

# Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Sites and Policy Consultation (May 2024)

Borough Council of  
King's Lynn &  
West Norfolk



## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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**Q: Is it necessary for the Council to allocate land to meet accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers?**

**A:** Yes. This is both a legal requirement and a national planning policy requirement.

Legal requirements:

- 2004 Housing Act – places a duty on local authorities to provide sufficient accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers
- 2010 Equalities Act – protects the characteristics of Gypsies and Travellers as an ethnic group, and local authorities are required to actively seek to eliminate unlawful discrimination. Gypsies and Travellers have particular needs due to their nomadic culture.

National planning policy requirements:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local authorities to provide land to meet housing and accommodation needs for all people, including for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople (GTTS).
- The NPPF is supported by the 2023 Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS), which sets out what local authorities are required to do to meet the legal requirements in planning for the accommodation needs of GTTS.

**Q: Why is the Borough Council now putting forward proposals to allocate land, to accommodate Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople?**

**A:** The Borough Council was required to undertake a specific Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA), which was published in June 2023. This report identified a future need for an additional 102 Gypsy and Traveller pitches over the remaining Local Plan period (2023-2039). Of this, a need for 76 pitches must be provided within the first 5 years of this period (2023-2028). The GTAA also identified a need for 5 additional plots for Travelling Showpeople within the first 5 years.

Since publication of the GTAA the need for Gypsies and Travellers has seen a small reduction (to 71 pitches within the first five years), as a result of recent decisions.

**Q: The Borough Council recently run a consultation about Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople sites and policies (January – March 2024). Why is the Borough Council consulting again so soon?**

A: The consultation about Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople sites and policies is a two-stage process. The first stage (January-March 2024) was putting out a list of potential/ possible sites and development management policies, allowing interested parties to raise any concerns about individual site proposals and/ or initial draft policies. Following the initial consultation, the list of potential sites and policies has been refined into a proposed list of sites and policies, which was agreed by the Council on 25 April 2024 ([Agenda for Council on Thursday, 25th April, 2024, 5.00 pm \(west-norfolk.gov.uk\)](#)).

The second stage of the consultation (due to start on 10 May) relates to the list of sites and policies, agreed by the Council for submission to the Planning Inspectors. This relates to the tests of soundness (National Planning Policy Framework, para 35: [National Planning Policy Framework \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)), against which the proposed Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople sites and policies will be assessed by the Inspectors.

**Q: What happens if the Council is unable to follow the requirements regarding Local Plan policies for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople?**

A: The Inspectors wrote to the Borough Council on 20 June 2023, setting out the Council's obligations regarding planning for Gypsies and Travellers. The Inspectors' letter is clear and unequivocal, that the Local Plan must allocate land to meet the accommodation needs for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople identified in the latest (2023) Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA).

Failure to do so, to the satisfaction of the Planning Inspectors, would be highly likely to lead to the Local Plan being found "unsound", thereby failing at examination. Failure at examination would lead to the failure/ loss of the Local Plan in its entirety.

**Q: Where is this accommodation need coming from?**

A: Kings Lynn and West Norfolk has a long-established Gypsy and Traveller community. There are over 70 existing sites across the Borough of which nearly all are privately owned. Just like the needs of other communities, the accommodation needs on some of these sites has increased. This is mostly coming from teenage children or other relatives who are, or will be, seeking their own pitch on existing family sites. This is why the Council are proposing to provide most of the current and future accommodation needs on or through extensions to existing established sites.

There is no need arising because of general inward migration.

**Q: What is the process for the Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople work and the wider Local Plan examination, going forward?**

A: The second stage consultation will take place for 6-weeks from the 10 May to the 21 June 2024, inclusive. It is emphasised that this consultation is about whether

the suite of proposed Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople sites and policies meets the legal tests of soundness.

Following the close of the consultation, representations (responses) will be submitted to the Planning Inspectors and will form the basis for the forthcoming hearing sessions, scheduled to take place on 3-4 September 2024.

**Q: How were the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople assessed?**

A: The methodology for assessing needs for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople accommodation is set out in the 2023 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA). This was assessed through a series of questionnaires and engagement between the appointed consultant (ORS) and travelling communities. Most need has arisen from the creation of new households/ family units coming of age, from established communities. The study was carried out in accordance with current best practice guidance.

**Q: Where is the accommodation need for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople located in West Norfolk?**

A: Accommodation needs are mostly localised, as these arise from existing communities. 72% of the need for Gypsies and Travellers is identified in three parishes – Outwell, Upwell and Walsoken. For Travelling Showpeople, the outstanding need has arisen from existing sites at Methwold and Northwold.

It is emphasised that the overwhelming need for Gypsies and Travellers is situated in the area of the Fens around Wisbech. This is reflected in the proposed site allocations.

**Q: Who will be consulted?**

A: In accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement, all statutory consultees and interested parties will be consulted, subject to the requirements of the 2018 Data Protection Act.

**Q: How and when can I respond to the consultation?**

A: The consultation will commence on Friday, 10 May 2024, running for 6 weeks (closing date, Friday, 21 June 2024). Details will be set out on the Local Plan examination web page:

- [https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20079/planning\\_policy\\_and\\_local\\_plan/951/local\\_plan\\_review\\_2016-2036\\_examination](https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20079/planning_policy_and_local_plan/951/local_plan_review_2016-2036_examination)).

To assist the consultation, there will be a representation form. This should be used, to ensure we can capture the information required to allow us to process your response. Please note that representations must be received within the 6-weeks period to be considered.