

Lewisham Gypsy and Travellers Future Needs Assessment

Prepared by Local Dialogue

For The London Borough of Lewisham

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dialogue^{LOCAL}
stakeholder communications

 **Lewisham**

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I. Executive Summary

The London Borough of Lewisham (hereafter Lewisham Council) commissioned Local Dialogue to complete a Gypsy and Traveller Future Needs Assessment to help inform the Council's emerging Local Development Framework.

The aims of the Assessment were to establish links with leading individuals who either represent or work closely with Gypsies and Travellers, to communicate and engage with members of the Lewisham Gypsy and Traveller community and to undertake comprehensive desktop research so as to identify the current issues and future needs for Gypsies and Travellers in Lewisham borough.

This Assessment has been undertaken in response to Section 225 of the Housing Act 2004, Circular 01/2006 *Planning for Gypsy and Caravan Sites* (ODPM 2006) and Circular 04/2007 *Planning for Travelling Showpeople*,¹ which require all Regional Planning Bodies to assess the accommodation needs of the Gypsy and Traveller populations in their jurisdiction and to identify land for sites and for this to be translated by local planning authorities to determine pitch and site targets.

This Assessment also follows on from the Gypsy and Traveller site selection process that has been underway in the Lewisham Council since the announced closure of the Thurston Road Traveller site in 2009.

At the London level, the *London Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment* (GTANA, 2008) and the London Gypsy and Traveller Unit (LGTU) (2009) suggest the total number of Gypsies and Travellers living in London to be approximately 17,100. However, this figure is likely to be a conservative estimate.

The GTANA, 2008 estimated that the South East sub-region of London (which the Lewisham Council is a part of) accommodates 1,509 Gypsy and Traveller families. As the sub-region provides approximately 174 authorised pitches, the majority of Gypsies and Travellers in the area live in bricks and mortar accommodation.

It is further estimated that over 100 Gypsy and Traveller families live in Lewisham borough in bricks and mortar accommodation. 70% of these are thought to be of Irish Traveller origin, with the remaining 30% consisting of

¹ This Needs Assessment has been prepared with an awareness of the current Department of Communities and Local Government consultation on the withdrawal of Circulars 01/2006 and 04/2007 and their replacement with a new Planning Policy Statement, which - if adopted - would shift responsibility for assessing need for and setting Gypsy and Traveller pitch and plot targets from Regional Planning Bodies solely to local planning authorities.

Roma Gypsies, English Gypsies and New Age Travellers. It must be noted that it is difficult to accurately determine the number of Gypsies and Travellers living in an area, particularly as the communities predominantly reside in houses. As such figures must be understood as estimates.

The Mayor of London, the Regional Planning Body for London, consulted on replacing the planning strategy for London - the London Plan - from October 2009 until July 2011. During this process several versions and reviews were published, each with different approaches to assessing the needs of Gypsies and Travellers, resulting in differing recommendations for the number of pitches of between 238 and 554. When this is translated to the borough level, for Lewisham there is a recommended need of between four and 19 pitches.

The last five Gypsy/Traveller pitches in Lewisham borough, located at Thurston Road near Lewisham train station, were closed in 2009 following the closure of 11 pitches in 2003. At the time of closure there were 17 families on the waiting list for a pitch. There are now 24 families on a register of site interest. All families who have officially registered an interest in living on a pitch site are Irish Travellers, with no Roma Gypsies, English Gypsies and New Age Travellers living in the borough expressing a specific interest in living on a pitch site.

During the stakeholder consultation phase of this Needs Assessment, the following issues were raised:

- Lack of pitch sites in Lewisham borough
- High levels of mobility within bricks and mortar accommodation, which is believed to be as a result of poor quality private housing and difficulties with landlords and tenancy agreements
- Poor quality private rental stock in Lewisham borough
- The need to 'mainstream' Gypsies and Travellers more to Lewisham Council services
- The need to make Lewisham Council procedures more consistent and straightforward for members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities to follow more easily, particularly for housing
- The low levels of attendance and attainment achieved by Gypsy and Traveller pupils in secondary schools
- The setting up of unauthorised encampments in Lewisham borough, although this is very rare and has always involved short-term settling

- Lack of transparency and inclusion for Gypsies and Travellers in Lewisham Council decision-making processes
- The lack of understanding around the current situation for pitch site waiting lists.

In common with other studies on Gypsies and Travellers, difficulties were experienced in making contact with the subject communities. In the main, this was due to lack of data on Gypsies and Travellers numbers and where they live (which in part is due to a reluctance to self-identify to local authorities and others). In addition, outside the Irish Traveller community, there are limited channels for contacting the communities as a whole.

Three separate discussion sessions were held for Gypsies and Travellers to attend within Lewisham borough; a total of 11 completed family survey questionnaires were returned. The discussion sessions and survey found the following:

- Average family size of 4.8 people.
- Eight of the 11 families had nearly adult children who will soon be looking for separate accommodation of their own.
- The majority of respondents (six) had lived in Lewisham borough for five years or more.
- The majority of respondents lived in private rented accommodation (eight), with only two living in socially rented housing and one living on unauthorised encampments in their caravan.
- Relatively high levels of mobility, with five respondents having lived in their current accommodation for less than six months and four respondents living in their current accommodation for 12 to 18 months. Furthermore, eight respondents have moved more than three times in the past three years.
- Three respondents were satisfied with their current accommodation, two of whom were the respondents who live in socially rented housing and the other was satisfied with their current accommodation in comparison to previous privately rented housing they had lived in. Six respondents were unsatisfied with their current accommodation to some degree for reasons relating to lack of space, poor living conditions and unfriendly neighbours.
- Six of the respondents had been on the 'register for site interest' list after four had previously been on the Thurston Road site waiting list.

- All respondents thought Lewisham Council should provide pitch sites, with some specifying the need for them to be in safe places, near schools and other amenities and being able to accommodate special/disabled needs.
- 10 of the 11 respondents would like to live on a pitch site, with preferences including a site that provided bath/shower, toilet and kitchen facilities, a site warden and a nearby park or play area for children. Living on a site just for one family was another particular preference. The 10 respondents who had children stated their children would also like to live on a pitch site.
- Seven of the 11 respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied with Council services available to Gypsies and Travellers and Gypsies in Lewisham borough, particularly in regard to education, health and outreach services. However, a number were dissatisfied with the housing service and the lack of opportunity for Gypsies and Travellers to be represented and have a say with Lewisham Council.
- Three respondents stated that either themselves or a member of their family suffer from depression or poor mental health due to living in houses.

From the information gathered through this research, it is difficult to ascertain an exact level of need as opposed to demand for accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers in Lewisham borough. It is evident that there is a demand for pitch sites. However, this does not necessarily directly translate into need.

The level of demand is known - 24 families have formally registered an interest in obtaining a pitch in Lewisham borough. The level of need is different as this Assessment shows, is likely to be relatively low. This is because of the 24 families who have formally registered their interest; some have already have their housing needs met by Lewisham Council through social housing and of those socially housed report they are satisfied with their accommodation. In addition, under the Mayor of London guidelines (2010) those who express need for a pitch due to psychological aversion to bricks and mortar accommodation may be excluded from calculations of 'need'.

As such, from the research carried out for this Assessment with Gypsies and Travellers and staff at Lewisham Council, combined with previous research noted above, the need experienced by Gypsies and Travellers in Lewisham borough is likely to be for between four and nine pitches. The majority this number could be accommodated within the five pitches at Church Grove (if the planning permission was renewed), while reviewing the need to possibly extend the number of pitches there, or at another site, on an on-going basis.

The findings of this Assessment also suggest there is a need for Lewisham Council to work closely with Gypsies and Travellers to identify the level of demand for social housing (as opposed to private rented accommodation) within the communities.

2. Introduction

Local Dialogue LLP was commissioned by the London Borough of Lewisham (Lewisham Council) to undertake a Gypsy and Traveller Future Needs Assessment to form part of the evidence base for Lewisham Council's emerging Local Development Framework. For more information on Local Dialogue, please see Appendix A.

This Needs Assessment began in March 2011 and follows on from Lewisham Council's Gypsy and Traveller site selection process, which has been underway since the closure of the Thurston Road site was first announced in 2007.

This Assessment has been undertaken in response to Section 225 of the Housing Act 2004, Circular 01/2006 *Planning for Gypsy and Caravan Sites* and Circular 04/2007 *Planning for Travelling Showpeople*, which require all Regional Planning Bodies and local planning authorities to assess the accommodation needs of the Gypsy and Traveller populations in their jurisdiction and to identify potential land for sites.

After this Needs Assessment was commissioned, the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) began consulting on new Planning Policy Statement (PPS) that would replace Circular 01/2006 and Circular 04/2007 existing Gypsies and Traveller planning regulations with a new PPS: Planning for Traveller Sites. Under the PPS, local authorities will be responsible for researching the needs of Gypsies and Travellers in their area and to make provisions accordingly.

In recent years, much research has been conducted to assess the presence and needs of Gypsies and Travellers in the Greater London area, with the 2008 *London Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment* (GTANA), fulfilling the requirement for a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment as set out in the 01/2006 *Planning For Gypsy And Traveller Caravan Sites* Circular. This was followed by several reports and reviews from the Mayor of London (the Regional Planning Body) attempting to specify London-wide pitch numbers as part of drafting a new replacement London Plan - the London-wide planning strategy. This process is detailed below in Sections 5.1 to 5.6.

The replacement London Plan was published in July 2011. Unlike its drafts, the final London Plan does not address the issue of pitch sites for Gypsies and Travellers. Instead, with reference to the on-going DCLG consultation on adoption of new planning regulations for Gypsy and Traveller sites, it states that pitch targets are an issue solely for local planning authorities and one in which Regional Planning Bodies should not have a role.

This Needs Assessment in no way pre-empts the DCLG consultation. Nevertheless, it is clear that both the current planning regulations and the proposed replacement give local planning authorities a key role in determining pitch targets for Gypsies and Travellers. Therefore, a necessity remains for each local planning authority to determine the level of sites and pitches needed within their area.

Much work has been carried out at the London-wide level over the past three years in determining the need for pitches (and no new methodologies or determinations have been developed by the DCLG). As such, this Needs Assessment study methodology was developed in line with the *Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment Guidance* issued in October 2007 by the DCLG.

This Needs Assessment aims to:

- Outline the approach undertaken, the regional, sub-regional and local context, the results gained and the conclusions made regarding the future provision of accommodation and support services for Lewisham borough's Gypsy and Traveller communities.
- Establish links with leading individuals who either represent or work closely with Gypsies and Travellers in the borough in order to identify the wider issues and needs of such communities.
- Help communicate and consult with Lewisham's Gypsy and Traveller families and fully capture their responses in order to provide an assessment of the future needs of the communities.
- Compile data to provide a comprehensive context of the current situation and future needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Lewisham borough.

3. Gypsies and Travellers – definition and background

The term ‘Gypsies and Travellers’ is defined in DCLG Guidance (October 2007) as:

1. *persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or living in a caravan; and*
 2. *all other persons of a nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin, including*
 - a) *such persons who, on grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependant’s educational or health needs or old age, have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently; and*
 - b) *members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people (whether or not travelling together as such).*
- (Section 24, pg. 9).

Gypsies and Travellers have a long history in Britain, with the largest populations being English Gypsies and Irish Travellers, but also including Roma Gypsies, Travelling Show People and New Age Travellers. Each of these is a distinct ethnic group, although they generally share equally strong family bonds and a desire to live in family groupings. This may be either on authorised or unauthorised sites in caravans or trailers or in bricks and mortar accommodation.

A 2009 review conducted by the Equalities and Human Rights Commission showed that, on balance, there are still levels of exclusion and inequality with regard to Gypsies and Travellers, particularly within the planning and housing systems. The London Gypsy and Traveller Unit (LGTU) (2009) therefore emphasises that local authorities should aim for best practice under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 in promoting equality of opportunity and good relations between different racial groups (2009).

In addition, as stated in DCLG Guidance (2007), “an understanding of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation issues is essential to make properly planned provision and avoid the problems associated with ad-hoc or unauthorised provision” (Section 13, pg. 7).

4. Approach

4.1 Introduction

The consultation approach was tailored to meet the needs and reflect the unique nature of Gypsy and Traveller communities within Lewisham. It was considered vital to respect the customs and cultural sensitivities of each community.

This assessment draws upon a range of data sources, including:

- **Desktop information and literature** - Comprehensive desktop research was carried out using recent research and policy literature. This provided an understanding of the regional, sub-regional and local background and helped inform the assessment.
- **Stakeholder consultation** - Wide-ranging research was conducted to compile a list of stakeholders. This included those who are involved or work with members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities in Lewisham borough and across London. Meetings were organised, where appropriate, in order to gain an understanding of the current situation and issues surrounding Gypsies and Travellers in the borough. A number of stakeholders were able to provide background research and data information for the assessment.
- **Gypsy and Traveller engagement** - Discussion sessions were organised for the attendance and involvement of Lewisham Gypsies and Travellers. A questionnaire was formulated and used to lead discussions and gather feedback.

4.2 Stakeholder Consultation

During the stakeholder consultation phase of the assessment, the following individuals, groups and services were contacted via email and/or telephone:

- Lewisham Traveller's Outreach Officer
- Lewisham Traveller's Forum
- Neighbourhood Engagement Officer of Voluntary Action Lewisham
- Community Sergeant and Council Liaison Officer for the Police
- An Officer at the Lewisham Traveller and Gypsy Education Service
- Community Development and Engagement Officer of the Lewisham Local Involvement Network (LINK)
- Lewisham Community Police Consultative Group Co-ordinator
- Contact for Strategic Policy at London Gypsy and Traveller Unit (LGTU)
- Contact for Community Development at LGTU
- Contact for Accommodation at LGTU

- Supporting People
- Race Equality Lewisham
- Lewisham Housing Department
- The Showman's Guild.

Overall, stakeholders provided a good level of context, contacts and information to help move the research forward. However, a number of those contacted either did not fully respond to the consultation or directed questions to other stakeholders. In most of these cases enquiries were referred to the Traveller's Outreach Officer or the Lewisham Traveller and Gypsy Education Service. As such, both the Outreach Officer and the Education Service contributed considerably to this report.

4.3 Gypsy and Traveller Engagement

As all of the Gypsies and Travellers in Lewisham reside in bricks and mortar accommodation and are scattered across the borough, difficulties were experienced in promoting the discussion sessions and consultation. Through consultation with Lewisham Council and stakeholders it was decided that the use of leaflets and letters would not be practical or effective. The consultation was instead advertised through word-of-mouth with those working with Gypsies and Travellers. The Lewisham Traveller Outreach Officer and an officer from the Lewisham Traveller Education Service invited Gypsy and Traveller families to attend the event and encouraged them to inform others about the session. It was thought that members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities would be more willing to participate in the consultation if the Traveller's Outreach Officer and Traveller Education Officer were involved.

Two different venues were used for the three events: the Irish Community Centre in Catford and Downham Library. This was to make it easy for members of the Gypsy and Traveller community living in different parts of the borough to attend one of the sessions.

In addition, when they made their rounds of home visits, the Traveller's Outreach Officer and Traveller Education Officer asked Gypsies and Travellers to complete the questionnaire.

When in communication with Lewisham Travellers and Gypsies, the following steps were taken:

- **Establishing trust** - Group discussion sessions were held with members of the community to discuss the issues and needs surrounding Gypsies and Travellers in the borough. The Traveller's Outreach Officer and a member of the Lewisham Traveller and Gypsy Education Service, who assisted in directing conversation and inviting individuals to have their say, also attended these sessions.

- **Making intentions clear** - From the outset, the objectives of the Needs Assessment were made clear. Members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities were advised the research would help inform local planning policy around the needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Lewisham borough. Members of the communities were also invited to ask any questions or raise any concerns regarding the assessment process.
- **Working with the communities** - Where possible, Local Dialogue worked through the questionnaire with each respondent and discussed any issues arising as the questions were answered. By doing so, the team was able to help those with reading or writing difficulties give their feedback.
- **Respecting local customs** - Team members were well informed of the traditions of the individual communities and were mindful of their customs and beliefs during the research.

Questionnaire

The survey sought to gain an understanding of the background, current accommodation and future needs of the respondents. Open as well as closed questions were used to ascertain what services and provisions respondents would like to see delivered to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Lewisham.

The Traveller's Outreach Officer and a representative from the Lewisham Gypsy and Traveller Education Service were consulted during the drafting on the questionnaire to ensure it was designed to best represent the Gypsy and Traveller communities. Please see Appendix B for a copy of the final questionnaire.

5. London Context

The national regulations covering allocation of Gypsy and Traveller sites and pitches are contained in Circular 01/2006 *Planning For Gypsy And Traveller Caravan Sites*. This document specifies that each region of England should carry out a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment, which is then checked by the relevant Regional Planning Body (in London this is the Mayor of London) to specify pitch numbers for each Local Planning Authority. Planning authorities should then use these numbers when drawing up their Development Plan Documents, which will identify site locations and pitch numbers.

Over the past three years, presence and needs of Gypsies and Travellers in the Greater London area have been the subject of a good deal of research. The *London Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment* (GTANA) was published in 2008 and fulfilled the requirement for a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment set out in the 01/2006 *Planning For Gypsy And Traveller Caravan Sites* Planning Circular.

The Regional Planning Body, the Mayor of London followed the GTANA with drafts of the replacement London Plan that included determinations of London-wide pitch numbers and their translation to the individual borough level. However, the final London Plan did not include targets. Further detail of this process is given in Sections 5.1 to 5.6.

5.1 London Gypsy and Traveller Population Size

The *London Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment* (GTANA) (2008) originally gave a figure of 13,537 individual Gypsies and Travellers living in London. However, an error was found in its calculations in Section 3.12, where the wrong figure is extracted from the table, resulting in a 20 per cent under-calculation. With this error and some other factors in mind, the London Gypsy and Traveller Unit suggest the figure of 17,100 as being more accurate. This recommended figure follows the GTANA's statement that:

...there remains a lack of reliable data on Gypsy and Traveller numbers, which cannot be overcome through accommodation needs research. We would therefore expect that the estimate of 13,537 [incorrect figure] Gypsies and Travellers living in London is a conservative figure (2008, Section 3.13, pg. 35).

5.2 Pitch Sites

The number of authorised pitches in London has been reduced over the past decade; with the London Gypsy and Traveller Forum and London Gypsy and Traveller Unit having recorded 85 pitch site closures between 1998 and 2009 (LGTU, 2009).

The GTANA (2008) estimated there are 543 Gypsy and Traveller families living on authorised pitch sites, which accounts for 14% of the total number living in London (2008). In terms of the distribution of Gypsies and Travellers in London, there are generally more sites in the outer London boroughs due to historic reasons and the availability of land. Figures also suggest that there are more Gypsies and Travellers living on sites in the West, East and South East sub-regions, with considerably fewer in the North and South West (LGTU, 2009).

The GTANA (2008) projected an overall maximum shortfall of some 554 new pitches for caravans between 2007 and 2012. If this were to be addressed fully it would represent a 104% addition to the pitch stock that was present in 2007.

5.3 Housing

Currently, the majority of London's Gypsy and Traveller families live in bricks and mortar accommodation, either through private rented or social housing. The GTANA (2008) estimated that 3,223 (84%) Gypsy and Traveller families were living in houses in 2008.

The GTANA (2008) also estimated, using its survey results, that 424 housed families present a need for a pitch due to psychological aversion to bricks and mortar accommodation; this is equivalent to 13% of the estimated number of housed Gypsy and Traveller families in London.

A small majority of the 815 Gypsies and Travellers that took part in the GTANA (2008) survey and were living in housing, wanted to return to living on a suitable site, although very few Roma Gypsies wanted such a move.

In addition, the GTANA (2008) found that 53% of those living on unauthorised camps have lived in bricks and mortar at some point, 84% of whom stated they would not want to live in bricks a mortar accommodation again.

5.4. Services

The GTANA (2008) found that a third of participants said they had been discriminated against when accessing services, particularly council housing departments and health services. Irish Travellers were found to be more likely to experience discrimination compared to other Travelling ethnic groups. A third of Irish Travellers said they had concealed their identity when accessing services, including a large majority of participants on unauthorised sites.

5.5 Pitch Site Targets and the London Plan

The GTANA (2008) found a London-wide need for between 130 and 554 additional residential pitches, 40 transit pitches and 77 bricks and mortar dwellings from 2007-2012. From 2012-2017, the GTANA (2008) identified a London-wide need for between 96 and 154 further residential pitches and a further 381 bricks and mortar dwellings. These figures are based on the methodology used to calculate pitch sites recommended by the Department of Communities and Local Government's (2007) Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments guidance.

The minimum additional pitch requirement of 226 (130 + 96) refers to need generated from Gypsies and Travellers currently living on pitch sites and includes overcrowding, unauthorised encampments and new family formation. The maximum pitch requirement of 708 (554 + 154) also includes the transfer to pitches of Gypsies and Travellers with a psychological aversion to housing.

The GTANA (2008, Section 12, pg. 116) breaks down minimum additional need to borough level. The figures are based on applying London-wide survey findings to each borough's proportion of pitches. The figures are based on applying London-wide survey findings to each borough's proportion of pitches and houses, rather than calculating need individually for each borough. This is because the statistical sample for individual boroughs is relatively small, and therefore analysing small sub-groups within individual boroughs, especially in boroughs where the overall Gypsy and Traveller population is small, may create significant anomalies. For Lewisham Council this works out at a minimum need for an additional four pitches between 2007 and 2012 and a further one pitch from 2012 and 2017. The maximum need is 16 additional pitches between 2007 and 2012 and a further three between 2012 and 2017².

The first draft of the *Replacement London Plan* was published in 2009. The London Plan forms part of the development plan for Greater London. London boroughs' local plans need to be in general conformity with the London Plan, and its policies guide decisions on planning applications by councils and the Mayor.

The 2009 first draft of the *Replacement London Plan* gives a London-wide target of additional 538 pitches. This is based on the median of the minimum and maximum pitch need identified by the GTANA (2008) with minor statistical corrections. Again the figures are broken down to borough level, setting pitch targets for each London local authority using a methodology based on that used by the GTANA but with a "weighting between need and housing land capacity which acknowledges the travelling

² As they were already scheduled for abolition at the time of publication, the GTANA (2008) figures do not include the five pitches at Thurston Road.

communities' current geographical preferences while seeking a more even distribution of provision than in the past" (2009, Section 3.50, pg. 76). This gives Lewisham Council a target of 15 additional pitches.

In early 2010, the Greater London Authority published *Towards Provision Targets for Gypsy & Traveller, Travelling Showpeople and Transit Pitches in the Draft Replacement London Plan*. This used four different options to model distribution of London-wide pitch targets across the London boroughs. All options were based on the maximum figures detailed in the GTANA (2008). Consequently, *Towards Provision Targets* returned higher figures than those quoted above for GTANA (2008), which used the minimum pitch need figures. The London-wide maximum additional need is given as 768 additional pitches. This translates to between 19 and 28 additional pitches to be provided in Lewisham borough depending on the model used³.

In March 2010, the Mayor of London published its *Minor Alteration - Proposed Pitch Provision for Gypsies and Travellers, Transit Sites and Travelling Show People*. This stated the Mayor's intention to reduce the pitch target figures in reference to the minimum additional pitch requirements provided by the GTANA (2008):

It is clear that in having put so much weight on 'proven psychological aversion' the GTANA goes much further than government's guidance requires. The Mayor presently takes the view that as identified through the GTANA, such 'aversion' does not provide an as yet sufficiently robust justification for specific planning intervention in the very tight London land market or the allocation of scarce public resources. It is more robust to recognise the distinct needs arising from those who live in caravans on sites and to closely monitor, and if necessary, subsequently address, the needs of those who are already housed in bricks and mortar accommodation (2010, Section 15, pg.10).

As a result of the Mayor's 2010 *Minor Alteration*, considerations and some recalculations to the GTANA's minimum additional pitch need figure, the reduced London-wide minimum need of 238 pitches was brought forward in the March 2010 *Minor Alteration*. This reflected constraints arising from

³ Option A, reflecting the maximum figure identified by the GTANA resulted in 19 pitches in Lewisham borough.

Option B, which met overall maximum need by allocating each borough a minimum of 10 pitches with provision being reduced in the top four boroughs with the highest level of identified need, again resulted in 19 pitches recommended for Lewisham.

Option C, which allocated to each borough a share of London-wide 'maximum' need based on a formula combining in equal weights its share of need and its share of London's housing capacity (identified in the 2004 London Housing Capacity Study) translated as 21 pitches in Lewisham.

Option D, which allocated an equal share of maximum need to each borough (3%) and added it to current provision would mean Lewisham would require 28 pitches.

restricted availability of both financial and land resources. Again, these figures are broken down to borough level. Here, a slightly different calculation has been used, which places a higher weighting to capacity than to need. This gives Lewisham an additional pitch target of eight.

In addition, the March 2010 *Minor Alteration* stated that pitch targets should be measured at the Housing Partnership Sub-region rather than at the borough level.

The London-wide *Minor Alteration* (2010) figure of a minimum of 238 additional pitches and the allocation at the sub-regional level has been criticised by the *Report of the Panel on the London Draft Replacement Plan* published in March 2011. The *Report of the Panel* reviewed the amendments issued by the Mayor of London and concluded that the 238-pitch figure was incorrect and in fact the minimum need was for 268 pitches. Additionally, the Report rejected the proposal to switch from borough to sub-region provision.

Nevertheless, the *Report of the Panel* provides two sets of breakdowns of the 268-pitch figure to borough level. These are based on the two London-wide base figures of a minimum of either 238 (from *Minor Alteration*, 2010) or 268 (from GTANA, 2008) additional pitches. This translates as a minimum of either five and nine pitches.

The new London Plan was published on 22 July 2011. Unlike the draft Replacement Plan (2009) and the *Minor Alteration* (2010) the final London Plan does not make recommendations on number of pitch sites for Gypsies and Travellers. Rather it states that:

In London, as in the rest of the country, the impact of provision to meet these needs is essentially local and, as government now proposes nationally, should properly be addressed by local planning authorities in Development Plan Documents. (2011, Section 3.56).

As the London Plan is now adopted policy, this means there are now no longer London-wide recommended additional pitch targets. In turn, this means that there is no break down to the borough level.

The 'proposes nationally', which the London Plan refers to is the ongoing Department of Communities and Local Government consultation on the withdrawal and replacement of 01/2006: *Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites* and its replacement with a new *Planning Policy Statement: Planning for Traveller Sites*. The draft replacement Planning Policy Statement intends to:

Enable local planning authorities to make their own assessment of need for the purposes of planning

and

Increase the number of traveller sites, in appropriate locations with planning permission, to address under provision and maintain an appropriate level of supply (2011, Section 5, pg. 33-34).

As such, if the draft Planning Policy Statement is adopted as it stands, it will mean it is the Local Planning Authorities, not regional bodies who would be responsible for setting site and pitch levels. In doing so, the Local Planning Authorities would:

a) Pay particular attention to early and effective community engagement with both settled and traveller communities

b) Co-operate with travellers, their representative bodies and local support groups, other local authorities and relevant interest groups to prepare and maintain an up-to-date understanding of the likely permanent and transit accommodation needs of their areas over the lifespan of their development plan in the light of historical demand; and

c) Use a robust evidence base to establish need to inform the preparation of the development plan and make planning decisions
(DCLG, 2011, Section 6, pg. 34).

6. Sub-Regional Context

Research into the accommodation situation and need for Gypsies and Travellers was carried out for the London authorities within the South East sub-region. Alongside Lewisham, the South East sub-region comprises the boroughs of Greenwich, Bromley Southwark and Bexley⁴.

In 2008, the London GTANA 2008 estimated the presence of 179 authorised pitches⁵, 19 unauthorised sites and 1,316 housed Gypsy and Traveller families living in bricks and mortar accommodation. This provides a total estimate of 1,514 Gypsy and Traveller families in the London South-East region. Information on each of the sub-region boroughs follows:

Greenwich is unique to its neighbouring boroughs due to the presence of the Thistlebrook site, which is one of the largest permanent Gypsy or Traveller sites in the country. The site consists of 40 pitches and can accommodate 60 homes in the form of trailers, caravans and mobile homes. The site is currently full and has a long waiting list.

Bromley has a significant number of Gypsy and Traveller sites (estimated at 62 by GTANA 2008) and a large number of known Gypsy and Traveller families living in bricks and mortar accommodation (estimated at around 1,000 by GTANA 2008). The housed Gypsies and Travellers are mainly found in the Orpington and Cray areas. In March 2010, the Leader of London Borough of Bromley stated they were looking to add further pitches in the Borough's pre-existing Traveller sites in Star Lane, St Mary Cray, Old Maidstone Road and Layhams Road. However, the Council is not looking to add a significant number of new pitches.

Southwark has one of the highest number of Gypsy and Traveller sites among inner London boroughs. The borough has four authorised sites, with three located in Peckham close to the border with Lewisham. Southwark's Core Strategy, adopted April 2011, includes Strategic Policy 9, *Homes for Travellers and Gypsies*, which sets out the safeguarding of the existing Gypsy and Traveller sites in the borough. A number of the sites were refurbished last year and are in good condition but have long waiting lists.

Bexley has three Gypsy/Traveller sites, which are located on Powerscroft Road, Jenningtree Way and Willow Walk. Together they provide 28 pitches. There is also one unauthorised site at Bunkers Hill. The London Borough of Bexley commissioned Local Dialogue to produce its Gypsy and Travellers

⁴ For the GTANA (2008) no survey work took place in Bexley, which conducted its own study. The London Borough of Bexley commissioned Local Dialogue to produce its Gypsy and Travellers Accommodation Needs Assessment in 2009, which predicted a no further need for additional pitches in the future.

⁵ The figure of 179 includes the five remaining at the time at Thurston Road.

Accommodation Needs Assessment in 2009, which predicted a no further need for additional pitches in the future.

Please see Appendix C for a comparative table of Bromley, Greenwich, Southwark and Lewisham regarding Gypsies and Travellers.

7. Lewisham Context

7.1 Recent History of Gypsy and Traveller Sites in the Lewisham borough

The last five pitches in Lewisham borough, located on the Thurston Road site, were closed in 2009. This followed the closure of 11 pitches in 2003.

Thurston Road opened in 1975, providing homes for 16 families. By 2004 only seven families remained. The reason for nine families leaving is unclear, but London Gypsy and Traveller Unit (LGTU) and local stakeholders believe the poor condition of the site could have had an influence.

In 2005, the Thurston Road site was identified as needed for the Lewisham Gateway regeneration scheme. The residents of the site were offered three choices: a new site, to move into housing or to relinquish their licence in return for compensation. Two families relinquished their licences and five opted for a new site. A project was then initiated to identify a site to re-locate the five Thurston Road families.

In December 2006, CB Richard Ellis was commissioned to carry out a site search assessment to find suitable replacement sites to accommodate Gypsies and Travellers within the borough.

A site in Church Grove near Ladywell train station was selected in June 2007 and in March 2008 a planning application for a five-pitch site was approved. In June 2008, a local resident applied for a judicial review of the decision to grant permission. Leave to appeal was refused.

However, towards the end of 2008 the remaining Travellers living on Thurston Road expressed concerns about moving to Church Grove and requested to surrender their licenses to the Council. The licenses were surrendered in February 2009.

The planning permission for the Church Grove site lapsed in April 2011.

7.2 Recent Traveller and Gypsy Accommodation Assessment Research

The London GTANA (2008) estimates the presence of 70 Gypsy and Traveller families in Lewisham borough. 15 families were thought to be Roma Gypsy, with the remaining 55 being of non-Roma origin.

In regard to pitch targets, the GTANA set the minimum and maximum target of four and 16 for Lewisham Council between 2007 and 2012. A further minimum and maximum target of one and three was set for 2012 to 2017.

7.3 Local and Regional Planning Policy Background

Lewisham's Local Strategic Partnership's key policy framework, the Sustainable Communities Strategy (2008-2020) has a key objective to make the borough 'Clean, Green and Liveable', which sets out the aspiration for people to live in affordable, high quality housing. The strategy includes the requirement for people to feel safe and the need for people to live lives free from crime, anti-social behaviour and abuse.

Lewisham Council's Housing Strategy (2009-2014) Strategic Objective 2 sets out the Council's plans to support vulnerable people, including Gypsies and Travellers, and follows the Council's policy to 'ensure appropriate accommodation provision for Gypsies and Travellers, which meet their needs' (2009).

The amendments to the Replacement London Plan that were announced in March 2010 were used to inform Lewisham's Core Strategy, which was submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in October 2010.

The Replacement London Plan Minor Amendment stated that the minimum need is for 238 pitches across London. This figure was based on the assertion that the GATNA (2008) assessment placed too much emphasis on weighting for 'proven psychological aversion to living in bricks and mortar accommodation' in provision of pitches. In addition the Replacement Plan took into account constraints on provision arising from restricted availability of both financial and land resources. It also reflected the methodology used for in the London Plan for social housing and which works on 73% of actual overall need.

However, the Report of the Panel on the Draft Replacement Plan rejected the minimum recommendation of 238 pitches as an arbitrary figure and recommended the reinstatement of a need for 268 pitches. Again, this was based on the GATNA (2008) methodology.

On 28 March 2011, Lewisham Council received the Inspector's report, which found the Core Strategy to be sound subject to some amendments. The Core Strategy was adopted on 29 June 2011.

The Inspector's report stated that 'the likelihood of a change both in Government guidance and the London Plan means that specifying a number of sites could take the Core Strategy out of conformity in those respects' (2011, Section 10, pg.6). This recommendation proved to be apposite as the new London Plan (2011) has removed pitch targets from the Plan and recommended that the responsibility of determining future need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation should be handed to the local authorities themselves.

Core Strategy Policy 2 addresses delivering the needs of Gypsies and Travellers within Lewisham borough, which has been addressed in accordance with guidance in Circular 01/2006 and the London Plan, evidenced through the GTANA (2008) and the accompanying Minor Alteration (2010) to the draft London Plan.

Core Strategy Policy 2 also states it will “assess and provide for the identified needs of Gypsies and Travellers in appropriate locations”. It also states that Lewisham Council is in the process of identifying a suitable site to replace the one lost at Thurston Road.

8. Results and Feedback

This section documents the results of the research and feedback gathered from the discussion sessions and the questionnaire.

8.1 Population Data

The Gypsy and Traveller population of Lewisham is made up of a number of distinct groups, namely Irish Travellers, English Gypsies, Eastern European Roma Gypsies and New Age Travellers.

The exact size of Lewisham Gypsy and Traveller population is hard to estimate for several reasons:

- Many members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities are not able to identify themselves as such, partly because a number of service providers do not include them as a distinct ethnic category in their equalities data gathering
- Members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities being unwilling to declare their ethnicity in order to protect themselves from discrimination and hostility
- Roma families are assumed to take their ethnicity from their country of origin and unless specifically asked, will not necessarily inform service providers that they are of Roma Gypsy ethnicity
- The level of mobility experienced among members of the Traveller and Gypsy communities, with the Lewisham Traveller Education Service's records showing that on average 74 per cent of families in such communities will be mobile within the school year
- The majority of Gypsy and Traveller families currently now live in socially or privately rented accommodation. This can cause support networks to become fragmented and can make it more difficult to record and monitor the Gypsy and Traveller communities, particularly in relation to their high level of mobility
- For the few that set up unauthorised encampments in Lewisham borough, they are often only settled for a few days or sometimes weeks, leaving little opportunity for service providers to make contact and assess need.

As a result of these issues, most assessments underestimate the Gypsy and Traveller population size. The London GTANA (2008) estimated 75 families in Lewisham borough. This figure is disputed by the Lewisham Traveller Forum, which argues the population size to be larger. Drawing on data

gathered directly by service providers, the Forum suggested a figure of approximately 490 individual Gypsies and Travellers in June 2009. The approximate breakdown of this figure is provided in the tables below.

Age Group	No.	%
0-5	35	7
6-16	135	28
16-25	70	14
Over 25	250	51
TOTAL	490	100

Ethnicity	No.	%
Irish Traveller	343	70
Roma Gypsy	74	15
English Gypsy	49	10
New Age Traveller	24	5
TOTAL	490	100

As the London GTANA (2008) admits it would expect its total population estimate of Gypsies and Travellers living in London to be a “conservative figure” (2008, 1.13, p35), it is possible the 75 families counted in the GTANA is an underestimate. With the estimated data gathered, this Lewisham assessment assumes the presence of approximately 108 Gypsy and Traveller families (490 individuals) in Lewisham borough.

Through liaison with a representative from the Lewisham Gypsy and Traveller Education Service, it was suggested that the proportion of Eastern European Roma Gypsies entering Lewisham and accessing the education system has been increasing in recent years. The Education Service was aware of 29 Roma Gypsy pupils in Lewisham in 2007-08, which increased to 37 in 2008-09 and to 64 in 2009-10. Although, this could be influenced by the Education Service’s outreach strategy becoming more effective.

To gather information about Lewisham’s population of Travelling Show People, contact was made with a representative of The Showman’s Guild. They confirmed that there are no Travelling Show People in Lewisham borough (and provided no indication of future need in respect of Travelling Show People).

The London GTANA (2008) found across London that the average Gypsy and Traveller family size was 4.2 people. However, an average family size of 4.9 people was found through the survey that was conducted as part of this assessment (sample size of 11). As Irish Travellers tend to have larger family sizes compared to other Gypsy and Traveller ethnicities and as Irish Travellers make up 70 per cent of the Lewisham Gypsy and Traveller

population, it would be expected that the average Lewisham Gypsy and Traveller family size would be higher than the London average.

Using the median figure of 4.55 as the average family size, the Lewisham Traveller Forum's estimate of 490 Gypsies and Travellers would indicate the presence of approximately 108 families in the borough.

The majority of the Gypsies and Travellers known to the Lewisham Gypsy and Traveller Service and Outreach Service are found in Downham, Sydenham and Catford, with others more sparsely distributed in areas such as Forest Hill, Deptford, New Cross and Bellingham.

8.2 Stakeholder Consultation

Local Dialogue engaged with representatives from the Lewisham Traveller and Gypsy Education Service, the Lewisham Traveller's Outreach Officer, the Community Sergeant and Council Liaison Officer for the Metropolitan Police, representatives from Supporting People, the Lewisham Traveller Forum and the London Gypsy and Traveller Unit (LGTU).

Input from these stakeholders ranged from receiving research documents and data to having ongoing communications, which included telephone interviews and face-to-face discussions.

The following key issues affecting Gypsy and Traveller communities in Lewisham borough were identified:

- **Pitch site provision** - All the stakeholders who responded to the consultation advocated the need for provision of residential pitches in Lewisham borough.
- **Mobility** - The Lewisham Traveller and Gypsy Education Service has found that the number of Gypsy and Traveller students who do not complete the school year at the same home address has been increasing since 2006. In 2006-07, 57 per cent of Gypsy and Traveller pupils finished the school year at a different home address to the one they started with. This increased to 69 per cent in 2008-09 and further to 75% in 2009-10. The Lewisham Gypsy and Traveller Outreach Officer believed this is a result of the poor quality of private housing stock and difficulties experienced with landlords. Stakeholders went on to suggest that mobility would be likely to decrease if there was provision of residential pitches in Lewisham.
- **Accommodation** - In 2009, the Lewisham Traveller Forum identified the lack of appropriate accommodation and problems with private renting as a key issue being faced by Gypsies and Travellers in Lewisham borough (Lewisham Traveller Forum, 2009). The Outreach Service Officer referred to cases of pest infestation, ignored repairs,

mould and damp. Examples were given of cases where landlords failed to solve such problems in adequate time.

- **‘Mainstreaming’**- Feedback from stakeholders and research from the Lewisham Traveller Forum identified the need to ‘mainstream’ Gypsies and Travellers more in services delivered by Lewisham Council. Mainstreaming involves the active incorporation and representation of Gypsies and Travellers as an ethnic group in the services provided by the Council. For instance, it was believed by stakeholders that Gypsies and Travellers would find Council services more accessible by having officers in each service department to liaise with and represent the Gypsy and Traveller communities. Another suggestion was to make Gypsies and Travellers more ‘visible’ by taking greater measures to recognise them as an ethnic group through the equality data-gathering exercises carried out by the Council.
- **Confusion and lack of understanding with procedure** - Stakeholders emphasised the need to make Council procedures more consistent and straightforward for members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities. This is particularly the case with pitch waiting lists. One existed for the Thurston Road site, which was then replaced with a ‘register of interest’ form. These forms are held by the Council but are not publicly available for inspection. However, both stakeholders and members of the communities are now unsure if this is still the correct procedure. Lack of information in identifying and applying for benefits and social rented housing was also mentioned as an issue. One respondent would like it to be possible to apply for social housing while still having a preference for, and remain on, the site interest list should a site be provided in the future.
- **Secondary education** - The Lewisham Gypsy and Traveller Education Service reports good levels of attendance for primary school, but secondary school attendance and attainment remains a concern. The lack of more vocational learning and not being able to accommodate Gypsy and Traveller pupils with low levels of literacy were identified as contributing factors to this problem.
- **Unauthorised encampments** - Although rare, the Community Sergeant and Council Liaison Officer for the Metropolitan Police stated there is the occasional case of unauthorised encampments in Lewisham borough. However, these encampments are known to be very short term, with the family not being settled for much longer than a few days. The Council Liaison Officer continued to say that Lewisham does not experience the same issues that surrounding boroughs have with regards to unauthorised sites. The Gypsy and Traveller Education and Outreach services find it very hard to track

down such families who set up short standing, unauthorised sites and so they usually fail to access Council services, particularly education.

- **Lack of transparency and inclusion in decision making processes** - Stakeholders were concerned about the lack of information that was reaching members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities, particular in regard to pitch site provisions, policy and the waiting list procedure.

The Thurston Road site had a relatively long waiting list before the site was closed in early 2009. After its closure, the Outreach Service approached those on the waiting list to find who would still be interested in living on a pitch site within Lewisham borough. 17 families on the list stated their continued interest in living on a site. The waiting list then became a 'registration of site interest' list, which a further seven families joined. (N.B. these families on the list are only the ones known by the Outreach Service). Only Irish Travellers appear to have officially expressed an interest in living on a pitch site, while members of the Roma Gypsy, English Gypsy and New Age Traveller communities have not done so.

8.3 Traveller and Gypsy Questionnaire Results

Through contact with the Traveller's Outreach Officer and the Lewisham Traveller and Gypsy Education Service Officer, members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities were invited to participate in the consultation. Sessions were held to gather information directly from members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities through group discussion sessions and by completing the questionnaire.

Two morning discussion sessions were organised at the Lewisham Irish Community Centre on Davenport Road, SE6 1SU. The first took place on Monday 21 March 2011 and was attended by nine women of Irish Traveller ethnicity. The second session was organised for Monday 4 April 2011 but was not attended by any members of the Gypsy and Traveller community.

The third event was organised at Downham Library on Wednesday 11 May. This was attended by one member of the Irish Traveller community (who had previously attended an earlier session).

Therefore, the information presented below only relates to contact with the Irish Traveller community, not Roma or English Gypsies or other communities. However, it should be noted that Irish Travellers make up the majority (70%) of the Gypsy and Traveller population of Lewisham borough. In addition, the register of site interest only has members of the Irish Traveller community on it.

The Traveller's Outreach Officer attended all three events. In addition, representatives from the Traveller Education Service and the London Gypsy

Traveller Unit attended the first meeting. A representative from Supporting People also attended the second session.

At the first discussion session, the attendees were invited to ask questions about the assessment process and to raise any concerns they may have. As a result of this discussion, adjustments were made to the questionnaire to reflect certain issues that individuals thought were not being adequately addressed. As such, the second two events had an extended questionnaire. Nevertheless, in general discussion, the first session covered the areas included in the extended questionnaire.

Local Dialogue worked with each participant who wanted to complete a questionnaire, encouraging further discussion around each question. This method also meant that those with writing and reading difficulties could give feedback. Eight questionnaires were completed through the organised discussion sessions with a further four returned later via the Traveller's Outreach Officer, making 11 questionnaires received in total. These are shown in Appendix D.

Below are the results from each question in the questionnaire. Where question numbers are given in parenthesis this refers to the numbers for the original, shorter questionnaire.

Q1. How many people live with you in your current accommodation and what are their ages?

Family Size	No.
1-2	2
3-4	4
5-6	3
Above 6	3

Average family size found through the survey was 4.8 people.

There were two cases where families of seven or eight people were living in three-bedroom housing, indicating a level of overcrowding.

Across the 11 families who completed the questionnaire, there were 39 children. The table below show the ages of these children:

Age Group	No. of Children
0-2	2
3-5	8
6-10	13
11-15	9
16-19	7

The most common age groups for children were 6-10 and 11-15 years. However, a considerable number of children are reaching the age where they would typically be considering marriage and seek to live independently from their parents (16-19 years). This indicates the formation of a number of new households in the near future, which will need to be accommodated.

Q2. Who contributes to the rent in your household and is this likely to change in the near future?

Response	No.
Has housing benefit	3
No rent as live in own caravan	1

NB this question did not appear in the original questionnaire.

The results for this question show that three of the respondents were receiving some form of benefits, which contributed towards paying the rent. This tendency to receive benefits was reflected in the discussions that took place during the first session. In addition, two households included an adult son or daughter who contributed to the rent, but who would be seeking independent accommodation in the very near future. One respondent was concerned about having to move due to losing her son's contribution to the rent.

Q3. How would you describe you and your family's ethnic origin?

100% of those who took part in the survey were Irish Travellers, who form 70% of the Gypsy and Traveller population in Lewisham borough. The presence of the Lewisham Irish Community Centre provided an avenue for contacting Irish Travellers. However, there is no such facility available to directly engage other Gypsy and Traveller communities.

Q4. How long have you lived in Lewisham?

Number of Years	No.
Less than 1 year	1
1-2 years	1
2-3 years	1
3-4 years	1
5-9 years	4
Above 10 years	3

The majority of respondents are long-term residents of Lewisham borough, with 67 per cent of respondents having lived in the area for five years or more.

Q5 (Q3)⁶. What type of accommodation do you currently live in?

Accommodation Type	No.
Rent from private landlord	7
Rented house from Council/Housing Association	2
Staying temporarily with family	1
Unauthorised caravan camping	1
Council/social rented site	0
Private site owned by self	0
Private site owned by a Gypsy/Traveller	0
Owner occupied house	0

The survey, found that the majority of participants live in privately rented housing. One respondent lives in their caravan and is continually moving among unauthorised sites, not settling for more than one or two weeks.

Through discussion, it was established that in addition to the two respondents who live in social rented housing, there were four participants who are either on the social housing waiting list or plan to go on it.

Q6 (Q4). How long have you lived in your current accommodation?

Number of Years	No.
Less than 6 months	4
6-11 months	0
12-18 months	4
2-4 years	2
5 years or more	1

As the majority of participants having only lived in their current accommodation for less than 18 months, this shows a high level of mobility.

Q7 (Q5). How long do you think you'll stay living there?

Response	No.
For a while (hopefully)	3
Hard to tell	2
Until landlord won't extend tenancy again	1
6 months (length of rental agreement)	1
Tenancy ends in 2 weeks	1
Not for long	1
Until I find a pitch	1
Until I find somewhere to live	1

⁶ Where question numbers are given in parenthesis this refers to the numbers for the original, shorter questionnaire.

These responses indicate a significant level of uncertainty for Gypsies and Travellers in regards to accommodation. That the greatest single response is, "For a while (hopefully), which suggests there is some wish among Travellers to be more settled and indicates that they are not in accommodation simply until a pitch becomes available.

In discussion, the most common reasons for leaving were landlords refusing to extend tenancies, being unable to afford the rent and very poor living conditions, not that there was an aversion to living in housing.

Q8 (Q6). Where did you live prior to your current accommodation?

Response	No.
Private rented house	4
Short term private rental housing	2
Social rented house	1
Lived with family member	1
An unauthorised site	1
Traveller site in Bermondsey	1
Travelling	1

When combined with Q5 (Q3), these results indicate that the majority of Travellers move from one private rented accommodation to another.

Q9 (Q7). How satisfied are you with where you currently live?

Level of Satisfaction	No.
Very satisfied	1
Satisfied	2
Unsatisfied	2
Very unsatisfied	3
Unsure	3

The respondent who was very satisfied and one of the respondents who was satisfied with their current accommodation were the two who live in socially rented housing. The other satisfied respondent said she was content with her current privately rented accommodation in comparison to the poor conditions and experiences she has experienced with housing in the past. However the remainder of participants said that they were unsatisfied with their private rented accommodation.

Two of the respondents who claimed to be very unsatisfied also declared a level of depression and mental health issues for themselves and their family as a result of living in their current privately rented accommodation.

Two respondents commented that they are having difficulty finding a different place to live, while two other respondents expressed concern for where their children, who are approaching adulthood, will live.

Three respondents referred to lack of space and overcrowding being an issue. These tended to be the same respondents who were unsure how satisfied they were with their accommodation.

Another respondent who is very unsatisfied with their current accommodation also commented on experiencing unfriendly neighbours and levels of discrimination in their neighbourhood.

One of the respondents who was very unsatisfied commented that the accommodation was too far away from her family but was the only place available to her. She also stated that her neighbours do not like children.

The respondent living in a caravan disliked not being able to settle on an authorised site and having to move constantly.

Q10. How many times have you moved homes in the last three years?

Number of Times	No.
Four times	2
More than five times	3

NB this question did not appear in the original questionnaire

These results indicate varying but high levels of mobility in the last three years. Although this question was not in the original questionnaire, in discussion at the first session, four participants said that they had moved up to three times in the past three years. In addition, four participants expressed the wish to be more settled.

Q11. Have you ever been on a waiting list for a pitch site in Lewisham?

(Results from Q11 and Q12 have been analysed together)

Q12. Are you currently on the 'register for site interest' list?

Waiting List	No.
On neither list	3
Was on former waiting list for pitch site in Lewisham and now on 'register for site interest' list	2
Was not on former waiting list but on 'register for site interest list'	0

NB these questions did not appear in the original questionnaire.

While the survey returns show only two respondents were on the list, during discussion at the first session, seven of the participants said they had officially registered their interest in living on a site, with four of these respondents having previously been on the waiting list for a pitch on the Thurston Road site that was closed in early 2009. Therefore in total nine of the 11 participants in the survey are on the register of interest list.

Q13 (Q8). Lewisham Council is looking into the future needs for Gypsies and Travellers. What do you think should be provided and where?

Response	No.
Provision of sites (not sure where)	12
Provision of sites in a safe place	3
Provision of sites near to schools and other amenities	3
Sites that could accommodate special/disabled needs	2
Provision of both permanent and transit sites (not sure where)	1
Would be happy with Church Grove site	1
Better communications with the Council	1

NB some respondents gave more than one answer

All 11 respondents think pitch sites need to be provided in Lewisham. They were unsure about where the best locations for such sites would be, but one would favour the Church Grove site (where planning permission for five pitches expired in April 2011). Others specified the need for the site to be in a safe place near schools, shops and other amenities.

Q14 (Q9). What type of accommodation would you like to live in?

(The results from question 14 and 15 have been analysed together)

Q15 (Q10). What sort of facilities would you like to be available?

All of the respondents would like to live on an authorised Gypsy or Traveller site. The one participant who does not want to live on a site would still like to see provision of pitch sites made available in Lewisham. One responded said they would like a house or a site to bring up children and keep them in school.

Six respondents would like to live on a small site for the whole family. Another five respondents made direct reference to wanting to live on a site for their children and future children so they could grow up in a safe environment that reflects their culture.

The following requirements were also mentioned:

Site requirements / needs	No.
Bath/shower, toilet and kitchen facilities	8
On-site or nearby park/play area for children	4
Good amount of space, particularly communal space	3
Sites for mobile homes	3
Near to local school and health services	3
Site caretaker or warden	2
Sites for static trailers	2
Special / disabled needs facilities	2
Access to mains electric and water	1
On a safe road	1

These results demonstrate that respondents would like to see a site with communal facilities, including toilet and kitchen facilities and access to electricity and water. Two respondents specifically mentioned wanting to have access to disabled facilities.

Q16 (Q11). If you have any children, when are they likely to need separate accommodation and what type of home do you think they would like?

All of the respondents with children (10 respondents) said their children would want to live on a site when they seek separate accommodation. Six of these respondents have older children who are approaching the age when they will be seeking their own accommodation.

Q17. If you have children, how many times have they changed school in the last three years for location reasons?

Response	No.
Once	2
Twice	1
Always move so that children can attend the same school	1
Children do not attend school due to constantly being forced to move (unauthorised caravan camping)	1

NB these questions did not appear in the original questionnaire.

Three respondents said their children had moved more than once or more in the last three years. One respondent commented that when they move they always ensure their children are able to attend the same school.

In addition, at the first session, two of these respondents said their children moved school approximately twice every year/had already moved twice this year. In addition, three respondents said their children had always been at

the same school or had been at the same school for three to five years. As such, it is clear that even when living in bricks and mortar accommodation, Travellers have a significant degree of mobility.

Q18. How many times have you changed your GP practice in the last three years?

Response	No.
Once	2
Twice	1
Twice this year	1
Have not changed GP	1

NB these questions did not appear in the original questionnaire and not all later participants answered this question

The results from questions 17 and 18 show that access to education and health services are important to families. The results also (which were mirrored in discussions at the first session) indicate a high level of mobility; however, one participant said they always endeavour to remain with the same school and GP when moving accommodation.

Q19 (Q12). How satisfied are you will the services available to Travellers and Gypsies in Lewisham e.g. education, health?

Level of Satisfaction	No.
Very satisfied	2
Satisfied	5
Unsatisfied	1
Very unsatisfied	1
Unsure	1

(Results from Q19 and Q20 have been analysed together)

Q20 (Q13). How could services be improved?

Response	No.
The Traveller Education Service, Irish Community Centre and Outreach Officer are a big help	3
Happy with education and health service	3
Dissatisfied with the housing service	2
By making provisions for Gypsies and Travellers to regularly meet and discuss what they need	2
Need to be better represented in Council services	1
Would be better if the Traveller Education Service was not closed	1
By understanding the different way of life and needs that Gypsies and Travellers have	1
Emergency provision when children arrive	1

Services could be made easier to access	1
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The results from questions 19 and 20 demonstrate the majority of participants (70%) were satisfied or very satisfied with the services available to Gypsies and Travellers in Lewisham, particularly in terms of health, education and the outreach services. However, when dissatisfaction with services was raised, it was in relation to the lack or loss of supporting services and the absence of opportunity to have their views represented to Lewisham Council.

Q21 (Q14). Any further comments?

Response	No.
Myself or family suffer from depression or poor mental health living in housing	3
Want children to grow up in their culture	3
Poor living conditions in private renting (pests/lack of repairs)	2
Want to be closer to and have support from other Gypsies and Travellers	2
Please provide some sites	2
Want to live on a site with the whole family	2
The Council do not listen to and contact us enough	1
Dissatisfaction with treatment from landlords and lack of renting rights	1
Want somewhere safe and secure to live	1
Worried about the future in terms of accommodation, it is too uncertain	1
Experience a level of discrimination and hostility in their neighbourhood	1

The results from the questionnaire show a large majority of the Travellers in the survey expressed their preference for living on a pitch site, more specifically on a site where the whole family could live. Respondents also stated their children would prefer to live on a site when they are of adult age.

It is clear that there is a high level of dissatisfaction in private rented accommodation. This is generally caused by treatment by landlords, poor living conditions, poor management and having to move so often. Those in social rented housing were satisfied with their accommodation and hope to remain there, although some still stated a preference for living on a pitch site.

It is evident that there is a general level of satisfaction with education, health and outreach services. However, some respondents indicated high

mobility rates, changing their doctor and their children's school on a regular basis.

9. Summary of Results and Feedback

From research, stakeholder consultation and the results of the Gypsy and Traveller survey detailed above in Section 8, the following findings can be stated:

- There are approximately 490 Travellers and Gypsies (108 families) living in Lewisham borough.
- Irish Travellers are the dominant ethnicity, making up approximately 70% of the total Gypsy and Traveller population. Although, the numbers of East European Roma Gypsies has been increasing in recent years.
- Only Irish Travellers have officially informed Lewisham Council of their interest in living on a site, with 24 families having sent the relevant form to the Council. Roma Gypsies, English Gypsies and New Age Travellers have not been found to have a specific interest in living on sites.
- From the surveys, it is clear that there is a high level of dissatisfaction in private rented accommodation. Most of the dissatisfaction relates to treatment from landlords, poor living conditions and having to move so often.
- Travellers in social rented housing were satisfied with their accommodation and hope to remain there, although some still stated a preference for living on a pitch site.
- The poor quality and management of private rented housing has been identified as a key issue.
- A strong majority of the Travellers in the survey expressed their preference for living on a pitch site, more specifically on a site for the whole family to live on. Respondents also stated their children would prefer to live on a site when they are of adult age.
- All survey participants and consultation stakeholders believe there is a need for pitch provision in Lewisham.
- There are rare cases of short-term unauthorised encampments in which the family is only settled for little more than a few days. In such cases, it is very difficult for the family to be included in Council run services.

- There are stated cases of depression and poor mental health due to a psychological aversion to living in bricks and mortar accommodation.
- There is a general level of satisfaction with education, health and outreach services.
- Primary education appears to be good but levels of attendance and attainment at secondary school level are a concern. One stakeholder suggested the need for more vocational training courses and for schools to be more flexible to the academic needs of Gypsies and Travellers.
- Dissatisfaction was expressed towards the housing service and the lack of opportunity for Gypsies and Travellers to meet and discuss their needs and to have their voice heard by the Council.
- Supporting services were found to be important and stakeholders identified a need for Gypsies and Travellers to be more 'mainstreamed' into Lewisham Council. A need was found for more representation and liaison opportunities for Gypsies and Travellers in Council services, particularly housing.
- There are high levels of mobility among Gypsy and Traveller communities, with 74% of those accessing the Traveller Education Service changing their home address during the 2009-2010 school year. It was suggested that this level of mobility would decrease if there was a provision of sites in the borough and if Gypsies and Travellers did not have to turn to poor quality privately rented accommodation.
- Concerns were raised over the lack of clarity and communication between the Gypsy and Traveller communities and Lewisham Council regarding the site waiting or interest list procedure and the site selection process. This has fostered a level of mistrust between the communities and Lewisham Council.

10. Findings

Research was based on interviews with Travellers, Lewisham Council and key stakeholders such as the Travellers Outreach Officer. In addition, this Assessment has been informed by previous studies such as the London GTANA (2008) and the *Report of the Panel on the Draft Replacement London Plan* (2011).

In order to help determine need and differentiate this from demand, we have used the following results from this research.

- There are approximately 108 families (490 individual) Gypsies and Travellers in the Borough. Approximately 70 per cent are Irish Gypsies.
- 24 families have expressed an official interest in living on a site through the original waiting list and the 'registering of site interest' list.
- Stakeholders who work with Gypsies and Travellers believe only Irish Travellers have expressed a specific interest to live on pitch sites: As Irish Travellers make up 70% of the Gypsy and Traveller population in Lewisham borough, this potentially reduces the number of families interested in living on a pitch site by 30%.
- Future family formation needs to be considered. From the survey, there is the potential for seven new family formations in the near future as respondents had children between the age of 16 and 19 who would soon be looking for independent accommodation.
- The survey and discussions found that those living in social rented housing were more likely to be satisfied with their accommodation than those living in private rented housing. Therefore, it is recommended that those who are in social rented housing but would still like to live on a pitch site should not be included as needing a pitch. Unfortunately, we have been unable to obtain figures of how many Gypsies and Travellers live in social rented housing due to how these ethnicities are classified.
- Overall results show there is evidence of overcrowding and unsuitable housing therefore a potential need for rehousing or provision of pitch sites exists. The majority of those in the private rented accommodation sector consider their accommodation to be unsatisfactory for a number of reasons:
 - Three of the 11 respondents claimed that either they or a member of their family suffer from depression or poor mental

health as a result of living in bricks and mortar accommodation. However, the Mayor of London (*Minor Alteration*, 2010) has now said that this should not necessarily be accounted for in determining need.

- Two of the respondents reported overcrowding with two households of seven or eight people living in a three-bedroom house.
 - Comments were received of discrimination due to ethnicity and large families.
 - Some saw their current accommodation being too far away from family members.
 - In addition, one respondent lives in their caravan at unauthorised encampments, which are always short term.
- The *Draft Replacement London Plan March Minor Amendment (2010)* altered downward the London-wide minimum pitch need figures are from 268 and 238. This revision was based on the assertion that provision of pitches should take into account constraints on provision arising from restricted availability of financial and land resources. However, the Report of the Panel rejected 238 as an arbitrary figure and recommended the reinstatement of a need for 268 pitches.
 - Depending on whether the 238 or 268 figure is used, when the London-wide figures are translated to a Lewisham there is a need for between four and nine pitches. This calculation takes into account the borough's relative financial and land resources.
 - Planning permission for five pitches on the Church Grove site lapsed in April 2011. Further permission could be sought for these five pitches to accommodate current need with the option for future increased provision there or on other sites left open.

From the information gathered through this research, by interviewing Travellers and Lewisham Council, it is difficult to ascertain an exact level of need for housing for Gypsies and Travellers in Lewisham. While 24 families expressed an interest in pitches since the Thurston Road site was closed in 2009, some of these already have their housing needs met by Lewisham Council through social housing. However, exact numbers of Gypsies and Travellers in social accommodation cannot be ascertained.

While the evidence from this survey is not conclusive, it points towards the need for provision of between four and nine pitches within Lewisham borough. Until recently, Church Grove had planning permission for five pitches. If planning permission was reinstated for these five pitches this

would give a suitable level of provision to meet current need. However, the need to extend the number of pitches there, or at another site, should be kept under review.

11. Conclusions

While considerable efforts were taken to provide opportunities for members of the Gypsy and Traveller community to become involved in the Needs Assessment's consultation, there were difficulties in identifying, contacting and engaging with Gypsies and Travellers (in particular with communities other than Irish Travellers). In addition, through discussions with stakeholders and members of the Gypsy and Travelling community, it was found that a level of frustration and suspicion exists around Council-led consultations, which made it difficult to encourage participation in the Needs Assessment. These issues are reflected in the relatively low level of responses to the consultation. Furthermore, discussions and feedback opportunities were only achieved with members of the Irish Traveller community. This is the only Gypsy and Traveller community that has formally registered an interest in pitches. Nevertheless, the predicted needs for Lewisham borough's Gypsy and Traveller population provided by this assessment must be considered indicative only.

This Needs Assessment has also been informed by data obtained through detailed desktop research and stakeholder consultation, as well as Gypsy and Traveller engagement. Therefore, it was still possible to make a number of evident observations and conclusions regarding the future need for Gypsies and Travellers in Lewisham borough.

With the last pitches in Lewisham borough being closed in early 2009, there is a demand for pitch sites. However, while there is evident demand, this does not necessarily directly translate into need. The current need for pitches seems relatively low (between four and nine). The majority of these could be accommodated with the five pitches at Church Grove if their planning permission is renewed. Nevertheless, it is important to review on an on going basis whether to provide more pitches either at Church Grove or elsewhere in Lewisham borough.

The findings suggest that where they are housed in social rented housing (as opposed to private renting), Gypsies and Travellers are satisfied with their accommodation. This shows a need for Lewisham Council to work closely with Gypsies and Travellers to identify the level of demand for social housing within the communities to look at accommodation in social housing alongside pitch sites.

ENDS

12. Appendices

Appendix A - About Local Dialogue

Appendix B - Questionnaire

Appendix C- Comparative Gypsy and Traveller Table for the South East Sub-Region Authorities

Appendix D - Completed Questionnaires

Appendix A - About Local Dialogue

Local Dialogue is a specialist public consultation agency with wide expertise in advising on and implementing consultation programmes for both public and private sector clients. Our extensive experience includes working with local authorities, housing associations and other public sector bodies as well as private sector organisations on consultation, facilitation and communications for masterplanning, policy research, regeneration and development proposals.

We have a dedicated team of 20 consultation professionals based in offices in London and Leeds supported by an extensive network of freelance consultants.

Local Dialogue is a corporate member of the Consultation Institute.

Appendix B - Questionnaire

Lewisham Borough Council: Travellers and Gypsies Research

Name: Contact:

Address:

Postcode:

1. How many people live with you in your current accommodation and what are their ages?

2. Who contributes to the rent in your household and is this likely to change in the near future?

3. How would you describe you and your family's ethnic origin?

4. How long have you lived in Lewisham? Years Months

5. What type of accommodation do you currently live in?

Sites

- Council/social rented site
- Private site owned by self
- Private site owned by a Gypsy/Traveller

Housing

- Owner-occupied
- Rent from Council/Housing Association
- Rent from private landlord

Other (please specify)

6. How long have you lived in your current accommodation? Years Months

7. How long do you think you'll stay living there?

8. Where did you live prior to your current accommodation?

Appendix B - Questionnaire (cont.)

9. How satisfied are you with where you currently live?

- Very satisfied Satisfied Unsatisfied Very unsatisfied Unsure

Other comments:

10. How many times have you moved homes in the last three years?

11. Have you ever been on a waiting list for a pitch site in Lewisham?

- Yes No If so, for how long?

12. Are you currently on the 'register for site interest' list?

- Yes No If so, for how long?

13. Lewisham Council is looking into the future needs for Travellers and Gypsies. What do you think should be provided and where?

14. What type of accommodation would you like to live in and why?

15. What sort of facilities would you like to be available?

Appendix B - Questionnaire (cont.)

16. If you have children, when are they likely to need separate accommodation and what type of home do you think they would like?

17. If you have children, how many times have they changed school in the last three years for location reasons?

18. How many times have you changed your GP practice in the last three years?

19. How satisfied are you with the services available to Travellers and Gypsies in Lewisham e.g. education, health, etc.?

Very satisfied Satisfied Unsatisfied Very unsatisfied Unsure

Other comments:

20. How could services be improved?

21. Any further comments?

Appendix C - Comparative Gypsy and Traveller Table for the South-East Sub-Region Authorities

	Bexley	Bromley	Greenwich	Southwark	Lewisham
Number of authorised pitches (London GTANA, 2008)	28 (according to Bexley GTANA 2009)	62 (across two sites)	40 (across one site)	38 (across four sites)	5 (now 0 since Thurston Road site closure)
Location of pitch sites	Powerscroft Road, Jenningtree Way and Willow Walk	Star Lane and Old Maidstone Lane	Abbey Wood in Thistlebrook	Bridale Close, Burnhill Close, Ilderton Road and Springtide Close	-
Number of unauthorised pitches (London GTANA, 2008)	1	11	7	0	0
Number of Housed Gypsy and Traveller families (London GTANA, 2008)	82	1000	119	44	75 (more recent research by Lewisham Council service providers indicates approx. 109 families)
Total number of Gypsy and Traveller families (London GTANA, 2008)	111	1,089	168	84	75 (109)
Main ethnic origin of Gypsy and Traveller families (London GTANA, 2008)	Mostly English Gypsy with some Roma Gypsies and Irish Travellers	English Gypsy and Irish Traveller	Mostly English Gypsy with some Irish Travellers, New Age Travellers and Travelling Show People	Mostly Irish Traveller and English Gypsy with some New Age Travellers and Travelling Show People	Mostly Irish Traveller with some Roma Gypsies, English Gypsies and New Age Travellers
Total minimum and maximum pitch need from 2007 to 2017 (London GTANA, 2008)	2, 46	29, 119	22, 45	12, 40	5, 19
Original and revised borough pitch targets from draft Replacement London Plan (March 2010)	27 reduced to 7	58 reduced to 17	32 reduced to 16	15 reduced to 8	15 reduced to 8 (in addition to the five pitches required to replace those on the closed Thurston Road site)
Local planning policy context	Draft Core Strategy will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in May 2011. The Draft Core Strategy policy CS11 - Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation - promises to protect Bexley's existing provision of pitches. The Bexley GTANA (2009) found future need for pitches in the Borough is likely to be nil.	Draft Core Strategy is yet to be completed.	Core Strategy underwent public consultation that ended in February 2011. Policy H4 - Gypsy and Traveller Needs - promises to retain existing provision of pitches for Gypsies and Travellers and to allocate new sites as proposed by the London Plan through the Site Specific Allocation DPD.	Core Strategy was adopted in April 2011. Strategic Policy 9 - Homes for Travellers and Gypsies - promises to protect existing sites and to provide new sites to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers.	Core Strategy was announced to be sound by the Planning Inspectorate subject to slight amendments in March 2011. Final document will be issued to the Full Council in June 2011 for adoption. Core Strategy Policy 2 - Gypsies and Travellers - promises to continue to assess and provide for the identified needs of Gypsies and Travellers in appropriate locations in the London Borough. Site selection process is underway for replacing the Thurston Road site.

Appendix D - Completed Questionnaire

Lewisham Borough Council: Travellers and Gypsies Research

Name:

Address:

1. How many people live with you in your current accommodation?

5

2. How would you describe you and your family's ethnic origin?

IRISH TRAVELLER

3. What type of accommodation do you currently live in?

PRIVATE RENTED ACCOMMODATION - TEMPORARY

4. How long have you lived in your current accommodation?

2 Years 4 Months

5. How long do you think you'll stay living there?

UNTIL GET A PROPT

6. Were did you live prior to your current accommodation?

BGMONDEN

7. How satisfied are you with where you currently live?

Very satisfied Satisfied Unsatisfied Very unsatisfied Unsure

Other comments: ONLY MOVED INTO A HOUSE AFTER THE DEATH OF MY HUSBAND. COULDN'T STAY IN PREVIOUS ACC. BECAUSE TOO MANY MEMORIES.

8. Lewisham Council is looking into the future needs for Travellers and Gypsies. What do you think should be provided and where?

LEWISHAM SHOULD BE PROVIDING SITES FOR TRAVELLERS TO LIVE ON. I PREFER A STALK SITE TO THE REALLY BIG ONES - SO I WOULD KNOW THE PEOPLE ON THE SITE HAD A GOOD REPUTATION AND BELIEVE IN PUTTING THEIR KIDS INTO SCHOOL TO LEARN TO READ AND TO WRITE. THE SITE SHOULD BE IN A SAFE PLACE, NOT NEAR A BUSY ROAD AND TRAFFIC AND NOT NEAR RAILWAY LINGS. NEAR A CATHOLIC CHURCH WOULD BE IMPORTANT FOR ME AND MY FAMILY.

9. What type of accommodation would you like to live in and why?

I WANT TO LIVE ON A SHACK SITE WITH MY MUM AND FAMILY. I NEED THEIR SUPPORT BECAUSE I SUFFER FROM DEPRESSION AFTER MY HUSBAND DIED A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO AND I GET VERY FRUSTRATED AT NIGHT TIME WITHOUT MY HUSBAND TO PROTECT US ALL.

10. What sort of facilities would you like to be available?

TO HAVE A PLACE TO BRING THE MOBILE HOME IN AND TO HAVE A SHED/HUT FOR THE KITCHEN + BATHROOM. (A DAY ROOM) LIKE IN BORMOODSLEY + LEWISHAM SITES.

11. If you have children, when are they likely to need separate accommodation and what type of home do you think they would like?

MY SON IS NEARLY 16 AND MAYBE IN A FEW YEARS HE WOULD LIKE HIS OWN PROT FOR HIS WIFE + KIDS - AND MY DAUGHTER TOO IN A FEW YEARS TIME.

12. How satisfied are you with the services available to Travellers and Gypsies in Lewisham e.g. education, health, etc.?

Very satisfied Satisfied Unsatisfied Very unsatisfied Unsure

Other comments: WITH EDUCATION - VERY SATISFIED.

13. How could services be improved?

SERVICES NEED TO BE MORE AWARE THAT TRAVELLERS HAVE A DIFFERENT WAY OF LIFE TO SETTLED PEOPLE AND THAT TRAVELLERS SHOULDN'T BE NEEDING TO BE ON THE ROAD BUT ON GOOD SITES.

14. Any further comments?

SINCE I'VE BEEN AT THIS ADDRESS FROM THE DAY I MOVED IN NONE OF MY NEIGHBOURS SAY GOOD MORNING, AFTERNOON OR EVENING BECAUSE WE ARE GYPSIES AND THEY KNOW. - EXCEPT ONLY ONE. IF MY FAMILY COME TO VISIT ME THEY TRY TO PUT IN COMPLAINTS ABOUT ME AND MY CHILDREN HAVE NEVER BEEN IN TROUBLE IN THEIR LIVES. SOME YOUTHS COME PAST AND SHOUT 'GYPSIES, GYPSIES' AT US. I DON'T LET MY CHILDREN GO OUT TO PLAY. MY CURRENT ACCOMMODATION IS TERRIBLE - I COULD BE

ON THE STREET ANYTIME - I KNOW THIS BECAUSE IT HAPPENED TO MY COUSIN. IT MAKES ME FEEL SCARED FOR MY FUTURE.

dictated to Hilary Dowden (TGS)

Lewisham Borough Council: Travellers and Gypsies Research

Name:

Address:

C

1. How many people live with you in your current accommodation and what are their ages?

8. me 37. son 18, son 16, son 13, Daughter 12
son 10, Daughter 6, Daughter 5.

2. Who contributes to the rent in your household and is this likely to change in the near future?

3. How would you describe you and your family's ethnic origin?

white Irish traveller.

4. How long have you lived in Lewisham? 2 Years Months

5. What type of accommodation do you currently live in?

Sites

- Council/social rented site
- Private site owned by self
- Private site owned by a Gypsy/Traveller

Housing

- Owner-occupied
- Rent from Council/Housing Association
- Rent from private landlord

Other (please specify)

6. How long have you lived in your current accommodation? Years 2 Months

7. How long do you think you'll stay living there? 6 months

8. Where did you live prior to your current accommodation?

another 6 months rental,

9. How satisfied are you with where you currently live?

- Very satisfied Satisfied Unsatisfied Very unsatisfied Unsure

Other comments:

Since we moved into a house 4 of my children has mental health problem, and me depression

10. How many times have you moved homes in the last three years? 4 .

11. Have you ever been on a waiting list for a pitch site in Lewisham?

- Yes No If so, for how long? _____

12. Are you currently on the 'register for site interest' list?

- Yes No If so, for how long? _____

13. Lewisham Council is looking into the future needs for Travellers and Gypsies. What do you think should be provided and where?

Sites permanent sites and transit
Site for family and children with
Special needs.

14. What type of accommodation would you like to live in and why?

Id like to live on a site because this is what me and my children are used to, we can't cope in a house.

15. What sort of facilities would you like to be available?

Site with family size sheds with utility rooms. and bathrooms and showers and a park near by for children.

16. If you have children, when are they likely to need separate accommodation and what type of home do you think they would like?

a caravan or mobile home.

17. If you have children, how many times have they changed school in the last three years for location reasons?

once.

18. How many times have you changed your GP practice in the last three years? once.

19. How satisfied are you with the services available to Travellers and Gypsies in Lewisham e.g. education, health, etc.?

Very satisfied Satisfied Unsatisfied Very unsatisfied Unsure

Other comments:

there is not a lot for travellers + gypsies in lewisham area.

20. How could services be improved?

Sites and meetings for travellers and gypsies to meet and speak about what they need, and youth club, eg. boxing teacher adults.

21. Any further comments?

yes I think that there should be more help and a site would be good for traveller, like myself as my children are depressed in the house and think there should be more help for traveller + gypsies,

Lewisham Borough Council: Travellers and Gypsies Research

Name:

Address:

1. How many people live with you in your current accommodation? 2 adults + 3 kids

2. How would you describe you and your family's ethnic origin? (2, ~~F~~, ~~I~~)

White Irish.

3. What type of accommodation do you currently live in? How comfortable is it? 2
2 bed house, private rented (v. small).

4. How long have you lived in your current accommodation? 5 Years 5 Months

5. How long do you think you'll stay living there? wherever he wants you out.
How long in borough? 2002. Since 2002/5/6 diff properties

6. Where did you live prior to your current accommodation?
96 Summerlee Ave. (3 bed house). v. bad condition. landlord out

7. How satisfied are you with where you currently live?
 Very satisfied Satisfied Unsatisfied Very unsatisfied Unsure

Other comments: would like another room. 3 boys in one room

8. Lewisham Council is looking into the future needs for travellers and gypsies. What do you think should be provided and where?

A site should be provided
Anywhere in Lewisham
(You would name the site if could)
Name on list. For community purpose

9. What type of accommodation would you like to live in and why?

Site, mobile chalet (fixed)

10. What sort of facilities would you like to be available?

Kitchen + bathrooms, toilets

11. If you have children, when are they likely to need separate accommodation and what type of home do you think they would like?

Young + Mo. When reach 18. (prob on a site).

12. How satisfied are you with the services available to travellers and gypsies in Lewisham e.g. education, health, etc.?

Very satisfied Satisfied Unsatisfied Very unsatisfied Unsure

Other comments:

NHS use.

w/ Brada Downs + Irish Centre Foster park School. Kids there since

13. How could services be improved?

4.

housing services. Want own Council place side of moving. Not own place.

14. Any further comments?

Will soon have to move. Side of moving here + there (2 & 3 yrs on waiting list). taken off list accidentally (while in hospital) My ~~husband~~ ^{partner} is disabled and is suffering from anxiety & depression. We both feel he would be better living on a site with the community.



Lewisham Borough Council: Travellers and Gypsies Research

Name: _____

Address: _____

1. How many people live with you in your current accommodation? 2 (you + son)

2. How would you describe you and your family's ethnic origin?
White Irish ret - just you. 18 in New

3. What type of accommodation do you currently live in?
Canal (3 bedroom) happy w/ accom.

4. How long have you lived in your current accommodation? 1 Years _____ Months
Pedham 17 yrs, Downham Way Str.

5. How long do you think you'll stay living there? long time (hopefully).
Borough - 4 yrs.

6. Where did you live prior to your current accommodation?
Downham Way - Council. (before Pedham).

7. How satisfied are you with where you currently live?
 Very satisfied Satisfied Unsatisfied Very unsatisfied Unsure

Other comments:
Concerned about where son will live.

8. Lewisham Council is looking into the future needs for travellers and gypsies. What do you think should be provided and where?
A site, no idea where.
(Son - schooling - Sedgehill. There Gr & 4/3 yr)
(Pedham. Don't have to new schools)

9. What type of accommodation would you like to live in and why?

happy with own site
Son would like to live on site

10. What sort of facilities would you like to be available?

Need toilet, communal kitchen, dry area.
shower facilities, kids play area. Nr. to school.

11. If you have children, when are they likely to need separate accommodation and what type of home do you think they would like?

v. soon (next yr.) . Site

12. How satisfied are you with the services available to travellers and gypsies in Lewisham e.g. education, health, etc.?

Very satisfied Satisfied Unsatisfied Very unsatisfied Unsure

Other comments:

13. How could services be improved?

N/A

14. Any further comments?

Son coming to age, daughter 3 kids
daughter w/ 3 kids moving on.
Put name forward for site
Satisfied in own place. Hope for family.



Lewisham

Thank you.

2thsd.

Completed on behalf of

23.03.11



Lewisham Borough Council: Travellers and Gypsies Research

Name:

Address:

1. How many people live with you in your current accommodation? 7 (6 children

2. How would you describe you and your family's ethnic origin?
white Irish
17, 15, 10, 8, 5, 3
(Just Judo contributes
to rent)

3. What type of accommodation do you currently live in?
Private & rented (3 bed).

4. How long have you lived in your current accommodation?
borough? 5 yrs. 1 Year 6 Months
had to leave 6 mo acco

5. How long do you think you'll stay living there? Not v. long - need more space.

6. Where did you live prior to your current accommodation?
346 Whitefoot Ln. (3 bed, private rented).

7. How satisfied are you with where you currently live?
 Very satisfied Satisfied Unsatisfied Very unsatisfied Unsure

Other comments: Not enough space but happy to be in area.

8. Lewisham Council is looking into the future needs for travellers and gypsies. What do you think should be provided and where?

A site, in Lewisham (doesn't matter).
On site on walking lot (2/3 yrs).
on council lot (4 yrs approx).
forced to take 3 bed (5 bed not available).
from council.

9. What type of accommodation would you like to live in and why?

Like to be on a site, fixed caravan.
stable home for children

10. What sort of facilities would you like to be available?

local schools, local health services.
common kitchen, toilet facilities.

11. If you have children, when are they likely to need separate accommodation and what type of home do you think they would like?

Oldest ~~person~~ child (17).
like to be on a site -- next couple of yrs or sooner)

12. How satisfied are you with the services available to travellers and gypsies in Lewisham e.g. education, health, etc.?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Unsatisfied
- Very unsatisfied
- Unsure

Other comments:

Breida + Hilary - helps.

13. How could services be improved?

#D

14. Any further comments?

kids same school? Been in same school since in borough

Zhsld. Completed on 23.03.11
on behalf of



Lewisham Borough Council: Travellers and Gypsies Research

Name: _____

Address: _____

1. How many people live with you in your current accommodation?

5 (3 adults +

2. How would you describe you and your family's ethnic origin?

(19). 2 children
2+15

traveller, white Irish

3. What type of accommodation do you currently live in?

Council house (3 bedroom).

4. How long have you lived in your current accommodation?

7 Years _____ Months

borough? 13 yrs.

5. How long do you think you'll stay living there?

10. Long - move out soon
Rest of family stay on.

6. Where did you live prior to your current accommodation?

Deptford.

7. How satisfied are you with where you currently live?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Unsatisfied
- Very unsatisfied
- Unsure

Other comments:

Not help w/ older kids to get properties
priorities.

8. Lewisham Council is looking into the future needs for travellers and gypsies. What do you think should be provided and where?

A site, not sure way.

safe place n b a school. children at school

Long - how many schools? 2 secondary.

3 primary

because had to move
over

9. What type of accommodation would you like to live in and why?

Loa - A site (for children + their kids).

10. What sort of facilities would you like to be available?

No school. amenities, kitchen, balconies

11. If you have children, when are they likely to need separate accommodation and what type of home do you think they would like?

Loa - v. soon (as soon as get married).
site

12. How satisfied are you with the services available to travellers and gypsies in Lewisham e.g. education, health, etc.?

Very satisfied Satisfied Unsatisfied Very unsatisfied Unsure

Other comments:

13. How could services be improved?

14. Any further comments?

have children was culture, where born.
Want safe space for family
Not on site waiting list

Lewisham Borough Council: Travellers and Gypsies Research

Name

Address

1

6 children overall

1. How many people live with you in your current accommodation?

4 = you + 3 children
18, 12, 7.

2. How would you describe you and your family's ethnic origin?

Irish Traveller

3. What type of accommodation do you currently live in?

Private rented housing

4. How long have you lived in your current accommodation?

Years 16 Months longest in house

5. How long do you think you'll stay living there?

hard to tell. Son leaving soon.

6. Where did you live prior to your current accommodation?

Private, rented 3-4 years in Kenton

7. How satisfied are you with where you currently live?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Unsatisfied
- Very unsatisfied
- Unsure

Other comments:

A previous housing on it for a few months due to poor condition

usually moved about twice year

8. Lewisham Council is looking into the future needs for travellers and gypsies. What do you think should be provided and where?

site provided for Travellers
want it for our own family. = including B+S and NTN.

happy happy with Church Grove

The Council won't listen to us... we email and call and they don't set back.

live with education and health
I want to be settled with my family

changed schools \Rightarrow time of school + GP time \Rightarrow
year on average.

9. What type of accommodation would you like to live in and why?

site

10. What sort of facilities would you like to be available?

shaded living area. Big enough to really live.
Have a table and chairs.

11. If you have children, when are they likely to need separate accommodation and what type of home do you think they would like?

18 year old would like to live on site in Lewisham.

12. How satisfied are you with the services available to travellers and gypsies in Lewisham e.g. education, health, etc.?

Very satisfied Satisfied Unsatisfied Very unsatisfied Unsure

Other comments:

13. How could services be improved?

be better represented

14. Any further comments?

Lived in Borouk for 6-7 years.

Council awful at keeping in contact. ^{feel ignored}

I try and attend all the relevant meetings (Co.S Forum)
but ask for feedback and do not receive
any.

Andlorde ask for numerous references for Traveller Tenants



Lewisham

Thank you.

Completed on behalf of
(by dictation)

or Freya Turtle,
Local Dialogue

Lewisham Borough Council: Travellers and Gypsies Research

Name:

Address:

1. How many people live with you in your current accommodation and what are their ages?

7. 40 dad, 35 me, 13 Tina 11 Martin Owen & Johnny 6, annalize 4.

2. Who contributes to the rent in your household and is this likely to change in the near future?

trailer. - Caravan

3. How would you describe you and your family's ethnic origin?

Irish Traveller.

4. How long have you lived in Lewisham? Years Months

5. What type of accommodation do you currently live in?

Sites

- Council/social rented site
 Private site owned by self
 Private site owned by a Gypsy/Traveller

Housing

- Owner-occupied
 Rent from Council/Housing Association
 Rent from private landlord

Other (please specify) Camps. Unauthorised.

6. How long have you lived in your current accommodation? Years Months

7. How long do you think you'll stay living there? For a while.

8. Where did you live prior to your current accommodation?

Sydenham, London

9. How satisfied are you with where you currently live?

- Very satisfied Satisfied Unsatisfied Very unsatisfied Unsure

Other comments:

becomes / Keep getting moved and
cant settle

10. How many times have you moved homes in the last three years? 10 and 20 times

11. Have you ever been on a waiting list for a pitch site in Lewisham?

- Yes No If so, for how long? []

12. Are you currently on the 'register for site interest' list?

- Yes No If so, for how long? []

13. Lewisham Council is looking into the future needs for Travellers and Gypsies. What do you think should be provided and where?

a site for travellers and gypsies
because there is no where for us
and its hard to keep moving out
and in ~~in~~ unautized camps, and I
cant get my children into school
or on a doctor because I have
no permanent home.

14. What type of accommodation would you like to live in and why?

I live in my trailer because I
hate a house, its like prison and drives
me depressed

15. What sort of facilities would you like to be available?

a family site with a care taker

16. If you have children, when are they likely to need separate accommodation and what type of home do you think they would like?

my children are in my trailer with me, because they are too small to have their own one now.

17. If you have children, how many times have they changed school in the last three years for location reasons?

they don't go to school because we keep getting moved.

18. How many times have you changed your GP practice in the last three years? 2

19. How satisfied are you with the services available to Travellers and Gypsies in Lewisham e.g. education, health, etc.?

Very satisfied Satisfied Unsatisfied Very unsatisfied Unsure

Other comments:

there is no help really as it's very limited,

20. How could services be improved?

by making people talk and meet about what they need.

21. Any further comments?

Please could you ask the council to make a site for us travellers it not fair to keep moving and no help or any one to talk to, to help me and my family

thank you.



Always moving - 6 months
at least 2 years at road.

been in the borough
2 years

Lewisham Borough Council: Travellers and Gypsies Research

Name

Address

1. How many people live with you in your current accommodation?

2 (aged 23, 40)

2. How would you describe you and your family's ethnic origin?

Irish Traveller.

3. What type of accommodation do you currently live in?

live with ^{extended} family - private rented

4. How long have you lived in your current accommodation?

Years 3 Months

5. How long do you think you'll stay living there?

not long - hard to tell.

6. Where did you live prior to your current accommodation?

lived with mum.

7. How satisfied are you with where you currently live?

Very satisfied Satisfied Unsatisfied Very unsatisfied Unsure

Other comments: too sleeping on 3 pieces. Needs his own space

8. Lewisham Council is looking into the future needs for travellers and gypsies. What do you think should be provided and where?

need a site provided for families and extended families. Close to schools, safe, shopping, doctors. Easily access everything you need.

9. What type of accommodation would you like to live in and why?

site, with the family

10. What sort of facilities would you like to be available?

bungalow. Large, Easily accessible. Showers. Disabled.

11. If you have children, when are they likely to need separate accommodation and what type of home do you think they would like?

My Dad would like to live on site.

12. How satisfied are you with the services available to travellers and gypsies in Lewisham e.g. education, health, etc.?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Unsatisfied
- Very unsatisfied
- Unsure

Other comments: ~~ok~~ with doctors. Drive from to and from doctors. Dad

13. How could services be improved?

14. Any further comments?

cannot put name on wishes list. Deposit for rented accommodation. ^{means cap.} I wanted my own place, I can't. want to set place together with my Dad so I can care for him. He is currently on disability benefits because of his back. He needs my care. Before, my Dad lived in a motorhome and had to move all the time.



Lewisham

Thank you.

Completed on behalf of

is dictation by Freya Turtle (Local Dialogue)



Lewisham Borough Council: Travellers and Gypsies Research

Name: _____

Address: _____

1. How many people live with you in your current accommodation and what are their ages?

Me + 3 husband 42 Daughter 14 son 9

2. Who contributes to the rent in your household and is this likely to change in the near future?

HB

3. How would you describe you and your family's ethnic origin?

IRISH TRAVELLERS

4. How long have you lived in Lewisham? 15 Years _____ Months

5. What type of accommodation do you currently live in?

Sites

- Council/social rented site
- Private site owned by self
- Private site owned by a Gypsy/Traveller

Housing

- Owner-occupied
- Rent from Council/Housing Association
- Rent from private landlord

Other (please specify) _____

6. How long have you lived in your current accommodation? 1 Years 6 Months

7. How long do you think you'll stay living there? UNTIL THE LANDLORD WONT EXTEND TENANCY AGAIN

8. Where did you live prior to your current accommodation?

PRIVATE LANDLORD LEWISHAM

16. If you have children, when are they likely to need separate accommodation and what type of home do you think they would like?

My daughter will be 15 this summer. She's liable to need a plot by the time she's 18. She wants to live in a trailer near me

17. If you have children, how many times have they changed school in the last three years for location reasons?

I always try to find a house near the same schools.

18. How many times have you changed your GP practice in the last three years? 3 times

19. How satisfied are you with the services available to Travellers and Gypsies in Lewisham e.g. education, health, etc.?

Very satisfied Satisfied Unsatisfied Very unsatisfied Unsure

- Other comments:
- ① Not satisfied for housing - can't get a council house & there's no site. ② Satisfied with education + schools ③ Satisfied with outreach service, always there to help

20. How could services be improved?

It would be better if you didn't close down the Traveller Education Service.

21. Any further comments?

I'm not happy always under private landlords. This house has had rats & the landlord wouldn't sort it out. In the end I took a dead rat to the letting agent and then they listened to us and got pest control to come. I'm a sick woman & this is very bad for me. I need to be closer to other family who live in houses all across Lewisham. We need to be together. The roof is leaking & they're not bothered about me. Once he's getting his rent he doesn't listen to me.



Lewisham Borough Council: Travellers and Gypsies Research

Name:

Address

14

1. How many people live with you in your current accommodation and what are their ages?

4 children 3 year 4 year 6 year 9 year

2. Who contributes to the rent in your household and is this likely to change in the near future?

HB.

3. How would you describe you and your family's ethnic origin?

Irish. Traveller by culture & practice.
Myself & 2 of the children were born in England.

4. How long have you lived in Lewisham?

14 Years

Months Resided in & resorted to LBL

5. What type of accommodation do you currently live in?

Sites

- Council/social rented site
- Private site owned by self
- Private site owned by a Gypsy/Traveller

Housing

- Owner-occupied
- Rent from Council/Housing Association
- Rent from private landlord

Other (please specify)

6. How long have you lived in your current accommodation?

Years 4 Months

7. How long do you think you'll stay living there?

Tenancy ends in 2 months

8. Where did you live prior to your current accommodation?

Lewisham. (PR)

How satisfied are you with where you currently live?

- Very satisfied Satisfied Unsatisfied Very unsatisfied Unsure

Other comments: To far from the family. I was forced to take this as the only place available to me. The neighbours don't like children & families there.

10. How many times have you moved homes in the last three years? 4 times in the last years.

11. Have you ever been on a waiting list for a pitch site in Lewisham?

- Yes No If so, for how long? SINCE JAN 2010

12. Are you currently on the 'register for site interest' list?

- Yes No If so, for how long? I DIDN'T HAVE A REPLY

13. Lewisham Council is looking into the future needs for Travellers and Gypsies. What do you think should be provided and where?

SITES.

14. What type of accommodation would you like to live in and why?

TRAILER ON SITE.

15. What sort of facilities would you like to be available?

KITCHEN/BATHROOM/SHOWER BUILDING ON EACH PLOT.
A ROOM TO SIT & EAT.
PLAY SPACE. SAFE RD.

16. If you have children, when are they likely to need separate accommodation and what type of home do you think they would like?

Not for some years yet.

17. If you have children, how many times have they changed school in the last three years for location reasons?

TWICE ALREADY THIS SCHOOL YEAR.

18. How many times have you changed your GP practice in the last three years? *TWICE THIS YEAR*

19. How satisfied are you with the services available to Travellers and Gypsies in Lewisham e.g. education, health, etc.?

Very satisfied Satisfied Unsatisfied Very unsatisfied Unsure

Other comments:

~~E~~DUICATION - VERY UNSATISFIED WITH LONG WAIT FOR SCHOOL PLACES.

20. How could services be improved?

EMERGENCY PROVISION WHEN CHILDREN ARRIVE.

21. Any further comments?

How satisfied are you with where you currently live?

Very satisfied

Satisfied

Unsatisfied

Very unsatisfied

Unsure

Other comments:

Only staying here temporarily

10. How many times have you moved homes in the last three years? Constantly/Travel

11. Have you ever been on a waiting list for a pitch site in Lewisham?

Yes

No

If so, for how long?

12. Are you currently on the 'register for site interest' list?

Yes

No

If so, for how long?

13. Lewisham Council is looking into the future needs for Travellers and Gypsies. What do you think should be provided and where?

Lewisham needs to build a site in the Borough.

14. What type of accommodation would you like to live in and why?

House or site to bring up my children & to keep them in school.

15. What sort of facilities would you like to be available?

If there was a site: play area; facilities unit; Bathroom & shower.

...e children, when are they likely to need separate accommodation and what type
...do you think they would like?

my oldest boy would need his own
accommodation when he's 16 or 17.

17. If you have children, how many times have they changed school in the last three years for location reasons?

once.

18. How many times have you changed your GP practice in the last three years?

once

19. How satisfied are you with the services available to Travellers and Gypsies in Lewisham e.g. education, health, etc.?

Very satisfied Satisfied Unsatisfied Very unsatisfied Unsu

Other comments:

20. How could services be improved?

Services could be made easier to access
eg getting school places more quickly.

21. Any further comments?