Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) guidelines. The number of extra pitches assessed as required in each district is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1 – Gypsy/Traveller Accommodation Assessments**

<b>District</b>	<b>Pitches</b>
Fenland	160-205
South Cambs	110-130
East Cambs	25-45
Kings Lynn & W. Norfolk	45-60
Forest Heath	15-20
Huntingdonshire	15-25
Peterborough	10-15
St Edmundsbury	10-20
Cambridge (City)	15
Total	405-535

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