

# **Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment**

**FINAL REPORT**

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We hope this report accurately reflects their opinions and needs. This analysis of the data may not reflect the views and opinions of the local authorities, or other stakeholders.

## Glossary and Acronyms

The following terms are used in this report. In the case of those terms which are related to Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation and culture, it is noted that a number of these terms are often contested and debated. It is not the intention of the authors to present these terms as absolute definitions rather; the explanations provided are those the authors used in this assessment as their frames of reference.

**Amenity unit** basic plumbing facilities (bath/shower, WC and sink) usually provided at the rate of one per pitch on most Gypsy and Traveller sites. Sometimes grouped into an Amenity block

**Authorised site** A site with planning permission which may include:

- sites with planning permission owned by Gypsies and Travellers for their own and/or their family's occupation and/or for commercial letting;
- sites owned by any other private individual or body with planning permission for use as a Gypsy or Traveller site. These sites can be owner-occupied, rented or a mixture of owner-occupied and rented pitches.
- sites owned by a local authority or Registered Social Landlord but leased to, or managed by, a non-local authority body or individual under arrangements which do not give the local authority control of site management (critically of rent setting and lettings).
- local authority or Registered Social Landlord Gypsy site owned and managed by the authority

**Bricks and mortar** Permanent mainstream housing

**Caravan** Mobile living vehicles used by Gypsies and Travellers. Also referred to as trailers.

A 'caravan' can include any of the following:

- mobile homes, caravans, trailers and other living-vehicles on Gypsy or Traveller sites and encampments, whether or not they meet the strict legal definition of a caravan;
- touring caravans on Gypsy or Traveller sites and encampments even if not lived in permanently;

**Concealed household** Households, living within other households, who are unable to set up separate family units and who are unable to access a place on an authorised site, or obtain or afford land to develop one.

**Country People/Buffers** Term used by Irish Travellers to refer to settled people/non-Travellers.

**DCLG** Department for Communities and Local Government.

**Doubling-up** To share a pitch on an authorised site.

**EHRC** Equality and Human Rights Commission.

**Gaujo/Gorger** Literal translation indicates someone who is not of the Romany Gypsy race. Romany word used mainly, but not exclusively, by Romany Gypsies to refer to members of the settled community/non- Gypsies and Travellers

**GTAC** Gypsy Traveller Advocacy Cymru

**GTLO** Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer. An officer (usually in a local authority but also found in police forces) whose specific remit is concerned with Gypsies and Travellers.

**Gypsy** Romany Gypsies were recognised as an ethnic group in 1989. This term is not acceptable to all Travellers.

**Gypsies and Travellers** The definition used in the Housing Act 2004, inclusive of: all Gypsies, Irish Travellers, New Travellers, Show People, Circus People and Gypsies and Travellers in bricks and mortar accommodation.

**Irish Traveller:** Irish Travellers have a distinct indigenous origin in Ireland and were recognised as an ethnic group in 2000.

**LDP** Local Development Plan. A detailed framework for planning policy and proposals for specific sites over a 10-year period consisting of a written statement and a map of the proposed sites. The written statement contains general policies on the use and development of land as well as specific proposals for sites and areas. In particular, it allocates sites to meet the requirement for housing set out in the structure plan. The map identifies the precise areas of land to which the policies and site-specific proposals apply.

**LHMA** Local Housing Market Assessment.

**Mobile home** Legally classified as a caravan but not usually moveable without dismantling/or lorry.

**NAW** National Assembly for Wales. In this context this refers to all publications by the elected National Assembly for Wales since it was established in 1999.

**New Traveller:** Term used here to refer to members of the settled community who have adopted a nomadic lifestyle. New Travellers are sometimes also referred to as New Age Traveller.

**NWWLHMA** North West Wales Local Housing Market Assessment.

**ODPM** Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

**Pitch** Area of land on a Gypsy and Traveller site normally occupied by one licensee family, sometimes referred to as a plot.

**PLASC** Pupil Level Annual School Census. Now **ASC** Annual School Census. Includes collection of data on ethnicity.

**Pulling-up** To park a trailer/caravan

**Residential site** A Gypsy site intended for long-term or permanent occupation by residents. No maximum length of stay is set.

**Settled community/people** Reference to non-Travellers (those that live in houses).

**Site** – Generically, an area of land laid out and used for Gypsy and Traveller caravans. An authorised site will have planning permission (and a site licence, if privately owned) for use as a Gypsy caravan site.; an unauthorised site will not have planning permission. Sites vary in type and size and can range from one-caravan private family sites on Gypsies' and Travellers' own land, through to large local authority sites.

**SI** Statutory Instrument.

**Stopping place** An area of land identified for use by Gypsies and Travellers in transit; the maximum stopping time may be more limited than for a Transit Site.

**Supporting People** A funding programme which provides grants in order to assist in the provision of housing related support to develop and sustain an individual's capacity to live independently in their accommodation.

**TES** – Traveller Education Service A local education authority support service, which works closely with schools and families to ensure access, and to raise Traveller pupils' achievement.

**Tolerated** A 'tolerated' site is one where the local authority has decided not to seek the removal of the encampment and where the encampment has been, or is likely to be, allowed to remain for an indefinite period of months or years.

**Trailer** Term commonly used by Gypsies and Travellers to refer to a moveable caravan.

**Transit site** An authorised site intended for short stays. Such sites are usually permanent, but there is a limit on the length of time users can stay.

**Travelling Show people** Commonly referred to as Showmen, these are a group of occupational Travellers who work on travelling shows and fairs across the UK and abroad

**Unauthorised Development** – Caravan sites are among the types of development which require planning permission. This term is used where Gypsies and Travellers are living on their own land in caravans/moveable dwellings without planning consent or established use rights. Such sites may vary in size and in the extent to which the land has been 'developed' with roadways, distinct plots, hard-standings, amenity blocks etc.

A 'not tolerated' site is one where:

- a planning enforcement notice has been served (including Temporary Stop Notices);
- the results of a planning enquiry are pending;
- an injunction has been sought;
- or where the compliance period has been extended.

**Unauthorised Encampment** Stopping at the roadside, or on private/public land not owned by Gypsies or Travellers which does not have planning permission.

A 'tolerated' encampment is one where the local authority and/or the land owner have decided not to seek the removal of the encampment, and where the encampment has been or is likely to be 'tolerated' for an indefinite period of months or years.

A 'not tolerated' encampment is one where: the local authority or police are using, or are preparing to use, their powers under the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 to remove the encampment, or where the landowner (including the local authority) has instigated, or is preparing to instigate, action either through the courts or under common law rights to regain possession of the land.

**WAG** Welsh Assembly Government. In this context, the term Welsh Assembly government is used for all publications of the executive between the establishment of the NAW and the May 2011 referendum.

**WG** Welsh Government. Following the referendum in May 2011 which supported greater law-making powers, the term Welsh Government became generally used.

**WO** Welsh Office. Disbanded July 1999 and many functions transferred to NAW. Many Welsh Office publications mirrored those of other Departments, particularly, in this context, those responsible for housing and local government..

**Yard** Term used by Travelling Show people to refer to a site

## **Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This summarizes the main findings and recommendations of the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment [GTANA] conducted for a consortium of five authorities in north Wales, and the Snowdonia National Park Authority. The objective of the GTANA is to assess the accommodation needs of members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities, giving them a direct voice in the process. The GTANA was managed by a Steering Group including local authority representatives, and members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities. Fieldwork also employed community members as interviewers. This Report has been written by members of the University of Bangor, on behalf of the Steering Group. Any conclusions are the responsibility of the authors alone.
- 1.2 The study draws of three sources of information:
- An analysis was made of existing sources of information, including research literature and other GTANA surveys identifying strengths and weaknesses of the sources available.
  - Information was obtained from key stakeholders within the local authorities
  - The views of the community were obtained through questionnaires, focus groups and discussions. A total of 93 responses from adult Gypsies and Travellers, and a further 43 from a survey of young Gypsies and Travellers, from a range of tenures and community groups, were received. The community questionnaire invited respondents to identify their aspirations for sites and their preferred location.

## **Background**

- 1.3 Since 2006, the Welsh Government has encouraged local strategic housing authorities to collaborate in producing Local Housing Market Area assessments of the future level and nature of housing demand. The LHMA process feeds into the production of Local Development Plans. An essential part of the LHMA process is the production of a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment. For this GTANA, the counties of Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Gwynedd and Ynys Môn joined together to conduct the GTANA, in collaboration with Bangor University [SNPA?] [1.7]. The Study was managed and commissioned by a steering group consisting of representatives of the local authorities [and SNPA], members of the Gypsy and Traveller community and the University of Bangor.
- 1.4 The broader objectives of the study are:
- To produce, in consultation with local Gypsies and Travellers, detailed information about in relation to their demographic profile, household formation, current accommodation needs, accommodation related service and support needs and barriers to accessing services.
  - To generate reliable estimates of future accommodation need.
  - To assess the current and potential future needs within the Gypsy and Traveller communities in the North West Wales Housing Market Area & Flintshire, i.e. the Study Area, for learning, health services and other services provided by local authorities and their partner organisations.
  - To assess the relevance of the policies and strategies in relation to Gypsies and Travellers used by the Partner authorities.

## **Main Findings**

### **Local Gypsies and Travellers**

- 1.5 Very little information is available on the numbers of Gypsies and Travellers in the UK as a whole, in Wales, or in the study area. Estimates for the UK as a whole vary from 82,000 to 300,000, including those living in Bricks and Mortar housing. It is agreed that in Wales most Gypsies and Travellers are concentrated along the key transport routes in the North and South of Wales. In the study area, there are currently 78 authorized pitches, and a further four caravans on unauthorized developments. Ten vehicles occupied by New Travellers are situated on an unauthorized but tolerated encampment on Ynys Môn. It is estimated that between half and two-thirds of the Gypsy and

Traveller population of the UK now live in 'bricks and mortar' housing, either through choice, but may also be through necessity, due to the shortage of pitches on authorized sites. There is no reliable estimate of the total numbers of Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar in the study area, but from the survey it is clear the number is significant, and distributed between the local authorities. They occupied both private and socially rented accommodation, and owner occupiers.

### **Characteristics of local Gypsies and Travellers**

- 1.6 24 per cent identified as Romany Gypsy, 58 per cent as Travellers, of whom 34 per cent were Irish Travellers, 17 per cent as New Travellers, and 1 per cent as Travelling Showman.
- 1.7 Mean household size was 4.37 persons, median size was four persons. Younger families predominated. The survey did not contact any persons aged 65 or over.
- 1.8 Most respondents described themselves as local to the area.

### **Gypsies and Travellers and local services**

- 1.9 The survey questioned Gypsies and Travellers about their use of local services and their views on the services provided. The Traveller Education Service Some accounts of perceived discriminatory behaviour by local services, health and welfare agencies, and police and local authorities were reported, but other respondents were considered they were treated 'as other people' The Traveller Education Service was generally praised, and the availability of dedicated liaison staff such as the GTLO welcomed.

### **Accommodation preferences and aspirations**

- 1.10 Respondents were asked for their views on the location and nature of further permanent site provision. It should be noted Gypsies and Travellers who want to develop sites privately are face significant obstacles in obtaining planning permission, though more permissions are obtained through the planning and legal appeal processes.

### **Accommodation need and supply**

- 1.11 Using standard calculations, a shortfall of 62 pitches was identified by the year 2016. It should be noted that while the calculations to 2016 are

presented on a local authority basis, this is not to imply that future provision should automatically be confined within the boundaries currently existing. Both the WAG guidance (WAG, 2006) and current policy proposals (WG, 2011) support the view that collaborative approaches to these issues are to be preferred.

Table 1: Residential accommodation needs arising from existing district level Gypsy and Traveller populations

| <b>Authority</b>  | <b>Current provision</b> | <b>Total additional residential pitch requirement (2011-2016)</b> | <b>Total additional transit caravan provision (2011-2016)</b> |
|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ynys Môn          | 0                        | 11                                                                | 28*                                                           |
| Conwy             | 0                        | 3                                                                 |                                                               |
| Denbighshire      | 0                        | 2                                                                 |                                                               |
| Flintshire        | 66                       | 36                                                                |                                                               |
| Gwynedd           | 12                       | 10                                                                |                                                               |
| <b>Study Area</b> | <b>78</b>                | <b>62</b>                                                         | <b>28*</b>                                                    |

- \*Shared

Note: For pragmatic reasons these figures have been rounded up to the nearest whole pitch

1.12 After 2016, assuming all current need has been addressed; the base calculation is that the number of pitches required will continue to increase at 3 per cent per annum compound. This would produce an overall requirement of 167 pitches (rounded up to nearest whole number) by 2021, an increase of 25 on the 2016 figure, and 194 pitches, a further increase of 27 (both estimates by 2026. Other factors might increase this requirement.

### **Unauthorized encampments and transit requirements**

1.13 Currently, there is no transit site located within the study area. Part of the Gypsy and Traveller site at Llandegai in Gwynedd was previously used as a transit site, but this was discontinued in 2005, following significant management issues relating directly to this part of the site. The discussion of transit site need derives its evidence from local authority data, on unauthorized encampments in the GTANA area during the years 2009 and 2010, together with an input of stakeholder experience.

1.14 Addressing unauthorized encampments can lead to considerable outlay, by both public authorities and the private sector, and may have a significant impact on relationships between the settled community and the Gypsy and Traveller community

1.15 This calculation of the transit site requirement is based on assumptions set out below. These are:

- Annually, about 55 encampments occur in the study area
- 10% of temporary encampments, about six during the year, will be from those looking for permanent site accommodation, and are discussed under the permanent site requirement
- Thus 90% of encampments, about 49 in total, would require transit accommodation
- The maximum stay would be for one month, though some encampments would be for a shorter period
- Accommodation for 7 caravans would deal with most encampments.

1.16 Using 7 as a working figure, transit requirements would be for (49 multiplied by 7) caravans per annum, or 343 over the year. On a monthly basis, this amounts to 28.5 caravans. However, for reasons discussed, this can involve some element of double counting. Proportionately, about 47% of encampments are recorded in the

Gwynedd and Ynys Môn area, 15% in the central area of /Conwy and Denbighshire, and 37% in Flintshire.

1.17 It is therefore suggested that the authorities work together to consider three or four transit sites accommodating up to seven caravans. More than one site is to be preferred, for a number of reasons

- They are more likely to be used if close to traditional stopping places
- The size of each site would be reduced
- Difficulties about ethnic or inter-family tensions would be reduced.
- A single transit site for the area would not resolve the issues. It is important that there is somewhere for occupants to move on, and a network is required. The local authorities should work jointly to identify appropriate sites for temporary accommodation on a regional basis.

1.18 It is recommended that the local authorities work jointly to identify appropriate sites for temporary accommodation. These may be transit sites, with a relatively full range of facilities where stays of up to three months may be permitted, or temporary stopping places with more restricted provision, where stays may be limited to 28 days. The nature, as well as the location, of provision, should be informed by data on the patterns of unauthorized encampment in recent years

1.19 There are a number of recommendations for action:

1.20 *Recommendation 1:* Following the guidance from the Welsh Government on adopting a collaborative approach, a North West Wales Gypsy and Traveller Co-ordination Group comprising of representatives from local authorities and sub-regional partners should be formed to continue the development of a meaningful and co-ordinated approach to Gypsy and Traveller accommodation and related issues, as well as ensuring that the findings from the GTANA are disseminated to departments within the partner Authorities and other stakeholder. The existing Gypsy Traveller Working Group would provide an excellent foundation for such a group, along with representation from the Gypsy and Traveller community.

1.21 *Recommendation 2:* A North West Wales Gypsy and Traveller Representative Group, with as wide a geographical representation as possible, should be established representing the views of the local Gypsy and Traveller population, and contribute to the consultative process. A Chair and administrative support for the group should be

provided from the North West Wales Gypsy and Traveller Co-ordination Group.

- 1.22 *Recommendation 3:* All partner authorities should ensure that an internal working group exists within each authority. This group should cut across service areas, in order to better co-ordinate the response and approach on Gypsy and Traveller issues and avoid potential duplication of work.
- 1.23 *Recommendation 4:* Each authority should identify a lead officer who manages each authority's response to Gypsies and Traveller issues.
- 1.24 *Recommendation 5:* In order to adhere to Equalities legislation, and to ensure the high quality of on-going monitoring, local authorities should ensure that Gypsies and Travellers are recognised in ethnic monitoring forms, most urgently in relation to housing and planning
- 1.25 *Recommendation 6:* Local authorities should ensure that principles of equality, in relation to Gypsies and Travellers, are embedded in the wide range of services provided. In particular this includes: housing, planning and homelessness policies.
- 1.26 *Recommendation 7:* Local authorities should be sensitive to the different cultural and support needs of Gypsies and Travellers who may present as homeless and those who may require local authority accommodation.
- 1.27 *Recommendation 8:* Residential site waiting lists should be: accessible to all Gypsies and Travellers in the area, and clear and transparent in terms of allocation policies
- 1.28 *Recommendation 9:* The management of permanent sites needs to be evaluated at regular intervals in accordance with the guidance issued by the to the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG, 2008)
- 1.29 *Recommendation 10:* Social Housing Agencies to establish if any such pattern results from positive choices, or negative decisions due to perceived threats or other causes.
- 1.30 *Recommendation 11:* The methods and approaches used by local authorities in promoting affordable accommodation to members of the non-Traveller communities should be adapted to the accommodation used by members of Gypsy and Traveller communities.
- 1.31 *Recommendation 12:* A progressive campaign which would promote the lifestyle and culture of Gypsies and Travellers in a positive light may help alleviate some of the racial discrimination experienced by young and older Gypsy and Travellers across the study area.

- 1.32 *Recommendation 13:* Ensure that staff working in primary and secondary schools have sufficient training about Gypsy and Traveller culture in order to tackle bullying more effectively.
- 1.33 *Recommendation 14:* Local Authorities should consider collectively providing the resources to recruit and train outreach workers (possibly from Gypsy and Traveller communities) to engage with young people.
- 1.34 *Recommendation 15:* Further research is needed with Travelling Show people, in conjunction with the Showmen's Guild, before recommendations can be made
- 1.35 *Recommendation 16:* An aspiration of many members of the Gypsy and Traveller community is to be owner-occupiers, as such there is a need to develop a constructive dialogue between Gypsies and Travellers seeking to develop private sites and planning authorities.
- 1.36 *Recommendation 17:* Planning departments should offer appropriate advice and support to Gypsies and Travellers on the workings of the planning system and the criteria to be considered in applications. This advice may require some tailoring for this particular client group.
- 1.37 *Recommendation 18:* All issues relating to access to services issues need to be disseminated as widely as possible by the North West Wales Gypsy and Traveller Co-ordination Group in consultation with the North West Wales Gypsy and Traveller Representative Group resulting in a strategy on how to improve the experiences of the local Gypsy and Traveller community as well as a facility to report other examples.
- 1.38 *Recommendation 19:* Local authorities should seek to identify possible sites where permission for a residential site might be granted.
- 1.39 *Recommendation 20:* that all counties complete the biannual caravan count.
- 1.40 *Recommendation 21:* that a common protocol for reporting the presence of unauthorised encampments and addressing the issues is agreed by the local authorities.
- 1.41 *Recommendation 22:* All authorities within the study area, or whatever group continues the GTANA process, should decide on a common format for the recording of encampments. Ideally this should contain at least the following items:
- Date encampment was reported
  - Date encampment ended

- Location, nature of site [public/private; industrial or business park, retail car park, other]
- Number of caravans,
- Estimated number of adults and children.

1.42 *Recommendation 23:* It is also recommended that data from North Wales Police be included, to aid consistency and completeness.

1.43 *Recommendation 24:* It is recommended that the local authorities work jointly to identify appropriate sites for temporary accommodation. These may be transit sites, with a relatively full range of facilities where stays of up to three months may be permitted, or temporary stopping places with more restricted provision, where stays may be limited to 28 days. The nature, as well as the location, of provision, should be informed by data on the patterns of unauthorised encampment in recent years. That stated, analysis of the existing data indicates different patterns between the local authorities in the consortium.

## Overview

### Introduction

- 1.44 In 2006 the Welsh Assembly Government, in its Welsh Housing Market Assessment Guide, suggested that local authorities should act collaboratively to conduct Local Housing Market Assessments
- 1.45 Housing Market Assessments are best conducted jointly between groups of authorities. Such a partnership approach is certainly best placed to deal with housing markets that cross administrative boundaries. (WAG, 2006:10)
- 1.46 In 2007, local authorities in the North West Wales region - Conwy, Denbighshire, Gwynedd, and Ynys Môn, together with the Snowdonia National Park Authority, formed a consortium with Bangor University to undertake a North West Wales Local Housing Market Assessment (NWWLHMA). The assessment provides an overview of housing needs, demands, requirements and aspirations for the sub-region.
- 1.47 Under s. 225 the Housing Act 2004, local authorities are required to develop and implement strategies to respond to the accommodation needs of the Gypsy and Traveller communities living in their areas as part of their wider housing strategies.
- 1.48 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments (GTANAs) are designed to provide the evidence needed to inform these strategies and are an essential component of Local Housing Market Assessments
- 1.49 Guidance from the Welsh Government, both in *Local Housing Market Assessment Guide* (WAG, 2006) and more recently, has consistently recommended that local authorities should address the needs of Gypsies and Travellers collaboratively. In 2011 the Welsh Government urged '*local authorities to work in a regional capacity and share the legal, moral, financial and political responsibility to address the accommodation inequality experienced by the Gypsy and Traveller community in Wales.*' [(WG 2011a:20)
- 1.50 The Welsh Assembly Government guidance stresses the need to engage with and include representatives of the Gypsy and Traveller community in conducting the GTANA.
- 1.51 Flintshire joined the members of the consortium for this process. The GTANA was managed by the Gypsy and Traveller Working Group comprised of officers representing the partner local authorities, North Wales Police, members of the local Gypsy and Traveller community, and

representatives of national Gypsy and Traveller organisations. A Project Coordinator, provided by Bangor University, had overall responsibility for overseeing the GTANA project.

- 1.52 This report presents the findings of the GTANA of Gypsies and Travellers across North West Wales, including Flintshire (known henceforth as the 'Study Area').

### ***Background.***

- 1.53 The Housing Act 2004 places a duty on local authorities to conduct an assessment of the housing needs of Gypsies and Travellers in their Local Housing Needs Assessment process and to have a strategy in place which sets out how any identified need will be met as part of their wider housing strategies. (Richardson, 2007:14).

- 1.54 These duties under sections 225 and 226 of the Act were implemented in relation to Wales from December 2007.

- 1.55 For the purposes of the 2004 Act Gypsies and Travellers are defined as:

*Persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or of living in a caravan; and all other persons of a nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin, including –*

*(i) 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*

*(ii) members of an organised group of travelling show people or circus people (whether or not travelling together as such).*

*(SI 2007, 3235 (W. 285))*

### ***Aims of the assessment***

- 1.56 The overall aim of the GTANA study is to assess "if there is a need to provide further accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers within the study area" and, if so, how it should be provided to best meet the needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community".

- 1.57 The broader objectives of the study are:

- To produce, in consultation with local Gypsies and Travellers, detailed information about in relation to their demographic profile, household formation, current accommodation needs,

accommodation related service and support needs and barriers to accessing services.

- To generate reliable estimates of future accommodation need.
- To assess the current and potential future needs within the Gypsy and Traveller communities in the North West Wales Housing Market Area & Flintshire, i.e. the Study Area, for learning, health services and other services provided by local authorities and their partner organisations.
- To assess the relevance of the policies and strategies in relation to Gypsies and Travellers used by the Partner authorities.

1.58 As part of the project, evidence was obtained from four key areas

- An analysis was made of existing sources of information, identifying strengths and weaknesses of the sources available
- A study of the research literature and other GTANA surveys was undertaken
- Questionnaires were directed at key stakeholders within the local authorities
- The views of the community were obtained through questionnaires, focus groups and discussions with key participants

1.59 Many GTANA surveys have already been completed, and this study was able to draw on some of the experiences of other projects, and reflective discussion about the way in which future consultations with the Community could be structured. In particular, the Steering Group would wish to acknowledge the helpful advice given by Dr Philip Brown (University of Salford), while the study by Pat Niner (Niner, 2008) provided a benchmark for measuring progress.

1.60 The GTANAs will feed into the Local Housing Market Area Assessment process, which in turn will help inform local authority strategic housing strategies, and assist in the preparation of Local Development Plans.

### ***Legislative background.***

1.61 Current local accommodation provision for Gypsies and Travellers has been influenced by past legislation and policies, It is important to have a historical perspective since local Gypsy and Traveller sites, and the present overall pattern of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation are the product of past, and not current, legislation and funding regimes. The

relevant policy context for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation includes legislation and guidance specific to site provision and management, unauthorised camping, land use planning, human rights and equal opportunities, social exclusion and housing. This chapter presents a summary of some of the main issues.

- 1.62 The Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960, aimed to regulate static residential caravan sites within the planning system and to raise standards for caravan dwellers. Under this Act a caravan site needed both planning permission for that use and a caravan site licence
- 1.63 While not specifically aimed at Gypsies and Travellers, the effect was to force many off traditional sites and on to temporary encampments. While the 1960 Act had a discretionary power to provide sites, this was not used frequently. Only 14 sites had been provided by 1967 (HoC, 2003)
- 1.64 To address this issue, the Caravan Sites Act, 1968 both created a statutory duty on local authorities (County Councils and London Boroughs) to provide sites for Gypsies and Travellers, and protected the residents from summary eviction. However, many local authorities did not act on the statutory duty, and some (London Boroughs and County Boroughs) were able to fulfil their duty by providing fifteen pitches. No specific financial aid was given, but under the Local Government Planning and Land Act 1980, 100 per cent Exchequer grants became available (ODPM, 2003:33).
- 1.65 The Mobile Homes Act 1983 extended certain rights in relation to stationing a mobile home on a 'protected site' where it is to be occupied as the person's only or main residence. This applied to private sites for Gypsies and Travellers, and to park homes, but not to local authority sites, which were excluded (section 5). The Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 (section 318) amended the Mobile Homes Act 1983 to remove the exclusion of local authority Gypsy and Traveller sites. This was implemented in England from 30<sup>th</sup> April 2011, but has yet to be implemented in Wales (Community Law Partnership, 2012:3).
- 1.66 The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 also affected Gypsies and Travellers, though ostensibly passed to deal, inter alia, with 'rave culture'. This gave local authorities civil powers to recover land from trespassers, including unauthorised campers. This Act gave local authorities in England and Wales powers to order itinerant groups to leave the land being used, with it becoming an offence to fail to comply with such a direction. The 1994 Act also gave the police powers to direct trespassers to leave the land. It has been argued that these powers

criminalised unauthorised camping with disproportionate consequences for Gypsies and Travellers.

- 1.67 In 1994 also the government repealed the duty imposed on local authorities under the 1968 act to provide sites for Gypsies and Travellers, though the discretionary power under the 1960 Act remains. Effectively, this was a shift towards self-provision of sites by the Gypsy and Traveller community, though others suggest it was an attempt to force Gypsies and Travellers into settled accommodation (O’Nions, 1995). The 100% exchequer subsidy available for site provision under the Local Government Planning and Land Act 1980 was also withdrawn
- 1.68 Following this Act Welsh Office Circular 2/94 drew attention to local planning authorities’ continuing requirement to indicate in development plans the regard that they have had to meeting accommodation need among Gypsies and Travellers. It noted that unitary development plans should, wherever possible, identify locations suitable for Gypsy and Traveller sites and, where this is not possible, should set out clear, realistic criteria for suitable locations. It also encouraged local authorities to consult Gypsy and Traveller communities and assist them in making planning applications (WO, 1994a). These requirements are reiterated by the Welsh [Assembly] Government in successive editions of *Planning Policy Wales* (WAG, 2002:104; WG, 2011b:133-4).
- 1.69 Under new measures introduced in the Housing Act 2004, local authorities are required to include Gypsies and Travellers in their Local Housing Market Assessment process and to have a strategy in place which sets out how any identified need will be met as part of their wider Housing Strategy.
- 1.70 In 2007 the Welsh Assembly Government Circular C30/07 Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites (WAG, 2007) strengthened the requirement that local authorities identify and make provision for appropriate sites in their local plans. It also places a new emphasis on consulting Gypsies and Travellers, their representative bodies and local support groups in the planning process.
- 1.71 The Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 amends the Mobile Homes Act 1983 to offer Gypsies and Travellers on local authority sites further protection, but the relevant section [318] has yet to be implemented in Wales (WG, 2011a).
- 1.72 Other legislation relevant to Gypsies and Travellers includes the Human Rights Act 1998, especially Article 8 (right of respect for private and family life) and Article 14 (discrimination). There is now some case law

relevant to these Articles. They are also covered by the Equality Act 2010, which places a duty on public authorities to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and harassment and advance equality of opportunity. As recognised ethnic minorities, Gypsies and Travellers are covered by these provisions.

1.73 The recent Welsh Government White Paper *Homes for Wales* notes:

*There are eighteen Gypsy and Travellers sites owned by thirteen local authorities, spread unevenly across the country. Demand for permanent residential sites outweighs supply.*

*This results in unauthorised encampments which are illegal and unsafe for both Gypsies and Travellers and the surrounding communities. Currently, there are no transit sites to accommodate transient groups requiring short stay places. The last new sites were built in Carmarthenshire, Flintshire and Pembrokeshire in 1997.*

*Evidence in Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments and Local Development Plans identifies a clear and urgent need for new sites. However, local authorities have been unable to progress plans to develop new sites. Current legislation imposes various duties on local authorities. It requires them to have regard to the provision of suitable and sufficient sites in their area but falls short of an explicit statutory requirement and problems are experienced when trying to obtain planning consent.*

*The situation cannot continue. Where the need for Gypsy and Traveller sites has been identified and not met by the relevant local authorities, we will place a duty on them to ensure they take action to provide them.*

*We will:*

- *Introduce a statutory duty on local authorities to provide sites for Gypsy and Traveller communities where need has been identified (WG 2012:37)*

## **Planning**

1.74 All Gypsy and Traveller sites, whether for residential or transit use, including those provided by local authorities, must have planning permission. However, gaining planning permission has been identified as one of the major obstacles to further site provision. Gypsies and Travellers seeking to provide sites for themselves fall foul of the planning system when they buy land and occupy it without permission and are faced with enforcement action.

- 1.75 While some 80 per cent of planning applications in general are approved, the success rate for Gypsies and Travellers who buy land and apply for planning permission for pitches for caravans is estimated to be less than 10 per cent. Of those applications which subsequently go to appeal, the percentage of appeals allowed (for England) has varied between 52 and 67 per cent over the years 2006 to 2010. (Hansard, 2011).
- 1.76 In 2007 the Welsh Assembly Government Circular C30/07 Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites (WAG, 2007) strengthened the requirement that local authorities identify and make provision for appropriate sites in their local plans. It also places a new emphasis on consulting Gypsies and Travellers, their representative bodies and local support groups in the planning process.
- 1.77 Ultimately, the GTANA informs the preparation of both Local Housing Market Assessments (LHMAs) and Local Development Plans (LDPs) by the individual local planning authorities,
- 1.78 *Recommendation 1:* Following the guidance from the Welsh Government on adopting a collaborative approach, a North West Wales Gypsy and Traveller Co-ordination Group comprising of representatives from local authorities and sub-regional partners should be formed to continue the development of a meaningful and co-ordinated approach to Gypsy and Traveller accommodation and related issues, as well as ensuring that the findings from the GTANA are disseminated to departments within the partner Authorities and other stakeholder. The existing Gypsy Traveller Working Group would provide an excellent foundation for such a group, along with representation from the Gypsy and Traveller community.
- 1.79 *Recommendation 2:* A North West Wales Gypsy and Traveller Representative Group, with as wide a geographical representation as possible, should be established representing the views of the local Gypsy and Traveller population, and contribute to the consultative process. A Chair and administrative support for the group should be provided from the North West Wales Gypsy and Traveller Co-ordination Group.

## **2. Gypsies and Travellers in the Study Area.**

### ***Introduction.***

- 2.1 As the Welsh Government acknowledges, 'reliable data on the numbers of Gypsies and Travellers in Wales is not available.' Among the reasons identified are:
- The Bi-annual Caravan Count only counts caravans, not individuals living in them;
  - Gypsies and Travellers in settled accommodation do not always identify themselves as Gypsy or Traveller as they fear discrimination; and
  - Low literacy levels means that a large number of the community are unable to participate in the census (WAG, 2011:10).

Indeed, very little information is available on the numbers of Gypsies and Travellers in the UK as a whole, in Wales, or in the study area. Estimates for the UK as a whole vary from 82,000 to 300,000, including those living in bricks and mortar housing.

### ***Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Count.***

- 2.2 Until recently the only official government dataset on the population was the Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Count. The caravan count was introduced in 1985, but discontinued in Wales in 1997, without replacement. Following recommendations from the NAW Equalities Committee (NAW, 2003) and Niner (2006), it was reintroduced in July 2006.
- 2.3 The bi-annual count of Gypsy and Traveller caravans is carried out each January and July by local authority officers and is coordinated by the Welsh Government. The Caravan Count presents the numbers of pitches and caravans on authorised (socially rented and private) sites; unauthorised developments on land owned Gypsies and Travellers; and unauthorised sites on land not owned by Gypsies or Travellers. In the latter categories, distinction is now made between sites which are 'tolerated' and those which are 'not tolerated'.
- 2.4 The Gypsy and Traveller Caravan count is useful as it provides a snapshot of approximate caravan numbers at local authority level and is helpful for examining trends over time. However the adequacy and accuracy of the Caravan Count has been criticised by official agencies and Gypsy representative groups (Brown and Niner, 2009) because it is only a snapshot of the members of the community who reside in

caravans (either on sites or in transit) at the time of the published counts in January and July each year. It does not include those who live in housing or individuals who may or may not wish to self-identify as Gypsy or Traveller (Niner, 2006). As such, it skews the distribution of Gypsies and Travellers to those areas with caravan sites.

- 2.5 Not all local authorities in the study area have participated in the all the caravan counts, with Gwynedd not submitting a return in July 2010, January 2011 and January 2012, and Conwy not submitting a return in July 2010 and July 2011. In compiling Chart 1 below, indicating the caravan count data since resumption, non-submission has been addressed by taking the last submitted figure for the authority concerned.

### ***Other evidence***

- 2.6 In 2003 the NAW Equality of Opportunity Committee attempted to calculate the Gypsy-Traveller population in Wales through a survey of local authorities which asked about the number of Gypsy-Traveller adults and children in their areas. This survey suggested there were a total of 1,412 Travellers (642 adults and 770 children), 59% of whom were living on local authority sites, 9% on private sites, 3% on unauthorised sites and 28% in houses. However it should be noted that this data is only based on a sample of 11 of the 22 Welsh local Authorities. This estimate is clearly likely to be a significant under-count. Of the local authorities involved in this GTANA only Gwynedd (20 adults, eight children, all living on a local authority site) was included. It is also likely that housed Gypsy-Travellers were under-counted, but to an unknown extent (NAW, 2003)
- 2.7 Following on from this study, the Welsh Assembly Government commissioned a research study from the Centre for Urban and Regional Studies, University of Birmingham. Authored by Pat Niner, it suggested there were at least 2000 Gypsies and Travellers in Wales. (Niner 2006:2) However, one study of the Welsh Gypsy and Traveller population in 1998 calculated that there were 1,809 Gypsy and Traveller children alone, before counting resident adults (Morgan & Melhuish, 1998).
- 2.8 More recently, in January 2009 a desk based study by the Welsh Assembly Government suggested the numbers in bricks and mortar accommodation almost matched the numbers on sites, suggesting a population of about 4,000 throughout Wales. (WG 2011:11)

- 2.9 In terms of geographical distribution, there is agreement that most Gypsies and Travellers are concentrated along the key transport routes in the North and South of Wales, which is also the location of most of the settled population in Wales. It is also recognised that the Gypsies and Traveller population is ethnically diverse and it is likely that all the groups found in Britain will be present in Wales, including in particular Welsh and English Gypsies, Scottish and Irish Travellers. There are also numbers of 'New Travellers' (Niner, 2006).
- 2.10 Niner also drew on PLASC data recording the ethnicity of school children in Wales. The 2004 figures showed 767 children recorded as of Gypsy and Traveller origin. It should be noted that PLASC data understates the numbers, as some parents are reluctant to declare ethnicity. Children under school age, and some non-attendees, particularly among adolescent females, give an overall total of about 1,100. (Niner, 2006)
- 2.11 Some evidence of the population distribution can also be inferred from the claims by local authorities for specific grant for educating Gypsy and Traveller children, though this relates to those of school age. In 2005 Estyn recorded 1,415 children in Wales as benefiting from the specific grant to meet the needs of Gypsy and Traveller learners (Estyn, 2005). For the 2011-12 financial year, Flintshire claimed for 93 primary school pupils and 20 secondary school pupils, with a further two children of primary school age and 22 children of secondary school age being supported by the Traveller Education Service outside school. In Gwynedd, funding was granted for 12 primary school pupils and six secondary school pupils, with 2 more being supported outside school. Secondary school numbers are likely to be an underestimate of the total population of this age, as some Gypsy and Traveller children, especially females, are withdrawn from education. Conwy and Denbighshire made a joint application to support 18 primary school pupils. No grant application was made by Ynys Môn (WG, 2011). These pupils will be resident not only on sites, but in bricks and mortar accommodation, and the figures give an indication not only of the wider population, but its distribution over local authority areas other than those containing residential sites (Information from Welsh Government, 2011).
- 2.12 Until 2011, neither the national census nor many ethnic monitoring schemes identified Gypsies and Travellers. However, for the first time in the 2011 Census, Gypsy and Travellers were provided with a Gypsy and Traveller tick box. This represented a compromise between the desire of the stakeholder groups to have data captured separately in

recognition of their distinct ethnic identities, and operational constraints on the Census (ONS, 2009).

2.13 The Census data released in December 2012 provided the following results:

| Authority        | Total population | White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller |
|------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|
| Isle of Anglesey | 69,751           | 65                              |
| Gwynedd          | 121,874          | 153                             |
| Conwy            | 115,228          | 65                              |
| Denbighshire     | 93,734           | 34                              |
| Flintshire       | 152,506          | 95                              |
| <b>Total</b>     |                  | <b>412</b>                      |

(ONS, 2013)

While this indicates Gypsies and Travellers living in all the authorities in the study area it is likely that this may include a general underestimation due to the reluctance of some members of the community in Bricks and Mortar to declare themselves. However, the total of 412 includes also some clear anomalies, including the small numbers recorded in Flintshire, which has the highest number of authorised pitches in the region. Indeed, the total numbers for Flintshire are less than the 137 Flintshire children receiving the Section 466 grant. On this basis, taking the average numbers in each household, and assuming half their population in Flintshire is living in bricks and mortar accommodation, the Flintshire numbers should be revised upward to around 567, making a total population for the study area of at least 884.

***Site provision: Local Authority sites.***

2.14 There are two local authority sites in the area, both long established, and mentioned in the survey by Niner (2006). The Llandegai site in Gwynedd was built in 1981 and was previously managed by the Gypsy Council but is now managed by the local authority. At the time of Niner’s 2006 report Gwynedd had 24 pitches (12 residential, 12 transit), but the transit pitches were subsequently closed by the council, and that part of the site fenced off, while residential pitches were reduced to seven.

Difficulties between permanent residents and users of the transit site were one contributory factor in the decision.

- 2.15 Riverside, Queensferry, in Flintshire is a local authority permanent residential site run by the Gypsy Council. It has 20 pitches and is occupied mainly by Irish Travellers. The site is bounded to the north by the River Dee, and is in a predominately industrial area adjacent to an existing scrap yard and within close proximity to a large sewage works. The existing site is accessed directly off the A494, which is both a dual carriageway and a trunk road.
- 2.16 The site which was previously developed for industrial uses was granted planning permission in 1990 and was built shortly after that date with hard standings and amenity buildings. No improvements to the infrastructure of the site had been undertaken since its initial construction and therefore some updating was required. The electrics to the buildings and the static caravan were recently updated through a Welsh Assembly Government grant under the site refurbishment program.
- 2.17 The site has had varying degrees of occupancy over its lifetime, however it is currently in a period of stability and the past caravan counts have shown the site to be fully occupied and there is an informal waiting list for pitches. A request has been put forward by the site occupants through the site manager to expand the existing site and is being considered by the Council at present.
- 2.18 Although the Council is in control of some of the adjacent land, any expansion of the site is constrained by the current access arrangements which lead directly onto the A494 dual carriageway. The Welsh Assembly Government Highways department will not accept any additional increase in vehicles through the existing access and the future of any road widening in relation to the A494 is also still uncertain. Therefore alternative access proposals are being considered by the Council which would require the acquisition of third party land.
- 2.19 The Niner Report (2006) suggested that it was difficult to ascertain the number of private sites. The reasons for this varied:
  - In most local authorities Gypsy and Traveller issues are not a major issue or policy priority.
  - The survey questions were framed in terms of Gypsy and Traveller sites. Most local authorities do not regard family owned single developments as sites and thus do not record them as sites.

- Planning permissions and site licenses do not identify caravan sites where Gypsies and Travellers live as Gypsy and Traveller sites.

2.20 Due to these issues it is suggested that local authorities under estimate the number of private Gypsy and Traveller sites. Niner (2006) estimated that there were between 65 and 100 private Gypsy and Traveller sites across Wales.

### ***Site Provision: Private Sites***

2.21 The authorised sites (one with a five year planning permission) currently within the study area are:

2.22 Corbetts/Lyons Yard, Sandycroft is a historic private site of 22 pitches within the settlement boundary of Pentre surrounded by residential and industrial uses. The planning history in relation to the use of the site as a caravan park dates back to 1952. The site has a Caravan Site Licence for permanent residential use. The site is privately owned and the plots are rented on a private basis. The site is open plan with hard standing and each pitch is small with room for either a static or a touring caravan and a shed. The site is mainly occupied by Irish Travellers. In general this site is usually fully occupied or only has a few vacant pitches at the time of any caravan count.

2.23 Mitford Caravan Site, Mounds, Gwespyr is an established private site within the Mounds holiday caravan sites dated back to circa 1978. The site is surrounded by holiday caravan parks and is located in the open countryside and green barrier in terms of the development plan. The site is also in an area of flood risk. The plots are rented on a private basis. The site has a mixture of static and touring caravans with some buildings attached to caravans. There is one building on the site which is a shared facility for waste provision for the site residents. The site has a Caravan Site Licence for permanent residential use.

2.24 Dollar Park, Bagillt Road, Holywell is a private site occupied by Welsh Romany Gypsies since March 2007. The site is in the open countryside between the settlements of Bagillt and Holywell. It is surrounded by woodland protected by a group Tree Preservation Order and is opposite a Grade II Listed Building. The site has a temporary planning permission for 5 years which expires on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2016. This was granted on appeal following two retrospective planning applications.

2.25 The above permission is personal to six named families and their resident dependants who own their individual plots. The permission is for 6 plots each with permission for a static caravan, a touring caravan and

a brick built amenity building on each plot. The temporary permission was granted on the basis that the site was unsuitable as a permanent site due to the impact of the site on the rural area and the setting of the Listed Building opposite. It was therefore allowed on a temporary basis of 5 years due to the lack of alternative site provision and based on a realistic time period for the Local Planning Authority to have reached an advanced stage of their Local Development Plan process following a needs assessment.

- 2.26 Gwern Lane is a private site occupied by Irish Travellers since June 2010. The site is in the open countryside to the east of the village of Hope. Planning permission was granted on appeal on 11th May 2011, following the submission of a retrospective planning application. The permission is a permanent consent for four caravans, two of which are permitted to be static and a day room. The site is occupied by one extended Irish Traveller family who previously resided on the Local Authority site in Wrexham; however the permission is not restricted to them personally although they are the land owners.
- 2.27 Dee Bank Caravan Park, High Street, Bagillt, is a small private site between the railway line and the A548 adjacent to industrial uses outside the settlement boundary of Bagillt. The site is in a flood risk area and is close to the Dee Estuary. There are three static caravans on the site. This is an established site and little is known about the site or its occupants. It has not been included in the annual caravan counts. The site has a Caravan Site Licence for permanent residential use, but has not been included in the biannual Caravan Count.
- 2.28 Two caravans opposite Waen Farm, Gorsedd; this is a small private site north of the village of Gorsedd in the open countryside. The site is an area of hard standing opposite Waen farm with two static caravans. It is well screened from the road by a mature landscaping bund. A Certificate of Lawful Use was approved for this site in 1996 for the siting of one permanent residential caravan and one caravan for occupation only between 25<sup>th</sup> March and 30<sup>th</sup> September in any calendar year. The site has been in operation since 1962 when a caravan site licence was applied for and the site has a Caravan Site Licence for permanent residential use. Little is known about the site or its occupants and it has not been included in the biannual caravan count.
- 2.29 In Gwynedd, a private site with permission for 5 caravans exists near Bethesda

- 2.30 Not all these sites have been included in some of the biannual caravan counts, an indication that Niner (2006) was correct in suggesting the numbers might be underestimated.
- 2.31 There is a small unauthorised development, with two caravans, at Llanaelhearn, Gwynedd
- 2.32 The study area contains one long term unauthorised encampment which now has tolerated status. Pentraeth is an encampment of New Travellers in a lay-by off the A5025 Menai Bridge to Pentraeth Road. Established in 2007, after the occupants moved from other sites within the study area, the encampment was given tolerated status in 2011.

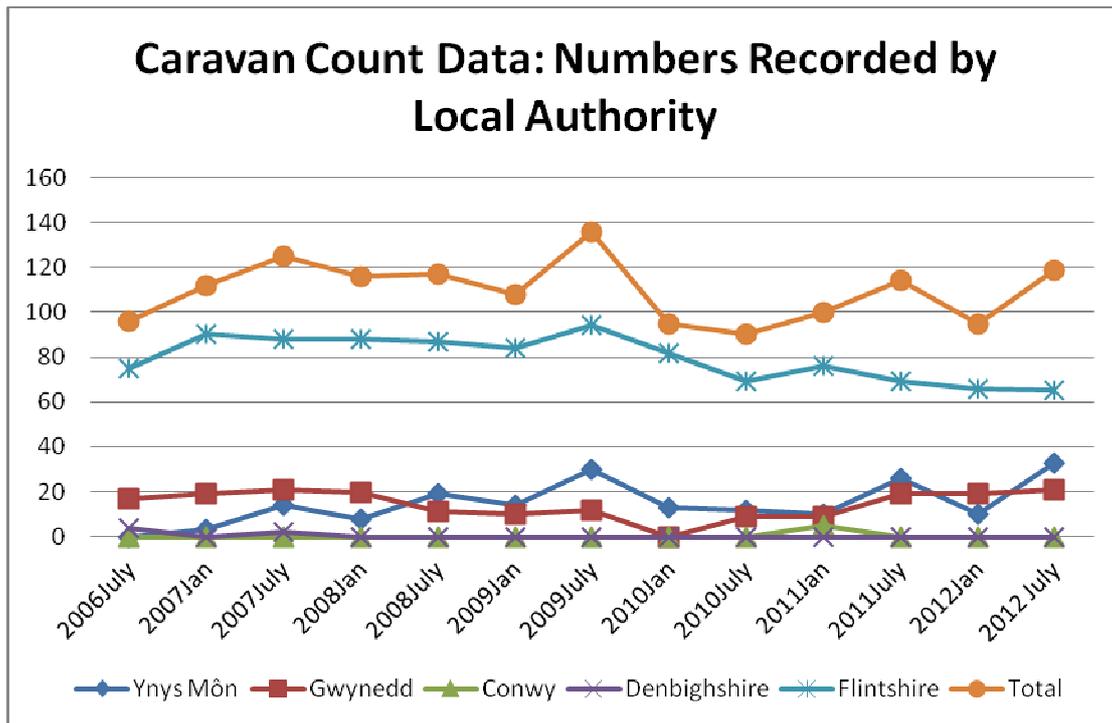
### ***Caravan numbers and trends from the Caravan Count***

- 2.33 The data provided in this chapter is derived from the Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Counts from the recommencement in July 2006 up until the last available count in July 2012
- 2.34 From the recommencement of the caravan count, the number of local authority pitches available has not changed. There are no socially rented sites, either permanent or transit, in Conwy, Denbighshire or Ynys Mon.
- 2.35 The Llandegai site is both owned and administered by the local authority. The site in Flintshire is on local authority land, but run by the Gypsy Council.
- 2.36 There are no recorded transit pitches across the study area, though Riverside has been wrongly allocated to the transit category in the caravan counts since January 2011. The transit site at Llandegai has been closed since Niner reported.
- 2.37 In the July 2012 Count, the total number of caravans counted in the area was 76, distributed as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Caravan Count Data, July 2012 (WG:2012)

|                     | Authorised sites (with planning permission) |         | Unauthorised sites (without planning permission) |               |                                                          |               |       |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------|--------------------------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-------|
|                     | Number of caravans                          |         | Number of caravans on sites on Gypsies own land  |               | Number of caravans on sites on land not owned by Gypsies |               |       |
|                     | Socially rented                             | Private | Tolerated                                        | Not tolerated | Tolerated                                                | Not tolerated | Total |
| <b>Ynys Môn</b>     | 0                                           | 0       | 0                                                | 0             | 12                                                       | 21            | 33    |
| <b>Gwynedd</b>      | 7                                           | 2       | 0                                                | 0             | 0                                                        | 12            | 21    |
| <b>Conwy</b>        | 0                                           | 0       | 0                                                | 0             | 0                                                        | 0             | 0     |
| <b>Denbighshire</b> | 0                                           | 0       | 0                                                | 0             | 0                                                        | 0             | 0     |
| <b>Flintshire</b>   | 18                                          | 40      | 0                                                | 5             | 0                                                        | 2             | 65    |
| <b>Total</b>        | 25                                          | 42      | 0                                                | 5             | 12                                                       | 35            | 119   |

Chart 1: Caravan Count Data, July 2006-July 2012



[http://data.gov.uk/dataset/gypsy\\_and\\_traveller\\_caravan\\_count](http://data.gov.uk/dataset/gypsy_and_traveller_caravan_count)

2.38 After adjusting for non-returns by including the previously recorded figure where an authority did not make a return, the number of caravans reported in the study area has not shown any clear trends since the reintroduction of the caravan count. Individual counts fluctuate according to time of year or coincidence with events. In July 2011, 15 of the caravans on Ynys Môn were associated with a visiting fair, while Welsh counts can also vary according to the proximity of events such as the Royal Welsh Show at Builth Wells

2.39 Other than Pentraeth, there are no long term unauthorised encampments identified through the caravan count data.

### 3 Survey methodology

- 3.1 This assessment was undertaken in three distinct stages which are described in more detail below:
- Stage one – collation and review of existing secondary information
  - Stage two – consultation with service providers and other stakeholders
  - Stage three – survey with Gypsies and Travellers across the Study Area.
- 3.2 The first stage comprised a review of the available literature and secondary sources, obtained from central and local government, as well as regional, community and academic bodies. This provides an historical, social and political overview of Gypsies and Travellers in the Study Area.
- 3.3 The second stage involved gathering the views of various service providers and other stakeholders and drew on their experience and perceptions of the main issues for Gypsies and Travellers. Much of this information was collected via an extensive self-completion questionnaire sent out to a representative from each local authority. Joint-working between housing, planning, and education departments was required in order to provide a completed questionnaire.
- 3.4 The questionnaire was structured around three broad issues:
- The particular experiences that stakeholder have in relation to the accommodation and related needs of Gypsies and Travellers across the Study Area;
  - The current working practices of stakeholders in relation to Gypsies and Travellers across the Study Area, and;
  - Stakeholder perspectives on what the priority needs are for Gypsies and Travellers across the Study Area.
- 3.5 All local authorities completed this questionnaire. Chapter 5 provides a discussion of the data collected from this questionnaire.
- 3.6 One of the most important aspects of a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment involves consulting with local Gypsies and

Travellers. This took place between October 2010 and February 2011. These consultations mainly took the form of face-to face interviews and focus groups in order to gather information about their characteristics, experiences, accommodation and related needs and aspirations.

- 3.7 Informal conversations were also used as a tool to collect data from individuals who were reluctant to fill in the questionnaires or take part in focus groups. The survey with Gypsies and Travellers is discussed in further detail below under three sections: sampling strategy and response rates; questionnaire design; and fieldwork and interviewers.

### ***Sampling methods and response rates.***

- 3.8 A sampling frame was difficult to produce as reliable data on the numbers of Gypsies and Travellers living in north Wales is unknown. Niner (2006) suggests the population in Wales is approximately 2,000 people, with the biggest concentration along the key transport routes in the north and south of Wales. She also refers to local authority estimates which suggest that the number of Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar accommodation is around 1800. Best estimates suggest that there are approximately 4,000 Gypsies and Travellers in Wales (Niner, 2006) with between 1,000 and 2,000 of those living in North Wales. Following consultations with the Gypsy and Traveller Working Group, using the above statistics above as a guide, it was decided that the study should endeavour to interview 140 individuals.
- 3.9 A purposive sampling approach was utilised. Purposive sampling targets a particular group of people. This method is used when the desired population for the study is difficult to locate and (or) recruit (Kelly et al, 2003). As the population of Gypsies and Travellers is relatively hidden from official records, this method was judged to be the most appropriate approach.

### ***Data Collection methods.***

- 3.10 The North West Wales GTANA comes relatively late in the initial round of GTANAs cycle and a number of previous reports were available as models. Valuable advice was given informally by members of the Housing and Urban Studies Unit at the University of Salford, which has wide experience in conducting GTANAs. The questionnaires for this study were designed in consultation between the GTANA Working Group and the University of Wales Bangor. Draft questionnaires were trialled and amended after input from members of the Gypsy and Traveller community.

- 3.11 Three questionnaires were designed to collect data from individuals;
- living on permanent sites
  - living in bricks and mortar accommodation, and;
  - staying on encampments or unauthorised sites.
- 3.12 Questions were a mixture of tick-box answers and open-ended questions. This gave the opportunity to gather quantifiable information, but also allowed the interviewer more scope for narrative responses. Whilst the three questionnaires were not exact replicas, all covered issues such as:
- current accommodation;
  - travelling patterns;
  - household details;
  - local services, and;
  - future accommodation preferences/aspirations.
- 3.13 In May 2010 a tender was then prepared for the collection of data, for a three month period, of Gypsy and Travellers living in bricks and mortar and established sites across the study area. This required evidence that the local Gypsy and Traveller community would be involved in the data collection process. Gypsy Traveller Advocacy Cymru (GTAC) was appointed to carry out the data collection field work. Members of the local Gypsy and Traveller community were recruited and trained as interviewers. In order to engage with the Gypsies and Traveller population it was decided that the fieldwork team should rely on two main methods:
- contacts of Gypsies and Travellers who had already been interviewed as part of the assessment; and,
  - the contacts of the Gypsy and Traveller Community Interviewers on the fieldwork team.
- 3.14 The GTANA Steering Group set a target for the number of adult respondents in local authority area. Table 2 indicates the target and actual number of interviewees

Table 2: Target and actual adult respondents from each local Authority area.

| Local authority area | Target no of adult respondents | Achieved no of adult respondents |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Ynys Môn             | 15                             | 19                               |
| Conwy                | 10                             | 9                                |
| Denbighshire         | 10                             | 13                               |
| Flintshire           | 35                             | 38                               |
| Gwynedd              | 30                             | 14                               |
| <b>Total</b>         | <b>100</b>                     | <b>93</b>                        |

3.15 Ynys Môn, Denbighshire and Flintshire exceeded the target number of respondents. Conwy and in particular Gwynedd, underachieved with regards to the target number of respondents.

3.16 In terms of the target number of adult responses versus the number of achieved adult respondents the overall sample fell short of 7 respondents. Reasons why this occurred are discussed later in this chapter.

3.17 Target numbers were also set in relation to the type of accommodation occupied by the respondents. The target and actual numbers achieved are indicated in Table 3.

Table 3: Target and actual adult respondents by type of accommodation.

| Type of accommodation | Target no of adult respondents | Achieved no of adult respondents |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Bricks and mortar     | 30                             | 36                               |
| Encampment            | 25                             | 32                               |
| Site                  | 45                             | 25                               |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>100</b>                     | <b>93</b>                        |

3.18 During the tender process GTAC expressed an interest to include younger members of the Gypsy and Traveller community in the data collection process. Following consultation with GTAC and the Gypsy

and Traveller Working Group the study team designed a further questionnaire suitable for use with young people. This shorter questionnaire consisted of twenty five questions regarding the main themes outlined above. The young person questionnaire was also designed so that it could be utilised when a shorter interview with other Gypsy and Traveller community members was needed (for example if the respondent had little time) or if there were literacy issues.

- 3.19 Due to the popularity of this questionnaire for the reasons above, utilising this questionnaire led to gaining more respondents who would not have responded if faced with a lengthier questionnaire. However it is noted that the utilisation of the additional questionnaire as well as another form of data collection (informal conversation) made data analysis more difficult.

### ***Focus Groups.***

- 3.20 Data was also collected from focus groups held with the Gypsy and Traveller community. Members of the Gypsy and Traveller community were recruited by GTAC as focus group facilitators – an example of good practice. A focus group topic guide, based on the topics outlined above, was prepared. All questionnaires and focus group material is available in the appendix to this report. Two separate focus groups were held in Gwynedd (local authority site), and Ynys Môn (unauthorised development).

### ***Informal Conversations.***

- 3.21 In order to maximise response rates data was also collected via informal conversations. This method was also useful to collect data from those who, due to time constraints or literacy issues, were unwilling to take part in a full interview. Informal conversations were mainly undertaken with individuals on encampments, however some individuals living on site accommodation and bricks and mortar also gave informal interviews.
- 3.22 Data collection took place between October 2010 and February 2011. A briefing note was distributed to Gypsies and Travellers when the fieldworkers' initially visited the site, explaining the purpose of the research and encouraging participation. At the completion of the data collection period the questionnaires were then checked for quality by the study team, before the data was analysed.

### ***Overview of the results from data collection with Gypsy and Traveller population.***

3.23 Ninety three adult respondents took part in the survey. Forty four respondents aged from 11 to 17 took part. Data collected from the young people interviewed will be discussed in a separate chapter. Table 4 provides an outline of the numbers of adults who took part via each method. Two focus groups were held – one in Gwynedd and the other in Ynys Môn.

Table 4: Number of target and actual respondents via each data collection method.

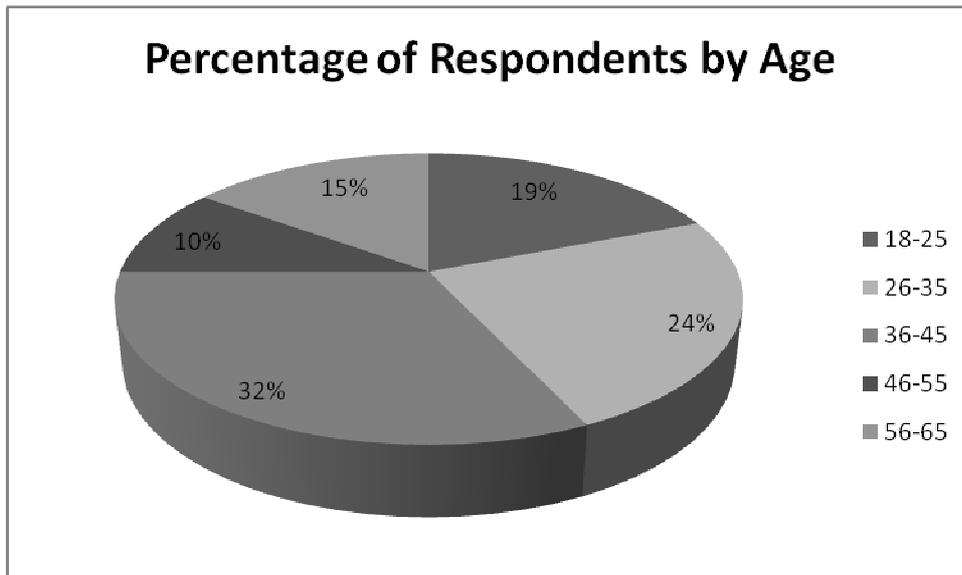
|                                | <b>Questionnaire</b> | <b>Focus groups</b> | <b>Informal conversations</b> |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Target interviews</b>       | 75                   | 25                  | 0                             |
| <b>Actual no of interviews</b> | 57                   | 14                  | 22                            |

3.24 Fifty seven respondents filled in questionnaires. Fourteen took part in focus groups. Informal conversations were held with the remaining respondents, mainly those on encampments, where there were practical difficulties in obtaining detailed information. These conversations on average took five minutes.

3.25 52 females (55% of the sample) and 41 males (45%) were interviewed for the survey.

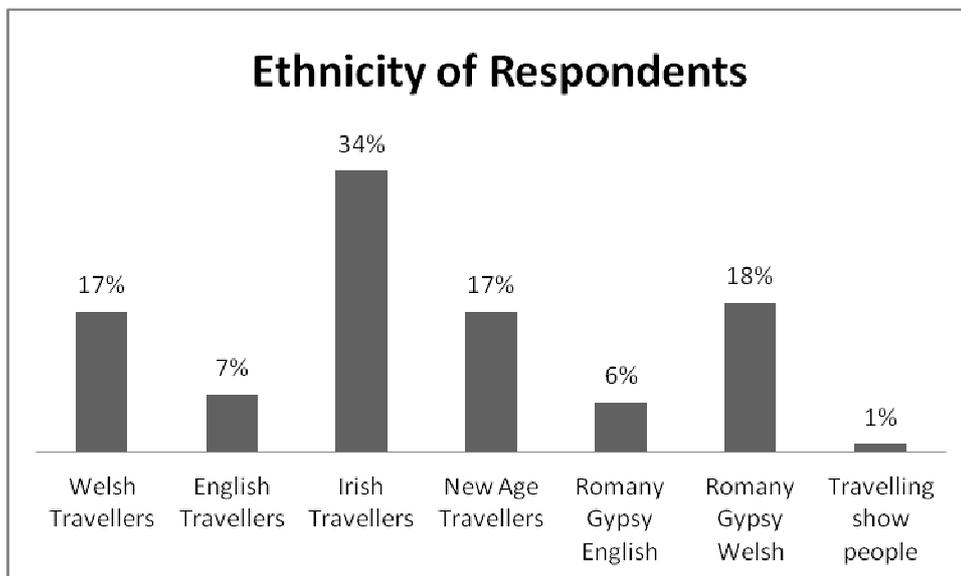
3.26 The stated age of interviewees is indicated in the graph below. 13% of respondents did not provide an age. The highest percentage of participants (32%) were those aged 36 – 45. The lowest percentage (10%) were aged 46 – 55. No one aged over 65 was interviewed.

Chart 2: Age of respondents.



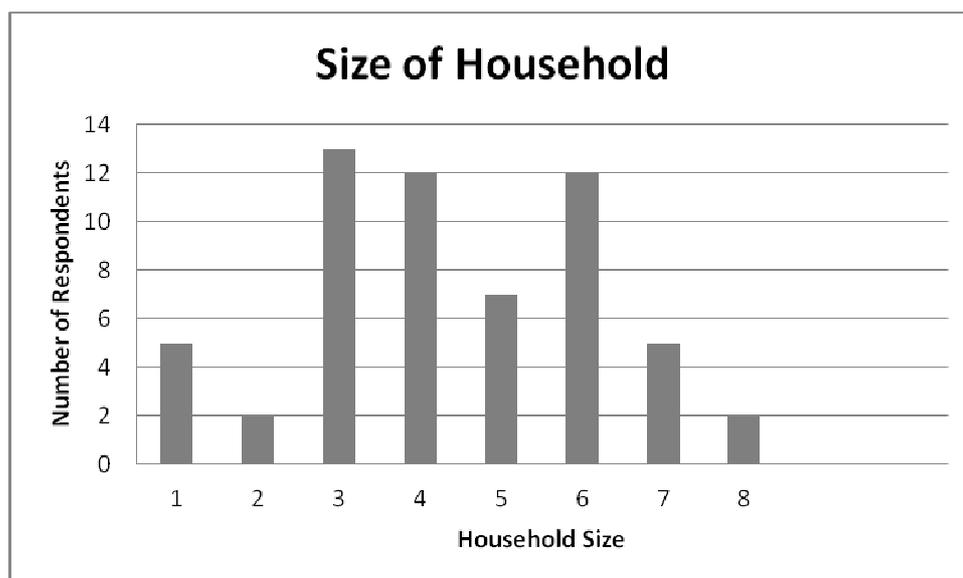
3.27 The declared ethnicity of respondents is indicated in the chart below. The highest number of respondents (34%) were Irish Travellers, with respondents from a Romany Gypsy background also comprising a large proportion of the sample (24%). There was one interview with a Travelling Show-person.

Chart 3: Ethnicity of respondents.



- 3.28 11% of respondents reported they had some form of disability. This is a high response rate, but is consistent with findings from other accommodation assessments carried out by local authorities.
- 3.29 Reported disabilities ranged from anxiety, asthma attacks to being paralysed after having a stroke and mobility issues. Half of those who reported having a disability suggested they had problems relating to anxiety or depression.
- 3.30 Mean household size, where this had been disclosed, was 4.37 persons per household. The median size was 4 persons. Whilst only 3% of respondents reported living in a household comprising of 8 individuals this is higher than the national average of 0.1%. While the lack of those over pensionable age in the sample might be a factor, these figures indicate that Gypsy and Traveller households are likely to be larger than the average.

Chart 4: Size of household.



**Data Collection - What worked well**

- 3.31 Prior to the start of the project the local Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer, had worked successfully to build relationships with members of the Gypsy and Traveller community living on a permanent site in her area. The project was promoted widely to the community by the local Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer, resulting in two members of the community joining the Gypsy and Traveller Working Group and then subsequently working as peer interviewers.
- 3.32 The study team also successfully recruited members of the Gypsy and Traveller community as peer interviewers. This was been extremely

beneficial in terms of identifying members of the community residing in bricks and mortar, and galvanising respondents trust to fully engage in the process, particularly in Gwynedd and Flintshire.

- 3.33 Offering an incentive to the Travellers in the form of supermarket vouchers often helped to secure the involvement of the community.

#### ***Data Collection – What didn't work well***

- 3.34 A number of potential respondents were reluctant to take part in the survey as they felt that their participation could potentially have a negative effect on their tenancy – possibly resulting in them being asked to leave the site. Recognition of this issue led to a further method of data collection: some respondents took part in the survey through a self directed, informal conversation
- 3.35 Consistent with the experiences of other local authorities carrying out GTANA's, the study team found that pending planning hearings affected the possibility of obtaining the views of some individuals.
- 3.36 Respondents in areas without official sites were more difficult to locate due to lack of established networks. Previous GTANA reports carried out in other areas across the UK suggest that is because some Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar accommodation are unwilling to reveal their Traveller heritage due to fears that they will be treated differently in the community
- 3.37 A further, unexpected issue was a reality television programme that dealt with the experiences of Gypsies and Travellers in Britain. A Big Fat Gypsy Wedding started its second series in January 2011. Subsequently, some potential participants suggested they were uncomfortable about taking part in the accommodation assessment as they felt that they programme had portrayed the community in a negative light. Up until this point, the data collection had been going particularly well, with expectations that a greater number of respondents would be interviewed – over and above the 140 participant target. It is estimated that an additional 50 respondents did not take part in the study due to concerns over the above television programme.
- 3.38 It is appropriate at this point to make some recommendations as a result of the data gathering process.

#### ***Recommendations***

- 3.39 *Recommendation 3:* All partner authorities should ensure that an internal working group exists within each authority. This group should cut across

service areas, in order to better co-ordinate the response and approach on Gypsy and Traveller issues and avoid potential duplication of work.

3.40 *Recommendation 4:* Each authority should identify a lead officer who manages each authority's response to Gypsies and Traveller issues

## **4. Stakeholder consultation**

### ***Introduction.***

- 4.1 A consultation was conducted with representatives from each local authority in order to provide in-depth qualitative information on the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers. A stakeholder questionnaire was sent to a representative from each local authority. Themes covered in the questionnaire included: current site accommodation; the need for additional provisions and facilities; travelling patterns; the availability of land; accessing services and work currently taking place to meet the needs of the Gypsies and Traveller community.

### ***Local Authority Gypsy and Traveller Sites.***

- 4.2 Stakeholders confirmed that no local authority residential sites had been closed or sold since 1994. The 12 pitch transit site at Llandegai in Gwynedd had been closed in 2005, while one residential pitch had been lost in 2010 while providing facilities for a site manager. All stakeholders indicated that they did not have any current plans to provide or increase the number of local authority Gypsy and Traveller pitches in their area over the next 5 years.

### ***Planning and private Gypsy and Traveller sites.***

- 4.3 Stakeholders were asked if they had a development plan covering their local authority area against which an application for a Gypsy and Traveller site would be assessed. All replied in the affirmative. All stakeholders except for Ynys Môn stated that their development plan included a policy towards Gypsy and Traveller sites. Gwynedd indicated that its development plan did not include provision for New Travellers.
- 4.4 When asked if the numbers of authorised private sites and/or pitches had changed since 2007, all stakeholders, except Gwynedd suggested that they had remained static. Gwynedd reported that there had been one new private site approved.
- 4.5 Respondents were then asked if they expected the number of authorised private Gypsy and Traveller sites in their area to increase over the next five years. All respondents replied that they did not know.
- 4.6 Respondents were tasked to fill in a table that reflected how many planning applications for the development of Gypsy and Traveller sites had been received since 2007.

4.7 From 2007 to 2009 no local authority had recorded any applications received. The table below shows that in 2010 Ynys Môn, Conwy, Denbighshire and Gwynedd had no recorded applications. Flintshire had 2 recorded applications. No permissions were granted, and one application - in Flintshire - was refused (though a five year temporary permission was subsequently granted on appeal).

Table 5: Planning Applications for Gypsy and Traveller Sites, 2010.

| Year | LA area      | Applications received | Location       | Permissions granted | Permissions refused | Granted on appeal |
|------|--------------|-----------------------|----------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 2010 | Ynys Môn     | 0                     | 0              | 0                   | 0                   | 0                 |
|      | Conwy        | 0                     | 0              | 0                   | 0                   | 0                 |
|      | Denbighshire | 0                     | 0              | 0                   | 0                   | 0                 |
|      | Flintshire   | 2                     | Bagillt, Ewloe | None to date        | One, Bagillt        | N/A               |
|      | Gwynedd      | 0                     | 0              | 0                   | 0                   | 0                 |

### ***Unauthorised Developments.***

- 4.8 Stakeholders were asked if their authority had experienced unauthorised developments of Gypsy and Traveller sites since 2005. Conwy and Denbighshire reported that they had experienced no unauthorised developments. Flintshire and Ynys Môn said they had two unauthorised developments, whilst Gwynedd had experienced one unauthorised development. Flintshire reported that there was one current case of enforcement activity whilst Ynys Môn had taken enforcement action twice at the time of response, Gwynedd was awaiting results of welfare enquiries and medical information before deciding how to proceed
- 4.9 Stakeholders were then asked if they expected further unauthorised private Gypsy and Traveller sites, to occur in their area over the next five years. All except Gwynedd said they did not expect an increase. Gwynedd's representative stated *"There is always a possibility given the area's location and past occurrences of unauthorised encampments. We have had three requests for plots at Llandegai over the last three weeks"*.

### ***Unauthorised encampments by Gypsy and Travellers.***

- 4.10 Three stakeholders suggested that their local authority is developing a policy on provision of sites for Gypsies and Travellers on a joint authority basis. Gwynedd and Ynys Môn are working on a Joint Local Development Plan.

### ***Site Provision in a Strategic Context***

- 4.11 All representatives, except Conwy and Gwynedd suggested that a review of policies on accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers was ongoing. Conwy noted that their policies had been reviewed in 2007, 2009 and 2010. Each local authority appeared to be awaiting results of the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment and other collaborative work with North Wales authorities.
- 4.12 All except Conwy suggested that their local authority's Local Housing Strategy aimed to provide or facilitate the provision of accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers. Conwy reported that this was in preparation.
- 4.13 Stakeholders were also asked about any specific measures already in place to help Gypsies and Travellers who want it to access and/or retain bricks and mortar accommodation in their area. Ynys Môn and Denbighshire said there were no specific measures. Both Gwynedd and Flintshire identified:

- Housing related support provided to Gypsies and Travellers.
  - Gypsies and Travellers are included as an option on ethnic monitoring forms.
  - Gwynedd also identified:
  - Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer(s) in post.
- 4.14 All except Conwy suggested that their local authority's Homelessness Strategy aimed to provide or facilitate the provision of accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers. Conwy suggested that this was in preparation.
- 4.15 Conwy and Gwynedd were the only local authorities that suggested their local authority's Community Strategy aimed to assist Gypsies and Travellers accommodation needs and/or social integration.

### ***Consultation with Gypsies and Travellers.***

- 4.16 Respondents were also asked if Gypsies and Travellers were consulted in the process of preparing the local housing, homelessness or community strategies or in the review of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation policy.
- 4.17 Conwy and Flintshire said that Gypsy and Travellers were consulted for their community strategy. Ynys Môn suggested that Gypsy and Travellers were consulted for their review of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation policy. Gwynedd had consulted on the local housing and homelessness strategies, and the review of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation policy.
- 4.18 The stakeholder from Denbighshire suggested that Gypsy and Travellers were not consulted for the local housing and homelessness strategy, or their community strategy.
- 4.19 When asked how Gypsies and Travellers were consulted, the representative from Flintshire said that *"Current FCC Local Housing Strategy is being reviewed and as part of this review process all interested or affected groups will be provided with opportunity to contribute to the review process"*. Gwynedd had consulted through the Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer. Ynys Môn, Conwy and Denbighshire did not respond to this question.
- 4.20 Accommodation issues relating to Gypsies and Travellers are specifically included in Conwy, Flintshire, Denbighshire and Gwynedd's plans required under the Race Equality Duty. Gypsy and Traveller

accommodation issues have been specifically included in Conwy, Flintshire, Gwynedd and Denbighshire's approach to the Equality Standard for Local Government in Wales (now being replaced by the Equality Improvement Framework for Wales). Ynys Môn suggested that Gypsy and Traveller accommodation issues had not been specifically included.

- 4.21 Interviewees were asked if their local Authority had carried out or facilitated specific training activities on issues related to Gypsy and Traveller accommodation and/or Gypsy and Traveller equality issues since 2007. Conwy and Flintshire said their elected members, senior and frontline staff had received training. Ynys Môn suggested their senior staff had received training, whilst Gwynedd suggested their frontline staff had the requisite training. Denbighshire said that none of the staff had been trained. Denbighshire suggested that this was because *"they are awaiting the outcome of GTANA in relation to site provision as well as awaiting agreement on North Wales Protocol on dealing with unauthorised encampments before adopting protocol and arranging training."*
- 4.22 All respondents were asked if their local authority had established a Gypsy and Traveller Interagency Forum, or made specific arrangements to improve relations with the local community, including Gypsies and Travellers themselves, to facilitate discussion of site provision. Only Gwynedd answered that there had been some specific arrangements in terms of a local Gypsy and Traveller forum. Conwy suggested they had made other arrangements in the form of a *"Gypsy and Traveller (G&T) Site Demand and Supply Study undertaken to determine the level and type of site required in the LDP. This involved direct contact with G&T communities"*.
- 4.23 When asked what other arrangements were in place regarding Gypsy and Travellers, Flintshire pointed out that they operate an internal officer working group. In addition the council is a member of the North Wales Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment. Denbighshire noted that educational provision was in place for a small number (currently four) of Gypsy and Traveller children living in bricks and mortar accommodation and for any individuals on temporary sites.

### ***Strategic vision for Gypsies and Travellers.***

- 4.24 Stakeholders were asked if overall, their local authority has a holistic strategic vision for Gypsies and Travellers - including site provision. All respondents apart from Gwynedd suggested they did not have a holistic strategic vision. Conwy suggested they *'partly'* had a holistic strategic

vision, *“In terms of the LDP a strategic approach has been established to determine any requirement identified through the GTANA including on-going monitoring of the effectiveness of the Policy approach. Under the current policy framework, the CBLP (1999) is the only local plan with a criteria based policy in place to assess planning applications. The CBLP only covers part of the Plan Area”.*

- 4.25 All respondents except Gwynedd suggested there were a number of priority actions that their local Authority intends to take in order to develop such a holistic strategic vision. Flintshire is shortly to commence development of a dedicated Gypsy and Traveller strategy linked to the review of the current Local Housing Strategy. This will form part of the council’s response to the national Gypsy and Traveller strategy. Ynys Môn intends to develop corporate policies to address Gypsy and Traveller issues; however the policies are unlikely to be holistic and comprehensive. Denbighshire reported that a working group of officers had been established to develop policies on site provision, communication, dealing with unauthorised encampments, etc. Consideration of Gypsy and Traveller issues alongside [those of other groups](#) in Community Strategies, LDPs, and other strategic plans will also be ensured. Conwy suggested that *“the completion of the GTANA is the first step in identifying any requirement for site(s) (temporary, transit or permanent) to identify a vision/strategy for accommodating any need. An approach is identified in the Council’s LDP to deal with any future need.”*

### ***Barriers to site provision.***

- 4.26 Each local Authority was reminded that the EHRC’s review of progress on site provision in England identified the main barriers to provision of additional sites for Gypsies and Travellers (Brown & Niner, 2009; This has subsequently been updated to include Welsh provision in Brown et al, 2010). The barriers identified are as follows:

- Lack of awareness of the issue among policy makers
- Public/elected member opposition
- Negative media issues
- Difficulty in identifying appropriate land
- The planning framework
- Funding and finance
- Gypsy and Traveller site provision not being a local priority
- Leadership issues

4.27 Respondents were then asked to comment, from their own experience, on whether these or other specific barriers were relevant in their local authority. Comments included:

*[There is a] “lack of up to date evidence base to demonstrate need as well as a strong community objection to site selection”.*

*“Whereas potential sites can be identified through the planning, the choice of sites often elicit strong objections from neighbouring residents and their elected members”.*

*[There is] “genuine concern that demand is so low in this area that the provision of a temporary site would create demand. Uncertainty about the size of site needed, if any, and the location within a large geographic rural area”.*

4.28 All stakeholders were then asked to reflect on any further barriers to additional (or new) site provision.

- Wales being deemed an area of ‘natural beauty’
- Possibly because Gypsy and Travellers are not perceived as being ‘Welsh’
- Current policies or measures regarding Gypsies and Travellers.

4.29 Respondents were asked to outline what proactive measures were being taken by their local authority to tackle these barriers and increase site provision. Answers included:

- GTANA is being undertaken
- Frequently Asked Questions about Gypsies and Travellers leaflet available on website
- Gypsies and Travellers included in cohesion and diversity training provided for employees, school pupils and elected members
- Celebration of Gypsy and Traveller History Month
- Gypsy and Travellers Myth buster leaflet has been circulated to employees, public and partners
- Two local authorities have commissioned consultants to help identify possible sites for accommodating Gypsies and Travellers within the two counties as part of the Local Development Plan Process.
- An agreed draft site selection criteria policy in the forthcoming LDP

4.30 When asked if there were any additional comments respondents from each local authority would like to make about Gypsy and Traveller site requirements and/or provision the following responses were given:

*“Advice would be useful on requirement for sites in an area where demand appears to be very low. The GTANA for North Wales may provide greater insight into the issues but it is difficult to devise a policy for such small numbers”.*

*“The deeply entrenched discrimination faced by the Travelling community and the general lack of understanding and awareness of different cultures and needs creates a significant barrier and undermines community cohesion which results in social exclusion of this group”.*

*“I have two youths who are coming of age, that require additional plots, plus a housed youth who requires to move back on site to be with family “*

*“I think Welsh Assembly Government should be more active in ensuring that proper provision is made for meeting Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation needs and if necessary should direct LA’s to make suitable provision”.*

*In Gwynedd the closure of the transit site was noted as an ongoing issue:*

*“Bangor, and Llandegai in particular, has been a traditional stopping place for Gypsies and Travellers due to the existence of the Site. This pattern has maintained since closing the Transit site, and we believe this trend will continue. Just because there is no provision in a given area doesn't mean that the Community will stop travelling or resorting to that district.”*

### **Recommendations.**

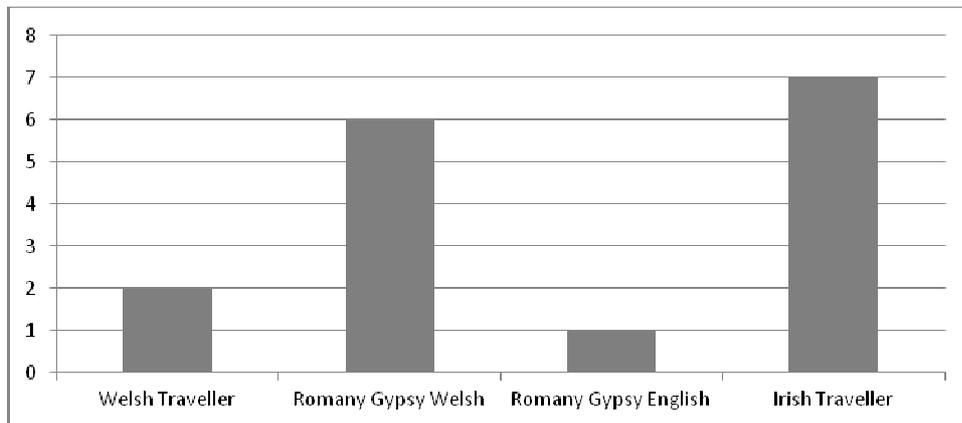
- 4.31 *Recommendation 5:* In order to adhere to Equalities legislation, and to ensure the high quality of on-going monitoring, local authorities should ensure that Gypsies and Travellers are recognised in ethnic monitoring forms, most urgently in relation to housing and planning
- 4.32 *Recommendation 6:* Local authorities should ensure that principles of equality, in relation to Gypsies and Travellers, are embedded in the wide range of services provided. In particular this includes: housing, planning and homelessness policies.
- 4.33 *Recommendation 7:* Local authorities should be sensitive to the different cultural and support needs of Gypsies and Travellers who present as homeless and those who require local authority accommodation.

## 5 Gypsies and Travellers on Sites with Planning Permission

### *Demographics of the sample population*

5.1 Interviews were conducted at a selected sample of the sites with planning permission within the study area. Llandegai is a long established local authority site owned and run by the local authority. Dollar Park is a private site with authorisation for a five year period ending on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2016. 25 respondents living on site accommodation were interviewed. 7 individuals were interviewed from Gwynedd and 18 from Flintshire. 15 respondents were female, whilst 10 interviewees were male. Over half (64 %) of respondents were aged 36-45. The respondents identified themselves as Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers

Chart 5: Ethnicity of the sample population of Gypsy and Travellers living on site accommodation



5.2 Four respondents, two at Llandegai and two at Dollar Park, suggested they or a member of their household have a disability.

5.3 Respondents living on the council site in Gwynedd had lived there an average of 6 years. Those interviewed who lived on the private site in Flintshire had lived there an average of 3 years.

### *Site facilities and condition.*

5.4 Participants were asked a series of questions about the facilities on their pitch and site and what additional facilities were required. Facilities on both sites include: hard standings, clear plot boundaries; water; bottled gas, electricity; drainage – cesspit; postal delivery, refuse storage in the form of bins on pitch; refuse collection from the local authority; a communal room; children’s play area; bus stop nearby, an amenity block with toilets and bath/showers and for laundry. Overall respondents from

both sites note that their site is close to shops, schools, doctors and dentists as well as a public telephone.

- 5.5 Respondents were asked if they had any health and safety concerns. Residents on Llandegai site noted that it is not easy to manoeuvre vehicles and caravans around the site as the road is too narrow. They also noted that there had been a health and safety issue previously where an ambulance couldn't get in due to the height restriction at the entrance. This is a concern as there is one resident who has mobility issues due to a disability.
- 5.6 Residents on Dollar Park did not mention any concerns with manoeuvring vehicles around the site.
- 5.7 Overall residents at Llandegai were happy with safety precautions on site, but there were a few residents surveyed who were unaware of the location of the fire precautions notice or fire fighting equipment such as hydrants, hoses and extinguishers.
- 5.8 Respondents from Dollar Park did not completely fill in these sections in the questionnaire, so it is unclear how they felt regarding safety precautions, nor their awareness of the location of the fire precautions notice or fire fighting equipment. However informal interviews with nine residents on Dollar Park highlighted that some residents felt the services they received were *'terrible'*. These residents asked not to be identified in the report and were very uncomfortable speaking openly about any concerns they had on the site as they felt they be asked to leave.
- 5.9 A focus group held with participants of Llandegai site asked a number of questions including their impression of the facilities on site. Residents noted that *"There's no caretaker...there is not the same level of maintenance"*. Residents suggested that they needed more sheds and also requested that the site some be made more 'homely'.

### ***Living on sites.***

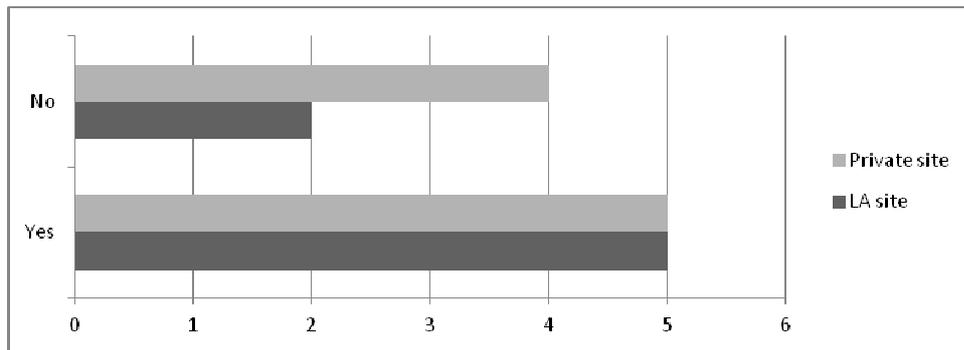
- 5.10 All respondents who live on the sites were asked: What are the good things about living on the site? Positive aspects of living on both sites were mainly related to being close to friends and family: *"Lots of my family live here. We have a proper site to live on"*, whilst another participant said that the site is: *"Close to children and grandchildren"*.
- 5.11 Respondents on both sites noted the peacefulness of the location: *"I like the peace and quiet. I love the animals that we see around here"* and *"It is quiet"*.

- 5.12 Respondents were then asked: What are the bad things about living on the site? Residents living on the Flintshire site appeared overall to have little problems with the site, but they did note that the road nearby was busy and dangerous. Residents living at the Gwynedd site had a number of concerns. The main concern was the appearance and facilities on the site. One resident noted: *“Even though it’s been refurbished it’s still not a nice site compared to other sites”*, whilst another resident felt the site had *“never been done properly, there is no living area”*.
- 5.13 Many respondents on the Llandegai site were unhappy with the fencing around the site as they felt it made the site look like a concentration camp. They also had concerns regarding the maintenance of the site, noting that *“there is no warden...the toilets are outside and that they need fixing”*. Llandegai residents also noted that a car was needed if you lived on the site as it was quite far away from the town centre.
- 5.14 Residents of both sites were then asked: How do you rate this site for neighbourhood, neighbours, location, noise and traffic”. Two respondents suggested they were neutral regarding all aspects relating to the neighbourhood, neighbours, location, noise and traffic whilst one respondent was very satisfied. As no residents from the Dollar Park site answered this section it is difficult to give a representative overview of their opinions.
- 5.15 Residents of both sites were then asked if they had had problem on the site regarding rodents, fly tipping, neighbours and (or) local, disputes. The residents from Llandegai site who did respond suggested there had been problems with rats and fly tipping. Residents from the Dollar Park site did not answer this question.
- 5.16 Residents at Llandegai agreed that they were involved in the consultation when there had been improvements to the site three years ago.

### ***Travelling patterns.***

- 5.17 Respondents were then asked if they had travelled away from home within the last twelve months. 62 % of respondents had travelled within the last few months.

Chart 6: Travel patterns of the Gypsy and Traveller sample population living on site accommodation.



5.18 Many respondents who had not travelled away from home suggested this was because there are no stopping places. One respondent said: *“where to go? [Its] getting harder, stopping places are blocked off”*.

5.19 Those that do travel did so in the summer and mainly did so due to work, visiting friends and family or going to special occasions such as weddings. Respondents travelled with their own households, or family members and friends. Respondents travelled within North Wales, the rest of Wales or Northern England. They might stop on either roadside/waste ground, farmers’ fields or at the side of a road. All respondents suggested that their travelling patterns had changed within the last few years.

**Recommendations**

5.20 *Recommendation 8:* Residential site waiting lists should be: accessible to all Gypsies and Travellers in the area, and clear and transparent in terms of allocation policies

5.21 *Recommendation 9:* The management of permanent sites needs to be evaluated at regular intervals in accordance with the guidance issued by the to the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG, 2008)

## 6. Gypsies and Travellers living on unauthorised sites and encampments.

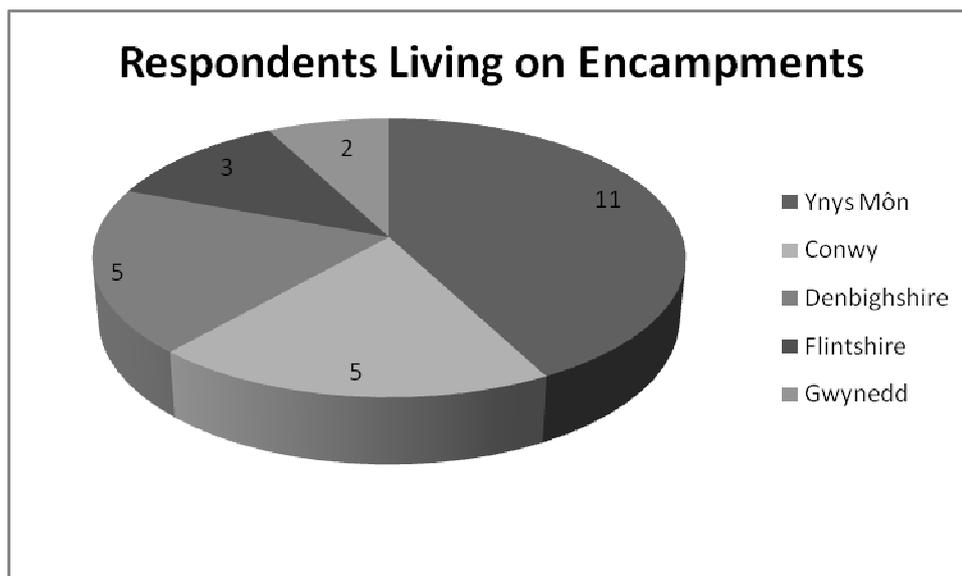
- 6.1 Unauthorised encampments, and the development of unauthorised sites, have become a major issue in recent years. They are a major cause of tensions between Gypsies and Travellers and the settled population. The presence of Gypsies and Travellers at unauthorised locations leads to high levels of friction and the manifestation of racist and discriminatory behaviours from settled and sedentary communities. The CRE (2006) found that 67 per cent of local authorities reported they have had to deal with tensions between Gypsies and Irish Travellers and other members of the public
- 6.2 Whether through a shortage of authorised permanent site provision, or a lack of authorised stopping places while in transit through an area, Gypsies and Travellers can resort to unauthorised developments or set up encampments,. They may then be caught up in a cycle of eviction, using varying degrees of ingenuity to obtain a short respite before moving on. In one study, over one third of roadside residents said they had been evicted on at least 30 occasions in the previous five years (CRE, 2006:19).
- 6.3 Evidence also suggests that Gypsies and Travellers often park in secluded areas at the back of farms, resided in caravans in relatives' gardens, and doubled up on family sites in breach of planning restrictions. (CRE, 2006:10)
- 6.4 Research has suggested that repeated eviction and clean-up of unauthorised encampments costs taxpayers significantly more than would the provision of permanent residential or transit sites, when all the costs involved are considered (Morris & Clements, 2002) Research suggests that the financial costs to local authorities exceed six million pounds a year. Although this is 'almost certainly a substantial underestimate' as it fails to account for staff time. The costs of policing and evicting Gypsies and Travellers instead of providing adequate authorised sites is not cost-effective,
- 6.5 The North Wales GTANA survey included those on unauthorised encampments. These included both temporary encampments, normally of short duration, and residents of a longstanding tolerated encampment at between Pentraeth and Menai Bridge, on part of a now bypassed section of the old A5025.

- 6.6 As with many accommodation assessments GTAC experienced difficulties when attempting to interview members of the community living on encampments and unauthorised developments. The main reasons for this were:
- There was not a coordinated and consistent policy for informing the project coordinator of when an encampment had arrived at a specific area.
  - In the majority of cases, when GTAC were informed of a potential encampment, the encampment had moved on.
  - Those encampments that were still in the locality were often very wary about taking part in the survey as there appeared to be concerns that this would affect their ability to stay at the site.
  - Because of the difficulties associated with questioning occupants of temporary encampments, some of the data included here is drawn from notes of conversations, rather than responses to formal questionnaires.

***Demographics of the sample population.***

- 6.7 32 respondents were interviewed: 69 % of whom were living on encampments across the study area - interviewed via questionnaires, or informal conversations. The remaining interviewees, living on an unauthorised encampment in Ynys Môn, took part in a focus group.

Chart 7: Respondents living on encampments from each local Authority area.



- 6.8 It is difficult to provide detailed data on gender, age or ethnicity as in many interviews it was unclear exactly how many other individuals were

present when the participant was interviewed, whilst in other cases only brief information in the form of an informal conversation was collected.

- 6.9 4 individuals living on encampments suggested they had a disability ranging from mobility issues and depression and anxiety.
- 6.10 Complete data is also not available concerning the number of caravans at each location. The data that is available as well as conversations with GTAC, suggest that on average there is approx five caravans at each encampment - however one encampment in Denbighshire had ten caravans.

### ***Current accommodation***

- 6.11 Respondents were asked how long they had been at the encampment and how long they expected to stay at that location. Respondents across the study area had been on the encampment for approximately 2 – 8 weeks. Respondents suggested they hoped to stay at that location for approximately 2-8 weeks, however one respondent summed up the views of many who were interviewed by suggesting that “[We] will stay here until they kick us off”. All respondents stated they did not have a permanent base.
- 6.12 Participants were then asked where they would travel to once they left the location or were moved on from the site. Respondents indicated they would stay within north Wales.

### ***Living on unauthorised encampments***

- 6.13 Respondents were asked their opinion of the particular area as a stopping place. Most respondents did not answer this question, but anecdotal information from GTAC suggests that respondents felt the overall opinion of the location as a stopping place was that it was “OK, but there is nowhere else to go.”
- 6.14 Positive aspects of the current location focused on the location and the local community. One respondent liked the area as it was “fairly quiet, next to river [and] out of the way”, whilst another respondent suggested that they liked their location as “people seem nice”
- 6.15 Participants were also asked what they did not like about living on their site. The lack of facilities and amenities available to participants was clearly a negative for the majority of participants; one noted it was a “very temp site. No facilities”. Further to this there was a concern over safety issues. One respondent noted that:

*“[There is] a large deep pond [that is] unsafe for children. Near a dual carriage way. Access to and from road is hazardous due to fast road.”*

### **Facilities**

- 6.16 Participants were then asked how they managed for basic facilities such as washing and bathing, water, toilets, rubbish collection and electric. In terms of electric power all those who answered this question suggested they had a generator. All respondents noted there are no facilities for rubbish collection or disposal. Most noted that they used black bags and then left them at the site, whilst other respondents used local recycling facilities. Many of those surveyed noted had similar comments such as one made by a participant who suggested that: *“Council should pick up [rubbish]. [We] need a skip”*.
- 6.17 Respondents noted that they normally use the local supermarket or garage for toilet facilities, whilst one respondent in Gwynedd noted that if possible they used the local Gypsy and Traveller site. A further participant noted that they: *“Use the land”*. All respondents felt that it was not suitable to have little or no access to basic facilities such as a toilet. In terms of access to baths and showers respondents recorded either using a friend’s house or the local leisure centre. Respondents felt that *“[this was] not good, [but] what else can we do?”*

### **Travelling patterns**

- 6.18 Respondents suggested they travelled with their own household, close relatives and other family members. Respondents travel throughout North Wales, the rest of Wales, Northern England and Scotland
- 6.19 All respondents suggested that their travelling patterns changed in the last few years. When asked why their travelling patterns had changed two main reasons were given: a lack of places to stop and the current legal situation around encampments.
- 6.20 In terms of lack of places to stop, one respondent noted that this had an effect in other areas *“Patterns have changed – Staying longer on unauthorized sites because lack of places to stop”*.
- 6.21 With regards to preferred accommodation all respondents suggested they would like to live on a private site owned by “you and your family” or on a site owned by the local council.

### ***Longer Term Unauthorised encampments***

6.22 The following section outlines the experiences of those living on an unauthorised, but now tolerated, encampment between Pentraeth and Menai Bridge. The information contained in this section of the report is based questionnaires completed and a focus group held with 13 residents of an unauthorised encampment based in Ynys Môn. Ten respondents were aged between 25-30 and were a mixture of male and females, whilst three respondents were aged 10-17 and comprised of 2 females and 1 male.

6.23 80 per cent of the participants had been living at the Pentraeth Site since it was established some 3 years ago. These respondents have been travelling and living together for the last 10 years on various unauthorised encampments across Conwy, Gwynedd and Ynys Mon.

6.24 Participants were then asked if they had anything else they would like to say. Most participants took this opportunity. One respondent felt:

*“I would like to tell the council that I would like to stay here. Keep an open mind and come and talk to us. Message for council – [there was] an eviction notice placed on caravans [which] threatened that the trailers would be confiscated”*

## 7. Gypsies and Travellers living in Bricks and Mortar

### *Introduction.*

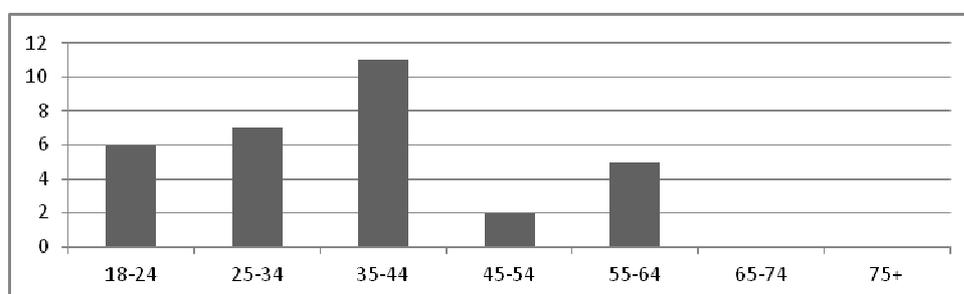
- 7.1 This chapter focuses on the circumstances and needs of Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar accommodation. It starts by considering their current accommodation circumstances before looking at their future expectations and requirements.
- 7.2 It is estimated that between half and two-thirds of the Gypsy and Traveller population of the UK now live in 'bricks and mortar' housing. Sometimes this is through choice, but can also be through necessity, due to the shortage of pitches on authorised sites (Brown & Niner, 2009:19). GTANA findings often indicate that they either became housed as a result of inadequate site provision and exhaustion caused by a constant cycle of eviction, or that health or educational concerns for family members led to moving into housing. (Cullen et al, 2008:18; Cemlyn, 2009).
- 7.3 Numerous GTANAs have reported Gypsies and Travellers in housing experiencing hostility from neighbours, and it is likely that the constant exposure to racism and discrimination has a negative impact on mental health (Cemlyn, 2009).
- 7.4 Identification of Gypsy and Traveller families living in bricks and mortar accommodation has been problematic in many GTANA surveys. Most local authorities, both in the study area and nationally, do not offer the option of Gypsy and Traveller in ethnic monitoring forms. In the study area, officers who had close contact with the community either as Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer (in Gwynedd) or in other capacities, had knowledge of some families either living within their local authority areas, or who had previously done so and had moved elsewhere. 'Local knowledge' helped to identify other long standing residents of the community. Snowballing techniques could then be used to identify other residents, though this had to be achieved with account taken of sensitivities. Some Gypsy and Traveller families would be reluctant to identify other community members without their permission.
- 7.5 Inevitably, these methods of identification would be more likely to include families of long standing in the local area, and previous residents of local sites. Recent arrivals would be less likely to be picked up by these methods.

- 7.6 It is also likely that these influences would skew the distribution of the sample towards rented, and particularly socially rented housing, rather than the owner occupied sector.
- 7.7 Even when identified and approached, there was reluctance by some potential respondents to take part in the survey. Other GTANAs and research studies have noted Gypsies and Travellers in housing experiencing hostility from neighbours, and this might be a relevant factor here (Brown & Niner, 2009:21ff.)

**Demographics of the sample population.**

- 7.8 36 respondents living in bricks and mortar were interviewed. The majority (91 %) filled in questionnaires, whilst data collected from the remaining respondents was collected via an informal conversation.
- 7.9 Almost half of the sample population (47 %) were from Flintshire. Conwy had the lowest number of respondents (10 per cent). Three quarters of respondents were female.
- 7.10 Those aged 35-44 had the highest response rate. No interviews were carried out with individuals 65-74 and those aged 75 and over

Chart 8: Age of respondents living on Bricks and mortar accommodation.

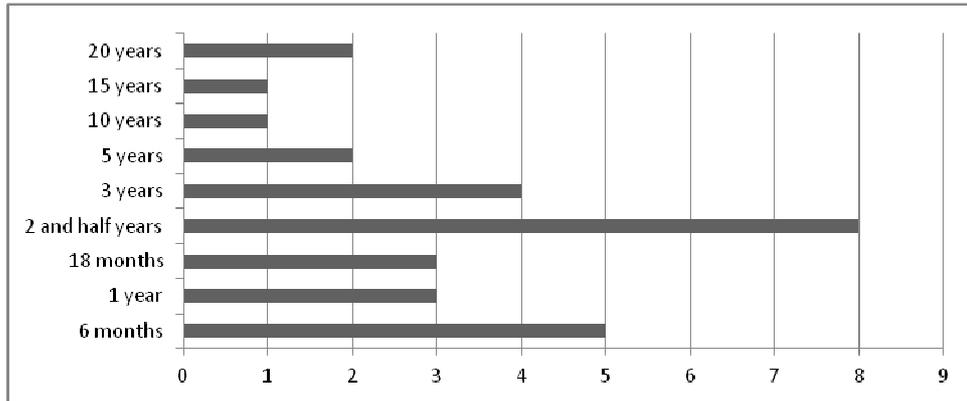


- 7.11 Almost one third (34 %) of respondents were Irish Travellers. The lowest percentage of respondents was for New Travellers (3.84 per cent).
- 7.12 The predominant tenure was socially rented housing, though respondents from all tenures were represented.

## ***Current accommodation***

7.13 Respondents were asked how long had they lived in their current accommodation. 41 % said they had lived there for 2 – 5 years, whilst 2 % had lived in their accommodation for either 10 or 15 years.

Chart 9: Length of time that Bricks and mortar respondents had lived in their present accommodation.



7.14 Respondents commented on the main reasons why they moved into housing. In order of significance these were:

- Inability to get a place on a site;
- Health reasons:
- Want to 'settle': Unable to find stopping places while travelling
- Inability to get a place on a site;
- Health reasons:
- Want to 'settle':
- Unable to find stopping places while travelling.

- 7.15 Respondents were then asked “what are the good points about living in bricks and mortar accommodation”. The most main benefit of living in housing was that there was the perception there are better utilities and services: “[The] bath and toilet are in the house with you”, whilst another respondent noted: “comfort, everything to hand, water electricity etc.” Other respondents however felt that there was “No good points” noting that they felt lonely or depressed living in housing.
- 7.16 The main disadvantages of living in housing related to isolation. A respondent suggested they felt “closed in, [I] feel very quiet and lonely” whilst a female interviewee reported feeling “blocked in since my husband died. I sleep in the trailer in my garden”.
- 7.17 The study team noted that the majority of respondents living in bricks and mortar appeared to feel depressed and unhappy about living in housing.
- 7.18 The contrast with living in a caravan was often stressed:
- “At first it seemed strange with the stairs. I feel more closed in.”*
- “I’m ok now coming upstairs now but was nervous when I first moved in.”*
- “Very strange at first as I have been used to living in a trailer. I felt down and ill for a while when I first moved in. I couldn’t look over the banister as felt scared of heights.”*
- 7.19 Findings in other GTANAs indicate that owner-occupiers of bungalows (usually with space to park one or two caravans) and residents in accommodation which broadly replicates the design of pitches on private caravan sites, are happiest in their accommodation (Cemlyn et al, 2009:20).
- 7.20 Respondents were asked if they would be interested in attending meetings to discuss Gypsy and Traveller issues, ten individuals suggested that they would be interested.

### ***Travelling patterns***

- 7.21 Respondent were then asked about travelling patterns, firstly being asked if they had travelled away from home within the last 12 months. 68 % had not travelled.
- 7.22 When asked the reasons why they hadn't travelled in the last twelve months, the majority cited harassment on the road as the main reason. One respondent suggested: “It’s getting harder, places are blocked to us. Ten years ago there were places to go in Bangor. These days

*Travellers can get as far as Rhyl*”, whilst another respondent noted that: *“There are no proper sites anyway, I wouldn’t feel comfortable”*. The remaining respondents cited health reasons for their decision not to travel away from home.

- 7.23 Research evidence suggests that Gypsies and Travellers who were both living in bricks and mortar and travelled rarely had the worst health status among all Gypsy and Traveller groups
- 7.24 Respondents who did travel suggested that they travelled during the summer months for an average of 11 weeks. Those who do travel, normally travel with their own household, close relatives and (or) friends and family. Respondents tend to park on roadways, waste ground or official transit sites. As well as travelling throughout north Wales the sample also travelled to areas such as south Wales, Shropshire, Ireland and Nottinghamshire. Respondents travelled due to work related reasons or to visit friends or family.
- 7.25 Overall most respondents noted that the travelling way of life is more difficult; one respondent noted that *“The laws have changed, it’s getting harder. Travellers are moved on”* whilst a further interviewee suggested travelling patterns have changed because: *“Travellers have had to adapt. I feel separate from my traveller connections. A lot of traditional traveller stopping points are being blocked off”*.
- 7.26 Feeling separate or alienated from Gypsy and Traveller culture was a common theme of those living in housing. One respondent noted that *“Since children have grown up I have been static. The council should do more for Travellers, more facilities”*.
- 7.27 The sample population who filled in the full bricks and mortar questionnaire were then asked if they had ever been forced to camp by the roadside or set up an unauthorised encampment while travelling in the last year. 40 % suggested that they had, mainly across North Wales – most notably in Towyn [Abergele]

### **Accommodation expectations**

- 7.28 Participants were then asked about the type of housing they would prefer. Respondents living in bricks and mortar had a low response rate for this section. Of those who did respond, 85 % suggested they would like to live on a site owned by themselves or their family. A site owned by the local council was the second choice.
- 7.29 As discussed it is difficult to ascertain the number of individuals in household who will want their own accommodation in the next five years

as many respondents did not answer this question or the data was not available as most respondents filled in the shorter questionnaire.

- 7.30 52 interviews were carried out with Gypsies and Travellers living in housing across the study area. GTAC noted that many more individuals were spoken to who did not wish to take part in the study. A dominant theme to be found in interviews with this community suggested many felt isolated within the local community and also away from the Gypsy and Traveller community.
- 7.31 Reflecting the relatively poor information available nationally on families in bricks and mortar accommodation, relatively little research evidence is available. Research from recent studies (Greenfields & Smith, 2010; Greenfields & Smith, 2011) offers two insights into families in social housing. Gypsies and Travellers were more likely to be offered
- 7.32 Tenancies in areas of poor quality and/or low demand social housing, and would also try to sustain communities by using tenancy transfers to move closer to relatives and other community members.
- 7.33 These results raise policy issues for social housing providers in the area. These can only be fully explored if they are able to identify members of the community living in socially rented bricks and mortar housing.
- 7.34 Research is necessary to determine whether members of the Gypsy and Traveller community have different patterns of social housing experience to other communities, and, if so, whether this is due to any formal or informal procedures or strategies of the agency
- 7.35 Research may identify any pattern of clustering in some estates due to use of tenancy transfers or swaps.
- 7.36 *Recommendation 8:* Social Housing Agencies to include Gypsy/Romany/Traveller option for self declaration on application forms.
- 7.37 *Recommendation 9:* Social Housing Agencies review current patterns of application and allocation using an appropriate toolkit or set of questions to determine whether there are avoidable biases in the system.
- 7.38 *Recommendation 10:* Social Housing Agencies to establish if any such pattern results from positive choices, or negative decisions due to perceived threats or other causes.
- 7.39 *Recommendation 11:* The methods and approaches used by local authorities in promoting affordable accommodation to members of the

non-Traveller communities should be adapted to the accommodation used by members of Gypsy and Traveller communities.

## 8. Young Gypsies and Travellers

### *The view from the literature*

- 8.1 Participation in secondary education is extremely low, with discrimination and abusive behaviour on the part of staff and students frequently cited as reasons for leaving education early
- 8.2 Even when housed or relatively settled on a permanent site many Gypsies and Travellers often find it difficult to go into schools or to make use of Further Education facilities.
- 8.3 Children can suffer psychological damage from repeated ~~brutal~~ evictions, tensions associated with insecure lifestyles, and hostility from the wider population
- 8.4 Research has also shown that children are particularly vulnerable to experiencing racism and discrimination, from their peers in school, from adults in authority such as teachers, and from adults and children in the general. (Cemlyn et al, 2009)

### *Background.*

- 8.5 Gypsies and Travellers marry and form new households at a relatively young age. The views and preferences of young Gypsies and Travellers are therefore important in formulating a GTANA strategy. As part of the NWW GTANA, a survey of the opinions of young Gypsies and Travellers was attempted. This mirrors previous work in Wales and elsewhere (Clark & Cemlyn, 2005; Ureche & Franks, 2008; Lloyd & Carrick, 2000; Aspinwall & Larkins, 2010)
- 8.6 In conjunction with Gypsy Traveller Advocacy Cymru (GTAC), the North West Wales Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessment also collected data from young Gypsy and Travellers in the study area. A young person questionnaire was designed for this purpose. These questionnaires were then filled in alongside interviews with adult participants. Pupils at the Delyn Centre in Flintshire, where there is separate provision for Gypsy and Traveller pupils, were also invited to take part in the survey

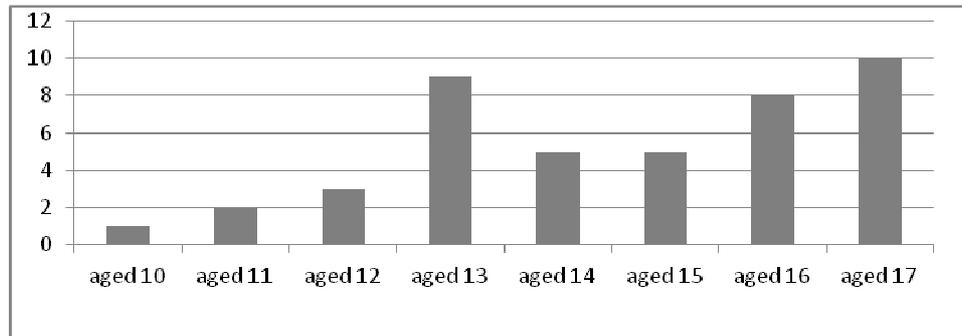
### *Demographics of the sample population*

- 8.7 43 young Gypsies and Travellers took part in the survey by filled in the young person questionnaire. 55 % of respondents were from Flintshire, 21 % from Gwynedd, with the remaining 24 % from Ynys Môn, Conwy and Denbighshire.

8.8 Of the sample 28 questionnaires were completed by young female Gypsies and Travellers, and 15 questionnaires by young male Gypsies and Travellers.

8.9 In terms of age, respondents aged 11 to 17 are defined as being a young Gypsy or Traveller.

Chart 10: Age of young Gypsy and Traveller respondents.



8.10 The majority of the respondents were aged 14 or over. As Gypsies and Travellers often marry at relatively young ages, the opinions of the young persons sample are relevant in relation to future provision of accommodation in the study area.

8.11 Respondents were then asked about their ethnic background. The majority of the sample defined themselves as being Romany Gypsy (34 % in total), with 18 % being Romany Gypsy English and 16 % self identifying as Romany Gypsy Welsh. .

8.12 58 % were living on site accommodation, whilst 39 % reported that they lived in bricks and mortar housing and 5 individuals were living on an encampment.

8.13 Those living in bricks and mortar mainly suggested that they liked their current accommodation due to the closeness of facilities such as toilets, bathrooms and the space that this gave. A number of respondents noted that they liked living in housing as *“I have my own bedroom”*.

8.14 In terms of what they didn't like about their accommodation a significant number of respondents suggested that they did not like living in a house as they did not feel in touch with their Gypsy and Traveller heritage – preferring instead to live on a site. One young person interviewed for the survey said *“I would like to live back on the Queensferry site again because it's boring where I live”*.

8.15 For individuals living on site accommodation most, if not all suggested that the level of closeness to their family and friends was the major

factor in enjoying living on site accommodation. One respondent noted: *“We are one of a kind on here”*.

- 8.16 The lack of, or poor facilities was a significant factor cited by most respondents relating to what they did not like about living on site accommodation. As one young respondent suggested: *“There are no showers and the site floods every time there is heavy rain.”*
- 8.17 Individuals staying on encampments were less likely to outline positive aspects of living on this type of accommodation, mainly because they were under constant threat of eviction. Travelling with family and friends was referred to as being a positive aspect of travelling
- 8.18 Young people living on the New Traveller site in Ynys Môn suggested that among the negative aspects of the accommodation was that there was *“No sunlight, its icy in winter...It feels like nobody cares about the place”*.

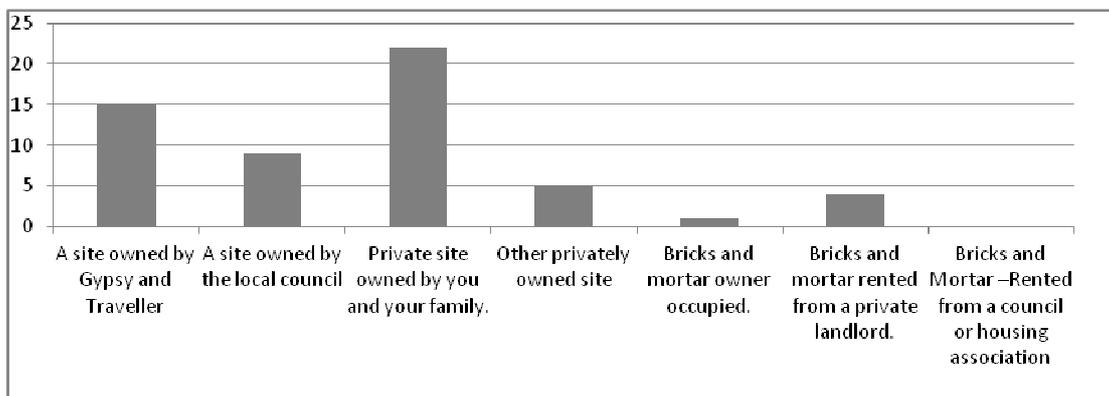
**Travel patterns**

- 8.19 Respondents were asked if they had travelled away from home within the last 12 months. 42 % of respondents had travelled away from home.

**Future accommodation aspirations.**

- 8.20 As Chart 11 below indicates, most young Gypsy and Travellers aspired to live on a site (92 %) once they were old enough to form their own household. Living on a private site owned by “you and your family” the most popular form of site accommodation (40 %). Living in bricks and mortar housing was less popular. No respondents wanted to live in accommodation rented from a council or a local Housing Association, while both privately rented housing and owner occupied housing having fewer preferences than any form of site accommodation.

Chart 11: accommodation aspiration – by type of accommodation – of young Gypsies and Travellers.



- 8.21 The young respondents were then asked in what areas in north Wales do you think there should be permanent Gypsy and Traveller sites. Various locations were cited by respondents, some respondents gave a number of suggestions. Within the study area Rhyl and Prestatyn were the areas that were mentioned most frequently.
- 8.22 Perhaps due to the type of accommodation already available in these areas, Bangor, Queensferry, Flint and Ynys Môn were also mentioned by young respondents.
- 8.23 Young Gypsies and Travellers were asked if they thought there should be transit sites available for when they travelled. As with the adult respondents, 100 % suggested that there should be transit accommodation available.
- 8.24 Respondents were then asked what areas in north Wales do you think there should be transit Gypsy and Traveller sites. Various locations were cited by respondents with some respondents giving a number of suggestions. Bangor and Ynys Môn were the most popular suggestions. Towns along the A55 route were also mentioned: in particular, Rhyl; Holyhead and Conwy.

### ***Experiences of discrimination***

- 8.25 Respondents were asked if they thought they had encountered discrimination or racism in the last twelve months. 72 % of the young Gypsies and Travellers had experienced some form of discrimination. Most respondents gave examples of the discrimination they had experienced.
- “I went to the cinema and was thrown out”.*
- “Not just once, loads of times. I don't think gorgas like Gypsies as they call us names.”*
- “They think we are going to cause trouble. I wanted to join local football team but they wouldn't let me because they knew I was a Traveller.”*
- 8.26 Respondents were also asked: Is there anywhere you avoid going to because you think you might encounter discrimination or racism? Various suggestions were given, such as: local cinema; ice skating rink; bowling alley; shops and local school.

### ***Recommendations.***

- 8.27 *Recommendation 12:* A progressive campaign which would promote the lifestyle and culture of Gypsies and Travellers in a positive light may help alleviate some of the racial discrimination experienced by young and older Gypsy and Travellers across the study area.
- 8.28 *Recommendation 13:* Ensure that staff working in primary and secondary schools have sufficient training about Gypsy and Traveller culture in order to tackle bullying more effectively.
- 8.29 *Recommendation 14:* Local Authorities should consider collectively providing the resources to recruit and train outreach workers (possibly from Gypsy and Traveller communities) to engage with young people.

## **9. Travelling Showmen.**

### ***Demographics of the sample population***

- 9.1 Though there are members of the Showmen's Guild based in the study area, a systematic analysis of need was not attempted. Local authority representatives were not aware of specific issues relating to this group.
- 9.2 Travelling fairs also visit the area from elsewhere (Showmen's Guild, 2007:16) During the course of the study, it became known that a Travelling Showman had made an encampment within the area. It was decided to interview the subject.
- 9.3 This chapter is based on one interview carried out in Flintshire as in depth information on locations of Travelling Show people was not available
- 9.4 The interview in question was carried out with a male aged 51 who, at the time, had been camped for 2-3 months at Playing field/ public space in Rowleys Lane, Shotton. The respondent expected to stay there for a further two months. The interviewee had seven caravans at the location.
- 9.5 The household comprised of 4 other individuals, all females aged 50; 28; 24 and 21 respectively. The individuals are camped at this site for work purposes and in order to attend a fair/event. The respondent felt the stopping point was very good and that it was convenient. The respondent also noted that they had held lots of events in the area and had been visiting the area for last 25 years. The interviewee did not draw attention to any health and safety issues relating to the site.

### ***Current accommodation.***

- 9.6 The respondent has a permanent base in Salford – a privately owned showman's site. However the respondent would like to live on a Travelling Showman site or a site owned by the local council in Shotton or Queensferry. The Travelling Showman site was required in order to have space to park machinery and rides.
- 9.7 As the interviewee has a permanent base outside the area, his accommodation needs would technically fall to another GTANA area, though if he wanted to move permanently to the north Wales area he might need assistance in finding a new site.
- 9.8 The respondent was asked how they how do you manage at the encampment for water, toilets, bath and shower, electricity, rubbish storage and rubbish disposal. The following table provides an outline of

their answers. Overall the respondent felt these arrangements were fine, but they did note that in regards to electricity a power point would be more helpful.

Table 6: Overview of facilities available to a Show person interviewed in Shotton.

| <b>Facility</b>         | <b>Where</b>           | <b>How satisfactory?</b>     |
|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Water</b>            | from Steelworkers club | Fine                         |
| <b>Toilets</b>          | Inside caravan.        | Fine                         |
| <b>Bath/shower</b>      | Inside caravan         | Fine                         |
| <b>Electricity</b>      | Generator              | Power point would be better. |
| <b>Rubbish storage</b>  | Take to the tip        | Fine                         |
| <b>Rubbish disposal</b> | Take to the tip        | Fine                         |

## ***Travel patterns***

- 9.9 The respondent was asked about his household's travel patterns. He suggested that his household travelled in spring, summer and autumn for approximately 30 weeks. The household travelled across north Wales and Northern England with his own household and other family members and friends.
- 9.10 The travelling patterns of the household has changed over the years. The respondent suggested that these changes are because the price of diesel has risen alongside the cost of vehicles. He also noted that young people do not attend fair grounds as much as they prefer to play on computer games.
- 9.11 Education whilst travelling is provided with the support of an education officer at the Showman's Guild in Lancashire. TES provide education discs which are completed and returned to the school.
- 9.12 In terms of healthcare, the household returns to Salford to use their local GP surgery.
- 9.13 The respondent ended the conversation by saying
- "This is our way of life. It is not just a business it is a close knit community. Even if I break down and I'm not speaking to one of the competitors they will still help me. It is the way we are. We are different to Gypsies as we earn our living with showman's work".*

## ***Recommendations***

- 9.14 *Recommendation 15:* Further research is needed with Travelling Show people, in conjunction with the Showmen's Guild, before recommendations can be made

## Access to services

### *Introduction.*

10.1 Whilst GTANA's primarily focus on accommodation issues, they are also expected to collect information on other experiences that Gypsies and Travellers have. This chapter reviews the local survey evidence in relation to in relation to: health; council services; other local services; education; employment; and any experiences of discrimination.

### *Health services.*

10.2 Response rate for this section varied depending on the services discussed. Information regarding access to doctors and dentists was high (approximately 75 % response rate) whilst data on all other services had a response rate of approximately 40-60 %. Some data is available for encampment respondents, however this is patchy as the questionnaire did not answer many of the questions asked of Bricks and Mortar and permanent site residents.

10.3 Attendance at GP surgeries was high. All those living in bricks and mortar accommodation had attended a GP surgery, compared with 98 % living on permanent sites and 60 % of encampment respondents. Those that did not attend their GP surgery reported that they went to walk-in health centres or A&E at the local hospital.

10.4 Generally respondents from bricks and mortar were less likely to suggest difficulties with their local GP (6 %) when compared to interviewees from private sites (10 %). A permanent site respondent suggested that it is *"very difficult registering. As soon as you say Dollar Park they do not register you"*. On the whole, however, respondents appeared to be positive about local GP's, with many respondents echoing the comments of one permanent site respondent who said *"doctors are always ok with Travellers...they treat us all the same"*.

10.5 A higher proportion of those living in bricks and mortar accommodation had attended a dentist surgery (80 %) compared to 63 % of those living on permanent sites.

10.6 A small number (4 respondents) reported having had previous contact with a district nurse. Respondents did not comment on their experience of the service.

10.7 In terms of Hospital A&E departments 31 % of respondents suggested that they had previously contacted their local hospital A&E department.

Whilst the majority of those lived on permanent sites or Bricks and mortar, three respondents staying on encampments suggested they went to their local A&E if they needed healthcare whilst they were travelling. Respondents did not comment on their experience of the service.

- 10.8 26 % of respondents had prior contact with other Hospital services across the study area. Respondents did not comment on their experience of the service.
- 10.9 24 % of respondents had prior contact with Health Visitors across the study area. Two respondents gave comments about their experiences: one respondent suggested *“they are OK, but can be a bit funny with me”*, whilst another respondent suggested that Health Visitors are *“very helpful”*
- 10.10 24 % of respondents had used alternative medicine. Respondents mainly suggested that their parents had used items such as cider vinegar, juice and leaves from cauliflower. One respondent suggested they used alternative remedies *“as I don't think that doctors are what they used to be”*

### **Council services**

- 10.11 This section is based on the views of 50 % of the sample population. Those who attended focus groups or gave information via an informal interview would not have answered the questions on access to services at all, or in many aspects, in any great detail. The questionnaire used for collecting data on those residing on encampments did not ask for information on access to services apart from the local Police force. As such the information below is mainly collected from those living on permanent sites or bricks and Mortar.
- 10.12 Respondents across the study area were then asked their opinion of and if they had accessed the following services: Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer, Housing; HOST (Homelessness Services); Social Services; Environmental Health; Planning and Education
- 10.13 Respondents were asked if they had contacted the local Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer (GTLO). Taking the above factors into account as well as the awareness that a GTLO is only in post at Gwynedd this question was answered by ten % of the respondents.
- 10.14 65% of Gwynedd respondents had contacted their Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer. All but one respondent commented positively. Participants in a focus group said the officer was *“very helpful, but needs*

*help so she can help us”, whilst a further interview respondent suggested “I can't praise her enough very supportive in every way”.*

- 10.15 Just under half (46 %) of respondents had contacted their local Housing department, the majority of whom were from Flintshire. Respondents commented that the Housing Department was “*fine*” or that they had “*helped us fill in forms*”.
- 10.16 Only one respondent, a male from Conwy had contacted their local HOST department. This respondent did not give further information.
- 10.17 19 % of respondents had contacted their local Social Services department. The majority of respondents were from Flintshire or Conwy. Respondents who commented on their local Social Services department said that they were ok.
- 10.18 11 % of respondents had contacted their local Environmental Health department. Residents from Ynys Môn, Conwy, Flintshire and Gwynedd had all contacted their local department with those from Flintshire having a slight majority. There was little in the way of actual opinions about the services, the few comments gave mainly focused on the actual service given. One interviewee however noted that “*Environmental services accused us of burning tyres/toxic waste. In fact it was a new Traveller. Council wrote to us implying that you did it as you are Gypsy*”
- 10.19 A total of 5 respondents from Ynys Môn, Gwynedd and Flint suggested they had contacted their local Planning Department. One respondent said that their local Planning Department was ‘OK’. The remaining comments were negative. One respondent suggested that their Planning Department was “*not very helpful*”. A further respondent suggested that:
- “If you want a property you won't get it 'cos you're a Traveller. Would like to own our own ground – won't be able to get land as won't get planning – never had advice from planners – don't want to bother with us”.*
- 10.20 Education services had the highest rate of access (21 per cent) compared to any other Council service. Respondents from all local authorities across the study area suggested they had contacted their local Education Department. All respondents who made comments about the service made positive comments relating to the helpfulness of the service.

## Local Services.

10.21 The table below shows the percentages of participants or their family that have used local amenities in their local area. Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar (83 %) were slightly more likely to use local services than those who live on permanent sites (81 %) <sup>1</sup>. Overall Gypsies and Travellers in the study area were very positive about local services, in particular local shops (93 %) and the Post Office (89 %). Local libraries had the lowest response rate (61%).

Table 7. Use of local services by Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar or on a permanent site.

| Accommodation type | Local shops | Banks | Public transport | Post Offices | Children's play area | Library |
|--------------------|-------------|-------|------------------|--------------|----------------------|---------|
| Perm site          | 93%         | 74%   | 82%              | 89%          | 87%                  | 61%     |
| Housing            | 93%         | 81%   | 87%              | 79%          | 86%                  | 72%     |

10.22 In terms of specific comments about local services, most of the comments focused on local shops, Post Offices and public transport. 50 per cent of those gave further details on their experiences of local services left positive comments. Respondents mentioned the friendliness of staff in shops: *“Good, nice people”* said one respondent on a permanent site, whilst a respondent living in bricks and mortar said that staff in shops *“were nice, treated like everyone else”*. Other respondents mentioned the helpfulness of staff: *“People are eager to help us”*. The Post Office, in particular received praise from many of the respondents:

*“They (the Post Office) are very good they help me complete forms” and “Lovely very helpful.”*

10.23 A number of respondents (10 %) were neutral about services in their area, suggesting that *“some services are OK, some are not.* Within this category some respondents mentioned that they had faced problems in shops when they had first come to live in the locality.

*“Ok now I’m older but I have faced problems in the past getting put out of pubs, shops and markets”*

10.24 A significant number (40 %) of those who chose to specifically comment on local services gave negative comments. Comments were

mainly related to respondents feeling that they were treated in a negative manner by the local services, *“local shops tend to look down their nose at you”* *“Some shops are funny with us”*. A further theme found amongst the negative comments received about local services was a feeling by the Gypsy and Traveller community was that they were treated differently to other members of the community. One respondent suggested that whilst local shops were *“alright I suppose...some are OK, some will watch in shop”* whilst a focus groups respondent, living on a permanent site felt she is *“treated as if I’m going to shoplift”*. Another respondent interviewed whilst travelling suggested that they had seen: *“a big sign in the window saying “No Travellers”. I thought this was against the law?”*

10.25 With regards to banks, one respondent suggested that they were *“alright, but they (the bank) don’t know about me being a Traveller”* whilst another interviewee noted that; *“I don’t always know how to fill in forms as haven’t had much schooling and they look at you funny like we are thick”*. Public transport yielded less commentary but one respondent suggested they did not use it as they felt *“if there are lots Travellers by the bus stop, the bus drives past”*. In terms of local libraries there were no negative or positive comments, just a general suggestion that respondents would like to use this particular service.

10.26 Only small numbers of respondents reported that they had used the local Citizen's Advice Bureau (4 per cent), Legal Advice services (2 per cent), and Traveller Advice Services (2 per cent). There were a small number of comments regarding these services, unfortunately all negative. In terms of local Citizen's Advice bureau one interviewee noted that they were *“Not helpful, they did not want to know”*. A further respondent suggested that local solicitors would not take [his] case on. Regarding Traveller Advice Services *“not very good, couldn’t help as it wasn’t a big enough case”*.

10.27 Interviewees were asked their opinion of the local [north Wales] Police force. The results across the study area were mixed. A small number of respondents (10 per cent) from Conwy, Gwynedd and Flintshire offered their views.

10.28 Respondents in Flintshire were mainly positive. A respondent living on a private site in Flintshire said *“[A] young man from the police comes for a cup of tea and sandwich. [The Police] have been very good”* whilst an interviewee living in bricks and mortar noted *“Recently I went to the Police because I need reassurance because there are a lot of gangs around here. I was happy with the feedback”*. However a respondent

staying on an encampment in Flintshire said that: *[The] Police have been aggressive; [they] threaten to burn down caravans. [We are] accused of stealing gravel*".

10.29 Two respondents from Conwy gave opposing views of the local Police force. One interviewee felt the Police were *"very nice around here"*, whilst a further interviewee suggested that *"I feel that the Police are more responsive to gorgas. If the neighbour called the Police they would come and deal with it a lot quicker"*.

10.30 Interviewees from Gwynedd were also mixed. One respondent felt that the Police were *"OK, I haven't had any problems"*, whilst another suggested that *"once they know you are a Traveller they treat you all the same"*

### **Education**

10.31 Respondents were asked about their use of pre-school playgroups or nurseries. Four respondents answered that they did attend pre-school provision. This finding is consistent with the observation from the Welsh Assembly Government that frequently Gypsy and Traveller children will have little or no experience of pre-school provision (Cemlyn et al, 2009:113).

10.32 The respondents who did attend pre-school playgroups or nurseries were those who lived in areas with a more established Gypsy and Traveller community (Gwynedd or Flintshire). Respondents were evenly split between bricks and mortar or a private site, having lived there for 2-5 years.

10.33 A respondent in Ynys Môn in bricks and mortar also reported having children attend school in their local area. However the data was unclear about how many children attend the school as well as the type of the school.

10.34 Only two respondents commented on their experiences of primary or secondary schools. One interviewee from Gwynedd suggested that *"primary schools are more helpful than secondary schools. Most people not interested in Travellers"*. They also felt that *"services seem to be different depending on the area"*. Whilst a respondent from Ynys Môn suggested that they: *"need a lot more Travelling children to attend [school]"*

10.35 Five respondents from Flintshire reported either having children who attend the Traveller Education Service in Flintshire or having attended the service themselves. The Traveller Education Service was

affectionately described as 'Gypsy High' by one young person. Respondents suggested they liked going to school as there are *"only a few children all Travellers so we are all on the same wave length"*.

10.36 Two respondents from Gwynedd living at Llandegai site reported having a tutor in the library. A respondent from Ynys Môn said they had a tutor at home.

10.37 Interviewees were asked about any support they had received from TES or Education Welfare officers. There appears to be a good correlation between support from TES or Education Welfare departments and eventual enrolment in some form of education as 54 % of respondents whose children attended either mainstream schooling or the Traveller Education Service (TES) in Flintshire reported having contact with the local TES officer. This service was perceived as being very positive. Respondents from Conwy and Flintshire suggested that the TES were:

*"Very helpful and supportive" (Flintshire).*

*"Lovely girl, very helpful". (Conwy).*

10.38 In terms of further education or training one respondent reported that they were currently in college on a hair and beauty course

10.39 Respondents were asked about the value of education for Gypsy and Traveller children. Respondents who commented were all in agreement of its importance. A respondent suggested *"education was an absolute must"* whilst another interviewee said that education was: *"Very important in this day and age. Everything is so advanced with computers. Kids need to know more"*

10.40 A further respondent summed up the many reasons why education was important to the Gypsy and Traveller community. *"Very important as they [Gypsy and Traveller] need to work. Kids today want to be doctors or lawyers and they can help their parents who can't read or write"*

10.41 Interviewees were also asked about the level of formal education that they had. Responses ranged from *"I can read and write very well"* to *"I can't read or write"*. Older respondents were more likely than younger respondents to have difficulty reading and writing. Those living in bricks and mortar or who had lived in their local area for ten years or more reported having a better level of basic skills than other respondents.

10.42 Respondents were then asked if they or their family had education or training needs. Whilst only 6 % responded to this question, they gave a

range of vocational options that they were interested in. Suggestions included:

- o Trades such as building, carpentry, tree felling, brick laying, gardening, plumber, block paving
- o Computing
- o Forestry
- o Sewing
- o Hair and beauty training,
- o Basic skills

10.43 Two respondents suggested they would like information on self employment as well as course and grants available.. A further respondent wanted information on *“how to get into college”*

10.44 Responses were gendered in terms of female Gypsies and Travellers requiring information on hair and beauty courses, whilst male respondents (or their wives on their behalf) wanted information on courses that would help them learn a trade.

### ***Employment.***

10.45 Respondents were also asked about the type of work that they or their family did. Vocational or service employment dominated. Tree work (25 per cent) and block paving/tarmacing (23 per cent) were the most popular responses. Carpet fitting and gardening were also popular answers.

10.46 The responses were on the whole gendered as the type of employment reflected the husband's rather than the wife's employment. This is most likely because female respondents tend to stay at home and look after the immediate family and other relatives.

10.47 Respondents were also asked if they had experienced any discrimination whilst looking for employment. Only 10 % of interviewees responded here. Over half (57 %) of those that did respond suggested that they had experienced discrimination whilst looking for employment.

10.48 A young respondent suggested she *“applied for a job and was told that the job was urgent. When I went there they told me the [job had] gone. My friend went in after me and got the job. She was a country girl [non Gypsy or Traveller].*

10.49 One respondent suggested that discrimination had occurred *“lots of times. When they know we are a Gypsy they don't give us the jobs...some people don't pay for the work we do”*. An encampment

interviewee suggested that it was even more difficult getting employment when you were classed as having “no fixed abode”. The 43 % of respondents who suggested they had not experienced any examples of discrimination whilst looking for employment did not add anything further.

### ***Racism and discrimination***

10.50 Interviewees were asked if in the last twelve months they had been refused service at any of the places mentioned earlier in this chapter because they are a Gypsy and Traveller. 37 per cent of respondents offered their views for the final section of this chapter. Ten per cent of those interviewed suggested they had experienced discrimination at the following places: Pubs; Gym; Shops; Camp sites, (particularly in Towyn); Bowling Alley (particularly in Flintshire) and the Cinema

10.51 Examples of racism and discrimination included: name calling, asked to leave places or refused service, followed around shops, being classed as ‘all the same’, refused employment. Respondents also gave example of what they had experienced.

*“when people know you are a Traveller they can be funny in pubs, shops, doctors, dentists, parks etc”.*

*“They tar us all with the same brush - i.e. sick of you lot coming around here”*

*“Many times people make sly remarks”.*

10.52 Respondents were then asked if they had experienced racism or discrimination on the last 12 months. 35 per cent of respondents said that they had. However it should be noted that 50 % of respondents did not answer the question. Respondents gave similar answers to the previous sections. Flintshire and Denbighshire appeared to have a larger number of respondents who reported example of racism or discrimination.

10.53 The interviews appeared to highlight that most respondents appeared to accept these discriminatory incidents as ‘normal’, almost part of their daily life. However a small number of respondents did mention the effect these incidents had on them. One young respondent sums it up quite succinctly saying that yes she had experienced racism or discrimination, but she *“can’t come to terms with it yet”*.

## ***Recommendations***

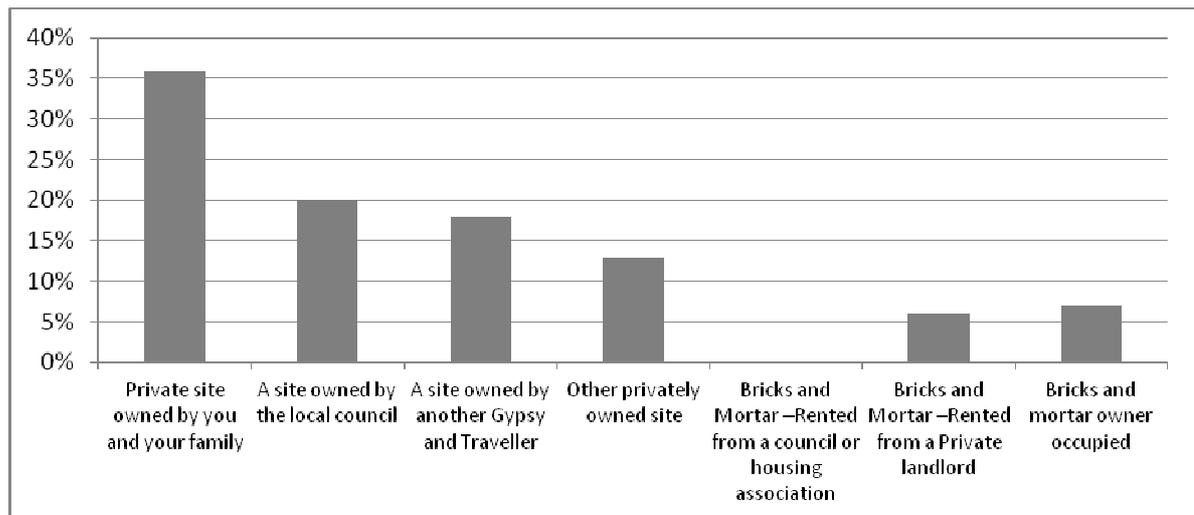
- 10.54 *Recommendation 15:* An aspiration of many members of the Gypsy and Traveller community is to be owner-occupiers, as such there is a need to develop a constructive dialogue between Gypsies and Travellers seeking to develop private sites and planning authorities.
- 10.55 *Recommendation 16:* Planning departments should offer appropriate advice and support to Gypsies and Travellers on the workings of the planning system and the criteria to be considered in applications. This advice requires some tailoring to meet the specific needs of this particular client group.
- 10.56 *Recommendation 17:* All issues relating to access to services issues need to be disseminated as widely as possible by the North West Wales Gypsy and Traveller Co-ordination Group in consultation with the North West Wales Gypsy and Traveller Representative Group resulting in a strategy on how to improve the experiences of the local Gypsy and Traveller community as well as a facility to report other examples.

## 11 Needs calculations for Permanent Sites.

11.1 This chapter will outline the needs calculation tables in relation to residential sites, including a discussion of the views of the Traveller community regarding location and pitch requirements.

11.2 100% of respondents in the sample felt there was a need for further permanent accommodation provision. Respondents were then asked what type of accommodation they would prefer to live in. The graph below outlines their responses. 87 % would like to live on site accommodation. Private site owned by “you and your family” was the most popular form of site accommodation. Bricks and mortar accommodation was preferred by 13 per cent of the sample population, with bricks and mortar - owner occupied having a slightly higher rate of responses when compared to other types of bricks and mortar accommodation.

Chart 12: Accommodation preferences (permanent accommodation) of adult Gypsies and Travellers.



11.3 Respondents were then asked what facilities did they think needed to be provided on, or easily accessible from, on permanent sites. The following facilities were most cited:

- Hard standings;
- Clear plot boundaries;
- Water, mains electricity and gas;
- Drainage;
- Postal delivery;
- Refuse storage and collection;
- Meeting room or social facilities;
- Children’s play area;
- Bus stop nearby;
- Amenity blocks with: baths/showers; toilets; laundry and kitchen; Wardens office and
- Close to schools, doctors and dentists.

11.4 Respondents were also asked an open question where they felt site accommodation should be located. Many responses were generic: ‘All over Wales’; ‘Every other town in north Wales’; ‘All around Ireland and UK’. The table below gives an outline of the responses which mentioned specific locations.

Table 8: Area preferences of adult Gypsies and Travellers (permanent accommodation).

| Number of responses | Town/ area.                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1-5                 | Caernarfon, Denbigh, Llanfairfechan, Mold, Bala, A55, Bethesda, Abergele, Pwllhelli, Queensferry, Towyn, St Asaph, Holywell, Flint, Portmadoc, Ynys Môn, Prestatyn, Llandudno, Conwy |
| 6-10                | Colwyn Bay, Holyhead, Bangor, Rhyl                                                                                                                                                   |

11.5 Rhyl, Bangor, Colwyn Bay and Holyhead were the most popular suggestions for the location of a permanent site. Ynys Môn, Prestatyn, Llandudno and Conwy were also mentioned frequently. Those that did not name a specific area generally suggested there should be permanent sites throughout the towns along the A55.

11.6 As there is no overwhelming preference for any location stated, the responses suggest the community would welcome a wider choice of locations for new sites.

***Working out the residential needs for 2011-16 (and 2016-21).***

11.7 At the outset, three points need to be made about this table:

11.8 The calculation indicates the local authority areas from which demand is generated. This is in part due to the calculation formula, which emphasises demand coming from residents of existing caravan sites. As paragraph 11.5 indicates, the community preference may be to locate in other areas within other local authorities.

11.9 The calculation includes some possibly conservative estimates about the numbers requiring a move to site accommodation from bricks and mortar. Other bricks and mortar residents might also want to relocate to a site, given availability of land and finance for private developments, and some responses to the questionnaire support this assumption. This raises issues about need and demand which are discussed below.

11.10 No allowance has been made for younger members of the community who are currently living in bricks and mortar to transfer to site accommodation. Here again, responses indicate a wish to rejoin traditional lifestyles, but financial circumstances could be a barrier to this.

Table 9: Residential Needs Calculation 2011-16

|                                           | Conwy | Denbigh-shire | Flintshire | Gwynedd | Ynys Môn | Total |
|-------------------------------------------|-------|---------------|------------|---------|----------|-------|
| Current Residential Supply                |       |               |            |         |          |       |
| <b>1</b> Socially rented pitches          | 0     | 0             | 20         | 7       | 0        | 27    |
| <b>2</b> Private authorised pitches       | 0     | 0             | 44         | 5       | 0        | 49    |
| <b>3</b> Total authorised pitches         | 0     | 0             | 66         | 12      | 0        | 78    |
| <b>4</b> Plots for Travelling Show people | 0     | 0             | 0          | 0       | 0        | 0     |

|                                       |                                                     |   |   |    |    |    |    |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|---|---|----|----|----|----|
| Residential pitch need 2011-16        |                                                     |   |   |    |    |    |    |
| <b>5</b>                              | End of temporary planning permissions               | 0 | 0 | 6  | 0  | 0  | 6  |
| <b>6</b>                              | New household formation from sites                  | 0 | 0 | 10 | 2  | 0  | 12 |
| <b>7</b>                              | Unauthorised developments [Tolerated/not tolerated] | 0 | 0 | 2  | 2  | 0  | 4  |
| <b>8a</b>                             | Movement between sites and housing (out of site)    | 0 | 0 | 0  | -1 | 0  | -1 |
| <b>8b</b>                             | (into site)                                         | 2 | 1 | 5  | 5  | 1  | 14 |
| <b>9</b>                              | Closure of sites                                    | 0 | 0 | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| <b>10</b>                             | Unauthorised encampments                            | 1 | 1 | 1  | 1  | 10 | 14 |
| <b>11</b> Additional residential need |                                                     |   |   |    |    |    |    |
| <b>a</b>                              | :Currently overcrowded                              | 0 | 0 | 12 | 1  | 0  | 13 |
| <b>b</b>                              | :Net in migration/outmigration                      | 0 | 0 | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| <b>c</b>                              | :Other residential need                             | 0 | 0 | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| Additional supply 2011-16             |                                                     |   |   |    |    |    |    |
| <b>12</b>                             | Pitches currently closed but re-entering use        | 0 | 0 | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| <b>13</b>                             | Pitches with permission but not developed           | 0 | 0 | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  |

|           |                                              |   |   |    |    |    |    |
|-----------|----------------------------------------------|---|---|----|----|----|----|
| <b>14</b> | New sites planned                            | 0 | 0 | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| <b>15</b> | Vacancies on socially rented sites           | 0 | 0 | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| <b>16</b> | Total Supply 2011-16                         | 0 | 0 | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| <b>17</b> | Remaining Residential Need Shortfall 2011-16 | 3 | 2 | 36 | 10 | 11 | 62 |

11.11 Row one indicates the current number of socially rented pitches in the area.

11.12 Row two indicates the numbers of pitches currently available on private sites with planning permission

11.13 Row three is a simple aggregation of the numbers.

11.14 Row four is currently showing no pitch requirements. There are travelling show people in the study area [e.g. Knightly's, Towyn] but no local knowledge of urgent need requirements. There is one interview from a travelling showman on an unauthorised encampment in the area, but who currently has a permanent site elsewhere. He might require assistance in finding suitable premises if he wishes to move to the area.

11.15 Row five shows need arising from for sites where temporary planning permissions terminate during the assessment period. Dollar Park in Flintshire has planning permission for six pitches for a five year period, terminating on 4 February 2016

11.16 Row six relates to future household formation within the planning period, and does not include existing households who require accommodation (e.g. Row 11a). This row applies only to households living on authorised sites (local authority and private) and is based on a calculation of a 3 per cent compound growth in need annually.  $[(78 \times 1.03)^5]$ . Niner suggested using household growth rates of 2 per cent and 3 per cent (ODPM, 2003:189). Using the 3 per cent assumption has become a standard approach to calculation of need in GTANAs. A small number of GTANAs have used their own calculations based on extensive sampling, or a complete census. In Ireland, 4 per cent compound growth estimates 'have proved remarkably

accurate' (DCLG, 2009:30). Using this latter calculation would imply an additional 5 households needing site accommodation.

- 11.17 The current figure assumes all future household formation from authorised sites will (a) require site, rather than bricks and mortar, accommodation and (b) will not marry a site resident from within the study area. Some GTANAs have used figures of between 70 and 90 per cent of new household formation as the baseline increase to allow for these eventualities
- 11.18 Row seven unauthorised developments (both tolerated and not tolerated) on land owned by the occupants. This calculation includes two households in Llanaelhaearn, and two caravans from Gwern Lane. Most GTANAs have adjusted for unauthorised developments on a one for one basis (DCLG, 2007:28), and this has been adopted in this instance.
- 11.19 Row eight a and b Movement between sites and housing This is an area in which many GTANAs have difficulty in providing estimates, as while the caravan count gives detailed information about the numbers on sites and encampments, there is no equivalent detail for those living in bricks and mortar. Moreover, while some residents move from sites to neighbouring estates, the overall pattern of settlement of Gypsies and Travellers in bricks and mortar can be different to that of site residents. Some GTANAs have used TES and PLASC data as a proxy to identify the relative size of the housed population, but this makes assumptions about the age profile of residents in bricks and mortar.
- 11.20 Site residents can want to move to bricks and mortar for health or other reasons. There is one respondent who has expressed a desire to move from Llandegai into housing. However, many Gypsies and Travellers currently in bricks and mortar are not there by choice, but through other factors, such as overcrowding, health needs, a lack of authorised sites, or the condition or location of some of the existing sites.
- 11.21 The Welsh Government guidance on LHMA defines 'need' as *"households who are unable to access suitable housing without some financial assistance"* (WAG, 2006: 5), and goes on to state *In many cases, the definitions of need and demand for the settled community will also be appropriate for Gypsies and Travellers, particularly those living in bricks and mortar housing. However, the distinctive accommodation requirements of some Gypsies and Travellers will give rise to similar types of need, but in a different context, for example:*

*Bricks and mortar dwelling households:*

- *whose existing accommodation is overcrowded or unsuitable ('unsuitable' in this context can include unsuitability by virtue of proven psychological aversion to bricks and mortar accommodation; although local authorities will wish to satisfy themselves that this is of sufficient severity to constitute a need rather than a preference);*
- *that contain suppressed households who are unable to set up separate family units and who are unable to access suitable or appropriate accommodation. (WAG, 2006: 159)*

11.22 There has been some case law (e.g. *R (Price) v Carmarthenshire CC* [2003] EWHC 42 (Admin); *Lee v Rhondda Cynon Taf BC*, [[2008] EWCA Civ 1013; *Sheridan & Ors v Basildon BC* [2012] EWCA Civ 335) discussing whether psychological aversion, or a stronger requirement for possible psychiatric harm, is needed before a local authority is required to provide site accommodation.

11.23 Some respondents, in both this and other GTANA surveys, report negative psychological effects from living in bricks and mortar. Were more authorised sites available, this would be their preferred accommodation. How many would actually move is unknown, while the lack of data on the total number of families is also problematic.

11.24 In the London GTANA it was estimated 16 per cent of housed Gypsies and Travellers in London would meet the needs criteria (Fordham, 2008). It should be noted that this definition underlying this estimate had been criticised by other groups (e.g. (LGTU, 2009:8). Taking 16% of households estimated to be living in bricks and mortar in the study area, this would mean 14 households (after rounding up) would need re-housing on a site. The numbers have been distributed between the authorities, given their known presence in each area.

11.25 Row nine is included, as within the UK there has been a net loss of local authority sites and pitches. However, there are no authorised site closures anticipated in the study area.

11.26 Row ten represents any residential site need arising from unauthorised encampments. There are effectively two aspects to this category. The first category would be unauthorised encampments seeking permanent residence within the study area (though not necessarily within the local authority in which they are currently located). The main component of this currently is the tolerated encampment near Pentraeth, Our understanding is that some at Pentraeth have temporarily moved into

bricks and mortar, but would actually prefer caravan/mobile accommodation, and some specific allowance may be needed for these households.

11.27 The second group would be short term encampments. Here, there is some conflict of evidence. The interviewees in chapter six stated their preference for accommodation in north Wales, and that they had no permanent residence. In many GTANAs, however, the working assumption would be that 80 to 90 per cent of all those on short term encampments will be in transit through the area, and thus would affect the transit pitch, rather than residential pitch, requirements. This interpretation is supported by the opinions expressed by the local authority representatives, and by the seasonality of the encampment data discussed in chapter twelve. The allowance made here is therefore calculated on the basis that 10% of temporary encampments, about six during the year, will be from those looking for permanent site accommodation. Taking 7 caravans as a figure equal or greater than the majority of encampment, this averages out as 3.5 caravans per month, or four when rounded up. It cannot be assumed that these are connected families, or linked to one area, and they are allocated between the local authorities, other than Ynys Mon, where the allocation is of the Pentreath encampment numbers.

11.28 Row eleven has sub-components. The first uses local knowledge to identify households on local authority sites which are known to be overcrowded, due to doubling up/ having three generations etc. Sometimes, this is not be due to lack of pitches, but to alternative explanations such as a cultural preference for living as an extended family. There is a question whether any information is available about the [long established] private site in Flintshire, as any overcrowding here could feed in to need,

11.29 The second sub-component relates to net in-migration/out-migration from the study area. This is quite difficult to assess. Some of the questions which might help to firm up this assessment are:

- Historically, what do we know about in-migration into the study area, either from neighbouring authorities (Wrexham, Cheshire, Powys, etc., Ireland, or further afield? From the questionnaires there are some indications of people moving in, but the great majority have a local connection. However, Niner (2006a:77) noted: *'The England/Wales border obviously means little to many Gypsy-Travellers. For example, all the women interviewed on the local authority site in Flintshire had moved to*

*it from somewhere in England....In describing their extended families, several Gypsy-Traveller interviewees mentioned brothers and sisters or sons and daughters now living in England (or other parts of Wales).'*

- Are there any possible developments which might increase (or decrease) the possibility of future in-migration, such as employment opportunities, or differing planning standards (see Hargreaves and Brindley, 2011).
- No GTANA has managed to canvass opinion from Gypsies and Travellers resident outside the study area who have not at least passed through during the survey. It is, however, possible that a study of GTANAs from neighbouring districts might indicate some desire to move into north Wales.

11.30 One other possible requirement for accommodation should be noted, though not currently included in the calculation and other questions about an allowance for marriage between residents in the area, which would reduce the total number of pitches required.

11.31 For the third component, The WAG Guidance also defines demand as “the quantity of housing that households are willing and able to buy or rent” (WAG, 2006:5) and notes:

*that the shortage of sites and local hostility, as well as lack of income, may prevent Gypsies and Travellers exercising their free choice in the accommodation market - and that there may in fact be no 'local accommodation market' in sites.*

11.32 The financial risks of acquiring land and failing to obtain planning permission subsequently has impacted on the growth of privately owned Gypsy and Traveller sites, and it is recommended that, in addition to addressing identified needs, local authorities seek to identify possible sites where permission for a residential site might be granted.

11.33 There is also some evidence from the surveys of a wider desire among respondents for site accommodation, and this extends to younger Gypsies and Travellers currently living in bricks and mortar accommodation. The ‘young persons’ questionnaire has 8 responses from individuals currently aged between 15 and 20 and living in bricks and mortar accommodation. All have expressed a preference for site accommodation; there are questions as to the extent to which this preference can be achieved, given financial constraints.

- 11.34 Rows 12-15 are standard items in the calculation, and except for row 14 show zeros in every box. Row fourteen includes a current application for a private site with five pitches which has not been determined at the date of writing. Should this be refused, the net residential need will increase by five pitches. I have not included any plans by local authorities to extend existing provision
- 11.35 Row 16 is the total of 12-15, so Row 17 is the current needs estimate to 2016
- 11.36 After 2016, assuming all current need has been addressed; the base calculation is that the number of pitches required will continue to increase at 3 per cent per annum compound. This would produce an overall requirement of 167 pitches (rounded up to nearest whole number) by 2021, an increase of 25 on the 2016 figure, and 194 pitches, a further increase of 27 (both estimates by 2026. Other factors might increase this requirement.
- 11.37 It should be noted that while the calculations to 2016 are presented on a local authority basis, this is not to imply that future provision should automatically be confined within the boundaries currently existing. Both the WAG guidance (WAG, 2006) and current policy proposals (WG, 2011) support the view that collaborative approaches to these issues are to be preferred.
- 11.38 In particular, the Welsh Assembly Government noted:
- 34. The picture of where Gypsies and Travellers live and want to live may have become distorted by different approaches to provision and enforcement adopted by different local authorities over the years. Where this is the case the local authority responsible for the area where the need is currently found will need to work closely with other local authorities in the region to find a shared solution. In some cases, local authorities who currently show a low level of need may need to accept that they will have to play a greater part in meeting regional need. (WAG, 2006:162)*

### **Recommendations**

- 11.39 Recommendation 18: Local authorities should seek to identify possible sites where permission for a residential site might be granted.

## 12. Transit Site Needs Calculation

### Context

- 12.1 For many Gypsies and Travellers, travelling for at least part of the year is part of the lifestyle. There are a number of reasons for this:
- Travelling to work, and en route to work locations
  - Travelling to fairs (for example, Appleby Fair in Cumbria, or on religious missions)
  - Travelling to family events
  - Travelling for holidays
  - Travelling because no permanent location.
- 12.2 In the study area, it is considered most of the travelling is in transit to other destinations. Holywell is a religious destination, and sometimes family events can bring visitors.
- 12.3 National policy suggests that transit pitches should be available to allow Gypsies and Travellers who wish to travel to do so without stopping illegally. Currently, there is no transit site located within the study area or indeed within Wales as a whole (WG, 2012:37). Part of the Gypsy and Traveller site at Llandegai in Gwynedd was previously used as a transit site, but this was discontinued in 2005, following significant management issues relating directly to this part of the site. (Gwynedd, 2008:5)
- 12.4 AS they may be unable or unwilling to use holiday caravan parks, the absence of official transit sites can give rise to unauthorised encampments by Gypsies and Travellers moving through an area.
- 12.5 These can have a significant impact on relationships between the settled community and the Gypsy and Traveller community.
- 12.6 Apart from damaging relationships, addressing unauthorised encampments can lead to considerable outlay, by both public authorities and the private sector. As Clements and Morris (2002) have suggested, for local authorities these costs can fall into a number of areas
- Legal costs, including officer time attending court proceedings
  - Other attributable staff costs and provision of facilities
  - Building work, including preventative measures such as the construction of earth bunds and the erection of height restricted barriers on lay-bys, and repairs and clearance costs after an encampment
  - Legal costs relating to planning issues.

- 12.7 A widely cited example of the value of a permanent transit site is Bristol, which claims to have reduced its costs from a maximum of approximately £350,000 per annum since establishing a transit site to which occupants of unauthorised encampments can be directed (EHRC, 2009b:11) though the initial capital costs involved in setting up the site reduce these savings. Bristol was experiencing between 20 and 30 large unauthorised encampments annually, of up to 50 caravans. While this is a different experience to that of north Wales authorities, the potential savings from authorised transit sites or stopping places may still be significant. The frequency of encampments and their geographical location will be relevant factors for consideration.
- 12.8 This discussion of transit site need derives its evidence from a number of sources. In part, it is based on local authority data, partly from the caravan count, but also from the records of unauthorised encampments in the GTANA area during the years 2009 and 2010. The study area indicates a considerable number of encampments, most of which are assumed to be temporary visitors or those passing through, during the two years for which full data is available. In addition, the input of stakeholder experience and opinion has shaped the recommendations.
- 12.9 The Caravan Count data for the period July 2006 to January 2012 is incomplete. Conwy did not provide data for the July 2010 and July 2011 counts Gwynedd has not provided data for the July 2010, January 2011 and January 2012 counts. In both cases, it would be reasonable to argue that numbers would be approximately equal to those recorded in previous years, and that the number of caravans on unauthorised encampments would therefore be low. Between July 2008 and January 2010 only one caravan was recorded on an unauthorised encampment was recorded in these two counties. The total caravan count chart has therefore been based on these assumptions. To facilitate monitoring of demand, all counties should complete the biannual caravan count.
- 12.10 Stakeholders were asked to supply data about known unauthorised encampments. This data is likely to be incomplete; as some encampments are not reported to the local authority, or are otherwise unrecorded.
- 12.11 In discussing the possible need for transit sites it should be noted that the data which is recorded currently varies between authorities when an unauthorised encampment is notified,. Some authorities note the exact location, day on which the encampment was reported, and the number of caravans and vehicles involved. Estimates of the numbers of adults and children present, and a record of the date on which the encampment

ended are sometimes recorded also. With other authorities, the month and approximate location only are recorded. The table below shows what information has been available and used from each of the authorities in relation to unauthorised encampments

Table 10: Data format for unauthorised encampments

|                                                   | Conwy              | Denbigh-shire      | Flintshire             | Gwynedd            | Ynys Mon           |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Date reported</b>                              | Day/month          | Day/month          | Month                  | Day/month          | Day/month          |
| <b>Date ended</b>                                 | Sometimes          | No                 | No                     | Sometimes          | No                 |
| <b>Location</b>                                   | Exact <sup>1</sup> | Exact <sup>1</sup> | Community <sup>1</sup> | Exact <sup>1</sup> | Exact <sup>1</sup> |
| <b>Number caravans</b>                            | Yes                | Yes                | No                     | Yes <sup>2</sup>   | Yes                |
| <b>Ethnicity</b>                                  | No                 | No                 | No                     | Yes <sup>2</sup>   | No                 |
| <b>Estimated number of adults and/or children</b> | Yes                | No                 | No                     | No                 | No                 |

<sup>1</sup>Exact means the precise location of the encampment, e.g. Tir Llwyd Trading Estate, Kinmel Bay. Community means the community within which the encampment occurred

<sup>2</sup>This information was not part of the database, but provided by the Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer from personal knowledge

12.12 A common format for recording encampments should be agreed, and data from North Wales Police included to aid consistency and completeness.

12.13 These variations are not unusual, but it does impact on one or two issues – it is not possible to make precise suggestions about the size or location of any transit sites. Again, this reflects other GTANAs, where precise location and numbers are not included, or where transit sites are allocated on the basis of ‘equality of provision’ or other means a common format for the recording of encampments.

12.14 Data was not received from every authority for the five years 2006-2010, so analysis concentrates on the years 2009 and 2010. Stakeholders considered that there had been a declining trend in the

number of encampments during these years, possibly due to economic factors. It was not considered this was likely to be a continuing trend.

12.15 From the available data, during the years 2009 and 2010 there was at least one encampment recorded in the study area every month of each year. Most encampments occurred during the summer travelling season, though encampments near the ferry port at Holyhead occurred in January and February.

12.16 Overall, 110 encampments were recorded by the five local authorities in the study area during the period 2009 and 2010. 41 were in Flintshire, 30 on Ynys Môn, 22 in Gwynedd, 12 in Conwy and 5 in Denbighshire. With the exception of Ynys Môn, all authorities reported fewer encampments in 2010 than in 2009.

12.17 The highest number of encampments recorded in the study area during a single month was 18, in September 2010. Without full data, it cannot be determined how many of these encampments were repetitions by the same group, or what was the maximum number of caravans on encampments, during this or any other month.

Table 11: Numbers of encampments recorded by year and local authority

|                       | Ynys Mon | Conwy | Denbighshire | Flintshire | Gwynedd |
|-----------------------|----------|-------|--------------|------------|---------|
| <b>2007</b>           |          | 10    |              |            |         |
| <b>2008</b>           |          | 8     |              |            | 18      |
| <b>2009</b>           | 12       | 6     | 0            | 27         | 18 (+4) |
| <b>2010</b>           | 18       | 6     | 5            | 14         | 4 (+1)  |
| <b>2011(&lt;7/11)</b> | 1        | 1     | 7            | 11         |         |

12.18 Where the number of caravans was recorded, (in all authorities except Flintshire) the majority of encampments in the study area (57%) contained six caravans or less. Only 11 per cent of encampments had more than 12 caravans. In the study period, the largest number of caravans on one encampment was 20, though historic data suggested encampments of 56 caravans had been encountered in previous years.

Table 12: Size of encampments, where recorded

|      | Ynys Mon | Conwy | Denbighshire | Flintshire | Gwynedd |
|------|----------|-------|--------------|------------|---------|
| <6   | 13       | 23    | 4            |            | 19      |
| 6-12 | 6        | 4     | 8            |            | 13      |
| 12>  | 3        | 4     | 0            |            | 5       |

12.19 The average number of caravans per encampment each year ranged from 3.0 to 7.4 between authorities

12.20 Where the exact location is identified, most encampments are not roadside or even lay-by, but on surfaced open spaces. Among these industrial estates, supermarket car parks and other car parks predominate. The variety and nature of the locations, including supermarket car parks, indicate the difficulties of applying effective preventive measures.

Table 13: Location of encampments

|                | Ynys Mon | Conwy | Denbighshire | Flintshire | Gwynedd |
|----------------|----------|-------|--------------|------------|---------|
| <b>Council</b> |          |       |              |            |         |
| Roadside       | 4        | 1     | 2            |            | 3       |
| Industrial     | 9        | 19    | 2            |            | 12      |
| Supermarket    | 12       | 1     | 2            |            | 3       |
| Other          |          | 11    | 6            |            | 10      |

12.21 Data on the end date of occupations is particularly scarce, so indications of length of stay are not available.

12.22 Where possible, the average [mean] number of trailers present is indicated. Large scale encampments are rare.

Table 14 Average number of caravans present

|      | Ynys Mon | Conwy | Denbighshire | Flintshire | Gwynedd |
|------|----------|-------|--------------|------------|---------|
| 2007 |          | 4.3   |              |            |         |
| 2008 |          | 5.0   |              |            |         |
| 2009 | 7.1      | 3.0   | -            |            | 7.4     |
| 2010 | 4.5      | 5.8   | 6.0          |            | 5.4     |
| 2011 | 5        |       | 6.7          |            |         |

### *Gypsy and Traveller views*

12.23 Respondents were asked if there was a need for transit accommodation to be developed in North Wales. 100 per cent of respondent suggested they would like transit accommodation to be available across the study area.

12.24 Respondents were then asked where they would like a transit site to be located. A variety of responses were given which are outlined in the table below. Holyhead, Rhyl and Bangor were the most popular suggestions. Prestatyn, Conwy, Abergele/ Pensarn and Flint were also mentioned frequently. Those that did not name a specific area generally suggested there should be permanent sites throughout the towns along the A55.

Table 15: Area preferences of adult Gypsies and Travellers (transit accommodation).

| Number of responses | Town/ area.                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1-5                 | Deeside; Holywell; Mold; Penmaenmawr; Bethesda; Rhosgoch; Tregarth; Caernarfon; Llanberis; Denbigh; Portmadoc; St Asaph/ Bodelwyddan; Llandulas; Llangefni; Queensferry; Towyn; Rhuddlan; Colwyn Bay; Llandudno; Ynys Môn; |
| 6-10                | Flint; Abergele/ Pensarn; Conwy and Prestatyn                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 11-15               | Bangor                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 16-20               | Rhyl and Holyhead                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

12.25 Respondents were also asked about the type of facilities they thought was needed on transit sites. The following facilities were most cited:

- o Hard standings;
- o Water and mains electricity;
- o Individual WC's
- o Individual baths/showers
- o Refuse storage and collection;

12.26 Additional facilities also cited include; meeting room or social facilities; children's play area; camera on gate; an electric gate for security; communal washing room; outside taps to clean trailers and attach hose pipe.

12.27 The Gypsy and Traveller site in Wrexham was often referred to as an example of a site that would be suitable for Gypsy and Travellers.

12.28 80 % of respondents would use official sites if they were provided. All were prepared to pay to use official sites, with the suggestion of £5 per day and between £20 – £45 per week, as long as *“the site has a warden on it, with electric and toilet and other basic facilities”*. In terms of size, the preferred size suggested by respondents was for 10 – 15 trailers.

12.29 When asked their views on combining residential and transit pitches on the same site 70 per cent of respondents did not think it was a good idea

*“Wouldn't be fair to the people who stay there full time.”*

*“No because if the comers and goers cause mischief the permanent residents will get the blame.”*

*“No I don't. Too much trouble, too much hassle.”*

12.30 The respondents were then asked about the most important things to take into account when creating future sites. Various responses were given:

*“[Sites would need to have a] Permanent block with kitchen and living area. Play area for the kids [as well as] basic electric and water”*

*“Location is key”*

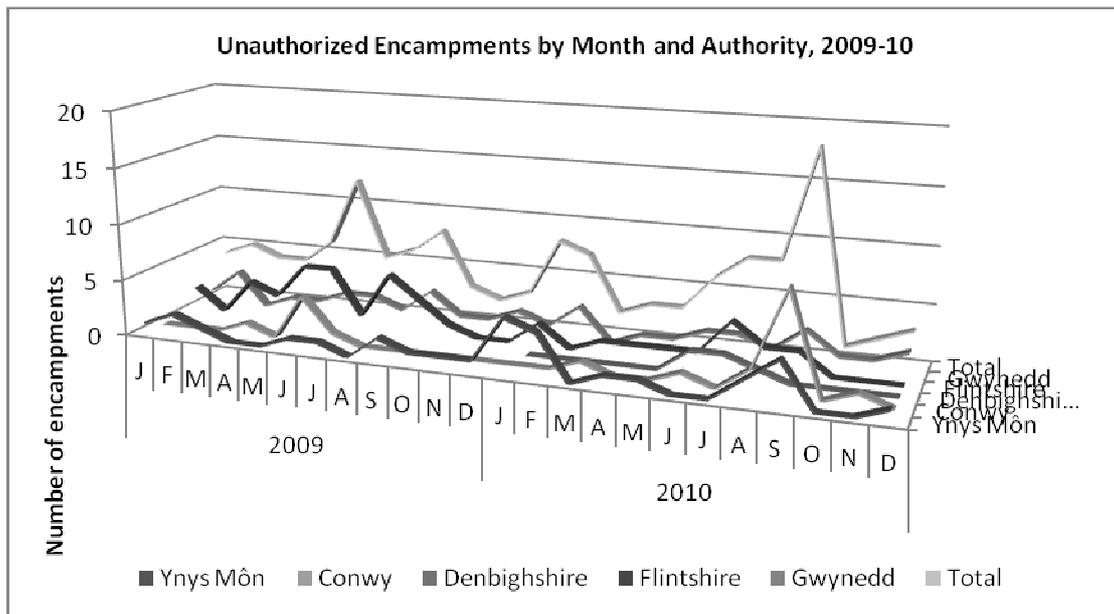
*“In my opinion it is better if Travellers run it as they understand it. Travellers could discuss any problems”.*

12.31 Community opinion is in agreement with Welsh Government advice is that sites should not contain a mix of permanent and transit sites (WAG,

2009:29). This is supported also by previous experience at the Llandegai site

12.32 Chart 13 below shows the number of recorded unauthorised encampments by month and local authority area. The data is not complete throughout the period, but does serve to indicate the seasonality of encampments, with the evidence indicating that most encampments are by seasonal travellers passing through the area, rather than long term residents moving within it.

Chart 13: Unauthorised Encampments 2009-10



## ***Calculation of Transit site needs***

12.33 Difficulties with the available data have produced a number of responses to the transit site issue in other GTANAs, sometimes omitting all discussion. This calculation of the transit site requirement is based on assumptions set out below. These are:

- Annually, about 55 encampments occur in the study area
- 10% of temporary encampments, about six during the year, will be from those looking for permanent site accommodation, and are discussed under the permanent site requirement
- Thus 90% of encampments, about 49 in total, would require transit accommodation
- The maximum stay would be for one month, though some encampments would be for a shorter period. A longer maximum period of stay would involve recalculation of the accommodation requirements.
- Accommodation for 7 caravans would deal with most encampments.

12.34 Using 7 as a working figure, transit requirements would be for (49 multiplied by 7) caravans per annum, or 343 over the year. On a monthly basis, this amounts to 28.5 caravans. However, for reasons discussed, this can involve some element of double counting. Proportionately, about 47% of encampments are recorded in the Gwynedd and Ynys Môn area, 15% in the central area of /Conwy and Denbighshire, and 37% in Flintshire.

12.35 It is therefore suggested that the authorities consider three or four transit sites accommodating up to seven caravans. More than one site is to be preferred, for a number of reasons

- They are more likely to be used if close to traditional stopping places
- The size of each site would be reduced
- Difficulties about ethnic or inter-family tensions would be reduced.
- A single transit site for the area would not resolve the issues. It is important that there is somewhere for occupants to move on, and a network is required.

12.36 The local authorities should work jointly to identify appropriate sites for temporary accommodation on a regional basis. These may be transit sites, with a relatively full range of facilities, or temporary stopping places with more restricted provision,. The nature, as well as the location, of provision, should be informed by data on the patterns of unauthorised encampment in recent years. That stated, analysis of the existing data indicates different patterns between the local authorities in

the consortium. Another option to meet some of the demand is to permit temporary stays on larger pitches in residential sites

- 12.37 In Ynys Môn, a clear preponderance of the temporary encampments was in the Holyhead area. Some were overnight, or left within a day, suggesting they were rendezvous points before or after using the Irish ferry.
- 12.38 In Gwynedd, recorded encampments are scattered throughout the county, a reflection perhaps of different travelling routes; East/West along the North Wales coast, or North/South through the county, or the availability of open land in which to stop. The strongest evidence of repeated occupations was in the vicinity of Bangor.
- 12.39 In the middle of the study area, there may be a need for a transit site on the border of Conwy and Denbighshire, but possibly one where the authorities co-operate in provision, in order to maximise usage of the site. In Conwy, a clear preponderance of encampments was close to the A55, with 90 per cent being on industrial estates and other sites within a short distance of Abergele. 65 per cent of recorded encampments in the county occurred on the Tir Llwyd Trading Estate in Kinmel Bay. Denbighshire also has most encampments close to the A55 corridor or near Rhyl.
- 12.40 In Flintshire, where 37% of all encampments in the area were recorded, the sites are more dispersed. However, over the years surveyed there may be a need for provision certainly within reach of Holywell.
- 12.41 Some of these encampments could be the same group travelling through the area, and thus from authority to authority, but variations in the data collected make it difficult to identify multiple occupations.
- 12.42 Policy suggests a collaborative approach to the provision of transit sites, and this could extend beyond the boundary of the study area. For neighbouring authorities, Wrexham conducted its own GTANA. The assessment gave no formal indication of transit site needs, [or data regarding encampments] It did recommend that Wrexham should collaborate on a regional basis. (Fordham Research, 2007).
- 12.43 Other neighbouring GTANAs are available for Powys (Centre for Urban and Regional Studies, Birmingham (2008) Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment Shropshire, Herefordshire, Telford & Wrekin and Powys) and West Cheshire and Chester (Brown et al, 2007) Cheshire Partnership Area Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation and

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### **Recommendations**

12.44 Recommendation 19: that all counties complete the biannual caravan count.

12.45 Recommendation 20: that a common protocol for reporting the presence of unauthorised encampments and addressing the issues is agreed by the local authorities.

12.46 Recommendation 21: All authorities within the study area, or whatever group continues the GTANA process, should decide on a common format for the recording of encampments. Ideally this should contain at least the following items:

- Date encampment was reported
- Date encampment ended
- Location, nature of site [public/private; industrial or business park, retail car park, other]
- Number of caravans,
- Estimated number of adults and children.

12.47 Recommendation 22: It is also recommended that data from North Wales Police be included, to aid consistency and completeness.

12.48 Recommendation 23: It is recommended that the local authorities work jointly to identify appropriate sites for temporary accommodation. These may be transit sites, with a relatively full range of facilities or may, if usage is likely to be intermittent, be temporary stopping places with more restricted provision, where stays may be limited to 28 days. (WAG, 2009:29-32) The nature, as well as the location, of provision, should be informed by data on the patterns of unauthorised encampment in recent years. That stated, analysis of the existing data indicates different patterns between the local authorities in the consortium.

## 13. Reflection.

- 13.1 The North West Wales and Flintshire GTANA is one of the last GTANAs to be completed in the first wave of GTANA assessments. The completion of other GTANA reports before that of North West Wales and Flintshire has enabled access to some of the analysis and reflections on the previous reports, particularly by CURS (2008a), but also some regional and other assessments of GTANAs.
- 13.2 From these other assessments some issues can be drawn which echo the experiences of the current NWW&F GTANA
- 13.3 It can only represent the first stage of an ongoing process of engagement and assessment of the accommodation needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community in the study area.
- 13.4 To continue this process, it is recommended that the following steps be taken immediately:
- 13.5 A follow up to the present GTANA steering group needs to be formed. This should be linked in to a general LHMA continuation strategy for North Wales, and report to broader coordinating group. Ideally, the composition of this should include at least:
- 13.6 Representatives of all the relevant local authorities, this needs to be considered in the light of both specific indications in the Welsh Assembly Government guidance into the conduct of GTANAs (WAG, 2006) and more generic proposals for collaborative working by councils in north Wales (Welsh Government Cabinet, 2011). This may require a larger grouping than the current survey area.
- 13.7 Representatives from the Gypsy and Traveller community, ideally the majority of this group should be locally based, including members from all ethnic groups and geographical concentrations. *“Gypsies and Travellers” include diverse communities and all need to be engaged* (CURS 2008a:3), together with any other relevant representatives.
- 13.8 It is important that the local authorities and community representatives maintain a long term engagement with the process. One of the objectives of the North West Wales LHMA was to develop a stock of in-house expertise which would offer a longer term perspective on local housing issues than relatively short term engagements by outside contractors.

13.9 Longer term engagement may also help to address some other issues which were evident in the first round of GTANA surveys. These include particularly the difficulties of estimating the number of Gypsies and Travellers in bricks and mortar accommodation, whether they were in bricks and mortar by choice or through lack of alternatives, and considerations of need, demand and desire.

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