

Herefordshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2013 - 2017

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Herefordshire Council Corporate Research Team

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DRAFT

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Executive Summary

Context

The Assessment of the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers across Herefordshire is important in order to fulfil the Vision as stated in the Herefordshire Council Travellers Policy November 2008, and Herefordshire Council's Strategy for Gypsies & Travellers (revised draft dated December 2011) "To create in Herefordshire an environment where different communities, the traditionally nomadic and the traditionally settled, live in harmony and where all have access to the basic needs and benefits which characterise an inclusive society."

The National Planning Policy Framework places the responsibility on individual planning authorities to set their own targets for traveller sites, and this necessitates a needs assessment.

The last time such an Assessment was carried out was in 2008 – this was the Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment for Shropshire, Herefordshire, Telford & Wrekin and Powys, produced by Centre for Urban & Regional Studies, University of Birmingham (July 2008)¹. This will be abbreviated to GTAA 2008.

Key Findings

Findings from the survey of Gypsy & Traveller households carried out in 2012

- 31% of households surveyed had some sort of accommodation need (this could be a need for one or more units of accommodation arising from one household). This is very similar to a previous survey in Herefordshire in 2006², where 29% had some sort of accommodation need.
- Of the 17 households with an accommodation need, 7 (39%) had a requirement for at least one additional pitch – one of this number wished to move from bricks and mortar, the others were already occupying pitches.
- 10 households (56%) had a requirement for bricks and mortar housing. Four of these are experiencing severe accommodation problems, one being of no fixed abode and 3 being in temporary accommodation due to homelessness.
- The survey indicates a total additional requirement for 7 pitches and 9 units of RSL (Registered Social Landlord³) accommodation within Herefordshire; 2 units of RSL accommodation in the county would be released by families who need to move.

Findings from site application forms

Analysis of the site application forms shows a need for 5 additional pitches. If sites were found for these applicants, this would release 4 houses (all RSL).

¹ www.herefordshire.gov.uk/housing/planning/35118.asp

² The survey took place in 2006 – this then fed into the GTAA 2008

³ also referred to as Registered Provider

Additional pitch requirements

As detailed in Table 1, the estimate for additional pitch requirements in Herefordshire has been obtained by looking at the 2012 survey, planning applications since 2008 both pending and refused, families who are currently on unauthorised sites, site application forms, and a follow-up to a 2006 Herefordshire survey. All of these are explained in more detail within the report. The additional pitch requirement is 31 and realistically, these pitches would be provided over the 5 years 2013 to 2017, giving a requirement for 6 additional pitches per year.

Table 1: Estimate for additional pitch requirement 2013 to 2017

	Pitches
Arising from 2012 survey	7
Follow-up to 2006 survey	1
Planning applications refused 2008-2012	10
Planning applications pending	2
Families currently on unauthorised sites	6
Additional pitch requirements found from site application forms. There will be some turnover during the 5 year period, but pitches becoming vacant on sites will be balanced out by additional families seeking pitches	5
Total additional pitch requirement	31

High level of housing need amongst those seeking bricks and mortar accommodation

- Although there are only 14 households identified as Gypsies and Travellers on the Home Point⁴ register, these have disproportionately high numbers banded as Gold (and correspondingly fewer households banded as Bronze) suggesting a higher level of need amongst Gypsy and Traveller households who are seeking affordable housing as compared to the housing register as a whole.
- The 2012 survey showed that, of the 10 households found to be seeking affordable bricks and mortar housing, 3 are in temporary accommodation due to homelessness and one is of no fixed abode, ie. 40% are in the highest categories of need.

Preferred size of private sites

The recent trend is for small-scale sites with nearly half of planning applications since 2008 being for a site with a single pitch, and over four fifths for a site with either one or two pitches.

While only 35% of applications were granted initially, a further 41% were granted on appeal. This would seem to indicate an initial suspicion amongst local communities, although once in place, the small private sites apparently usually cause no problems.

Shortage of land for private sites

Suitable land is in short supply, see under "Current and planned site provision"

Vacancy rate on council sites

The council sites are normally full, with some families on the waiting list. The vacancy rate at present is only 4% which is in line with the minimum achievable vacancy rate for bricks and mortar housing – purely due to turnover or "churn".

⁴ This is the Housing Register for Choice Based Lettings
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Introduction

As part of the GTAA 2008, interviews of Gypsies and Travellers were carried out across the study area (Shropshire, Herefordshire, Telford & Wrekin and Powys). The sample size across the study area was sufficiently large that estimates could be made for new household formation over the next 5 years, from families in authorised sites, unauthorised sites, bricks and mortar housing, etc.

The GTAA 2008 drew on a Herefordshire Council survey of Gypsies and Travellers which had been carried out in 2006 – hereafter referred to the 2006 survey.

These figures were used to give an estimate of the additional pitch requirement in Herefordshire over the five year period 2008 to 2012 – 83 pitches over and above the planned delivery of 8 additional pitches on the Bromyard LA (Local Authority) site.

Delivery of pitches since 2008 has been as follows.

Table 2: Delivery of additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches since 2008

Additional pitches needed 2008 to 2012 over and above those due to be delivered on Bromyard LA site (source GTAA)	83 pitches
Total additional pitches including 8 to be provided on Bromyard LA site	91 pitches
Delivered as of 31/10/12	44 pitches
Expected total pitches delivered once the Bromyard LA site is refurbished	52 pitches
Apparent shortfall as of 31/10/12	39 pitches

In addition, the GTAA 2008 stated that there was some need for transit accommodation in the county, in view of the fact that provision at Madley transit site was not usable. The report gave a rough estimate that in the region of 27 families over a year could need transit provision in Herefordshire. As each family would have a limited stay, the conclusion was that a few stopping places would be sufficient to meet the transit need.

The GTAA 2008 estimated that there could be a need for social rented housing arising from the Gypsy & Traveller community of about 12 households per year over the whole study area, but it was not possible to break this down by local authority area. In Herefordshire, the need for social rented housing arising from the Gypsy and Traveller community forms part of the total Home Point register for Choice-based lettings and are treated exactly the same as any other British national regarding access to housing.

As we are now reaching the end of the five-year period covered by the GTAA it was decided to re-assess the situation by gathering as much new data as possible, but for Herefordshire only.

Methodology

The methodology takes the form of evidence-gathering from all available sources, plus re-surveying as many Gypsy and Traveller households as possible in 2012.

In detail, the methodology is as follows.

- A new survey using a new, simplified survey form. From April 2012, Gypsies and Travellers were surveyed face-to-face, and the responses were recorded on forms by the Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer, and the Gypsy Officer. By 9th October, when the analysis took place, 59 forms had been completed.
- Examination and analysis of Home Point data
- Interviews with Herefordshire Council officers:
the Gypsy Officer
the Team Leader for Equalities and GRT (Gypsy & Romany Travellers)
the Corporate Diversity Manager
- Telephone interviews with external partners
Manager of The Travellers Health Programme (THP), Wye Valley Trust
Registered Providers –all our main Registered Provider Partners were approached, and two were able to assist with information provided by the Customer Involvement Officer or Housing Officer
- Herefordshire Council files and documents
The following were examined
Records of planning applications together with outcomes
The Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Reports⁵, which assess the implementation of the Local Development Scheme and the extent to which the Council's planning policies are being achieved.
Application forms for the Council's Travellers sites
- Examination of Caravan Count data from the "Inside Government" website

Comparison with the GTAA methodology

The methodology used by the GTAA 2008 was to carry out a total of 125 interviews across the study area (Shropshire, Herefordshire, Telford & Wrekin and Powys). The total sample size for Herefordshire was 84 because the 29 households interviewed by the University of Birmingham were augmented with 55 responses from a Herefordshire survey which had been carried out the previous year.

The sample size across the study area was sufficiently large that estimates could be made for new household formation over the next 5 years, from families in authorised sites, unauthorised sites, bricks and mortar housing, etc. as described in detail in the GTAA ⁶

Current limitations

Due to the smaller number of surveys and the fact that there is no defined sample frame for Gypsy & Traveller families in Herefordshire, it is not possible to repeat the estimates in the GTAA which derive future need from new household formation. In this assessment we have therefore taken a pragmatic approach and tried to look at all the factors which are believed to have a bearing on the likely need for accommodation for Gypsy and Traveller households in Herefordshire over the next 5 years.

⁵ See http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/docs/Final_AMR_2011.pdf for the latest report

⁶ Model of Supply and Need, GTAA chapter 13

National policy

The Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) published its “Planning policy for traveller sites” in March 2012. The document forms part of the National Planning Policy Framework.

- The planning policy places the responsibility on individual planning authorities to set their own targets for traveller sites in cooperation with neighbouring councils. Herefordshire Council planners hold meetings with their counterparts in neighbouring authorities at key points in policy development in order to comply with this “Duty to Co-operate”.
- Targets will be evidence based, but it will be up to authorities to reach their own decisions on the type and volume of evidence on which they rely.
- Authorities should set criteria-based policies for land allocation. These should be fair, and facilitate the traditional and nomadic life of travellers while respecting the interests of the settled community
- It is a requirement to consider local environmental quality impacts on the health and well-being of travellers and others, and to avoid placing undue pressure on local infrastructure and services when considering the sustainability of potential sites.

Concerning provision for Gypsies and Travellers, local planning authorities should, in producing their Local Plan:

- Identify and update annually, a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years’ worth of sites against their locally set targets
- Identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years six to ten and, where possible, for years 11-15

Where an authority cannot demonstrate an up-to-date five year supply of deliverable sites, this will be ‘a significant material consideration’ when considering any subsequent application for temporary planning permission. This provision comes into effect for applications from March 2013 onwards.

Characteristics of the Gypsy and Traveller population in Herefordshire

The different Gypsy and Traveller groups

In Herefordshire Council's Education Department, the Advisory Teacher for Travellers⁷ stated in October 2012 that he knows of, and has contact with, 241 children and young people aged between 0-19 years old. 8 of these are children of Travelling Showpeople, 7 are New Travellers, and 226 are Romany Gypsy. These children are from 111 families, which would give an average of 2.2 children **in this age group** per family. This cannot be compared with national figures for family size, as the average is derived using only children aged 0-19, and only those families that currently have children in this age group.

It was reported that 17.5 % of these children and young people live on sites (some private, some tolerated and some LA owned). The remainder 82.5% live in bricks and mortar accommodation. In his experience, the largest numbers of housed families with children aged 0-19 can be found in Hereford city, the Leominster area, and westwards to Weobley. Site-dwelling families with children can be found on all the council sites.

Information from the Education Department is that known families of Travelling Showpeople mainly live in Ross-on-Wye and the surrounding area, with 4 known families with children among this group. The GTAA 2008 concluded that there was not an accommodation need in Herefordshire from among this group. It is known that this group keeps separate from other Traveller groups and that they never apply for Local Authority sites. Further information is being sought on this group.

Under-reporting of Gypsy and Traveller numbers

Where residents are given the option of describing their nationality and/ or ethnicity on official forms, it is up to the individual as to whether to class themselves as Gypsy / Traveller or just as British. To quote from a housing officer with one of the Council's RSL partners

"The official statistics say that we have 3 people who describe themselves as 'Gypsy, Romany, Irish Traveller' all from one household, which equates to 0.04% of our households. However, there are up to 16 households which have described themselves as from another ethnicity e.g. White British, that we feel are likely to be from a Gypsy or traveller background. It should be said, though, that this is not official and we have to adhere to how households describe themselves."

2011 Census

For the 2011 Census **363** people living in Herefordshire ticked the box to identify as 'white: Gypsy or Irish Traveller' - a relatively small minority (0.2%) of Herefordshire's population, but nevertheless making Herefordshire just outside the highest 10% of authorities in the country in terms of Gypsy & Traveller percentage numbers. It is unlikely that this is a true estimate of the number of Gypsies & Travellers in the county, but it is a count of the number that chose to state their identity.

- At present, just this single figure is available. An age breakdown will be given in a future data release
- The definition which appeared on the Census form, for respondents to tick, was "**Gypsy or Irish Traveller**" ie. New Travellers were not counted. The reason for this is that Gypsies and Irish Travellers are recognised as an ethnic group in terms of legislation (eg. planning law) whereas it is considered that New Travellers form a group by virtue of a lifestyle choice.

⁷ His full title is **Team Leader for Equalities and GRT (Gypsy Roma & Traveller) Teacher** but he prefers to be known by the shorter title.

The previous population estimate

Herefordshire Council's paper "Ethnicity in Herefordshire, 2009"⁸, gave an estimate of 800 to 900 individuals, derived from the 2008 GTAA. BUT this included New Travellers, estimated at about 160 individuals, meaning that the previous population estimate for Gypsy & Irish Travellers was between about **650** and **750**.

Current estimate of the Herefordshire G&T population

1) Households living in caravans / trailers - Table 3

Pitches (as listed in this report)	134
Of these, pitches occupied by New Travellers	38
Therefore pitches occupied by Gypsy or Irish Travellers	96

2) Households living in bricks & mortar accommodation

It is assumed that those in housing would all be ethnic Gypsy or Irish Travellers because the definition of New Travellers is members of the settled community who have adopted a nomadic or semi-nomadic lifestyle living in moveable dwellings.⁹

The number of households in bricks and mortar is difficult to determine as there is no definitive data. There are 2 estimates that can be used.

2.1 A figure of **115** households in Herefordshire is given in the 2008 GTAA. This figure was modelled using all available sources of information at the time.

2.2 A current estimate (December 2012) derived from the local knowledge of the Advisory Teacher for Travellers based on the families who he knows with children of school age. Certain assumptions were made in order to arrive at the estimate. In particular, it has been assumed that the % split between households in caravans and households in bricks and mortar is the same as the % split for the 241 children known to the Advisory Teacher.

Table 4: Calculation of the current estimate for households in bricks & mortar

Households of Gypsy or Irish Travellers with children aged 0-19 who live in bricks & mortar accommodation	89
Of Gypsy or Irish Travellers who live in bricks & mortar accommodation, % with school-age children (source: the 2006 Herefordshire survey. The 2012 survey gave a similar result at 73% but the numbers are small with a base of only 11 families)	69%
Extrapolating from this, estimate for total Gypsy or Irish Traveller households who live in bricks & mortar accommodation	$89 \div 0.69$ = 129

⁸ see <http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/factsandfigures/ethnicity.aspx>

⁹ GTAA 2008 Glossary.

Average household size for Gypsy or Irish Travellers in Herefordshire

Again, there are 2 estimates

- 1) The **lower estimate** is **2.7**, found from the 2012 survey.
- 2) The **higher estimate** is **3.5**, found from the GTAA 2008 with a larger sample size of 125 households across the study area this This also drew on a Herefordshire survey of 55 households in 2006, where the average household size was also found to be 3.5

Table 5: four estimates for the Gypsy & Irish Traveller population

Estimate for households in bricks & mortar	Therefore estimate for total households	Estimate for average household size	Resulting population estimate	Estimate if New Travellers are included
115	211	2.7	570	673
129	225	2.7	608	711
115	211	3.5	739	872
129	225	3.5	788	921

The means that the current population estimate for Gypsy & Irish Travellers in Herefordshire is between about **550** and **800**.

The current population estimate for Travellers in Herefordshire, including New Travellers, is between about **650** and **950**.

Caravan counts

English local authorities have a statutory duty to carry out caravan counts twice a year, in January and July. Whereas site provision is counted in terms of pitches, and a single pitch can accommodate more than one caravan, the caravan count is exactly as its name implies. One reason for this is that when the survey team are out counting the caravans, for example on the roadside, it is not really possible to estimate a number of pitches.

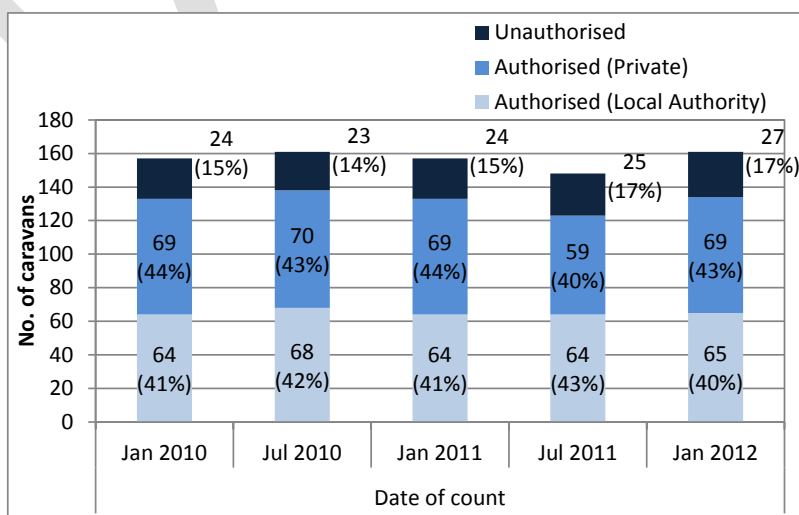
The table below shows the counts for Herefordshire, its neighbouring English counties and England since January 2010.

Table 6: Count of Gypsy and Traveller Caravans 27th January 2011: Last five counts

County	Date of count	Total all caravans	Authorised sites (with planning permission)		Unauthorised sites (without planning permission)			
			Local authority owned	Private	Caravans on Sites on Gypsies own land		Caravans on Sites on land not owned by Gypsies	
					"Tolerated"	"Not tolerated"	"Tolerated"	"Not tolerated"
Herefordshire	Jan 2012	161	65	69	27	0	0	0
	Jul 2011	148	64	59	24	0	0	1
	Jan 2011	157	64	69	21	3	0	0
	Jul 2010	161	68	70	21	2	0	0
	Jan 2010	157	64	69	21	3	0	0
Shropshire ¹⁰	Jan 2012	175	81	86	8	0	0	0
Worcs.	Jan 2012	501	225	220	38	7	3	8
Gloucestershire	Jan 2012	423	106	266	4	21	26	0
ENGLAND	Jan 2012	18,746	6,800	9,096	975	914	480	481

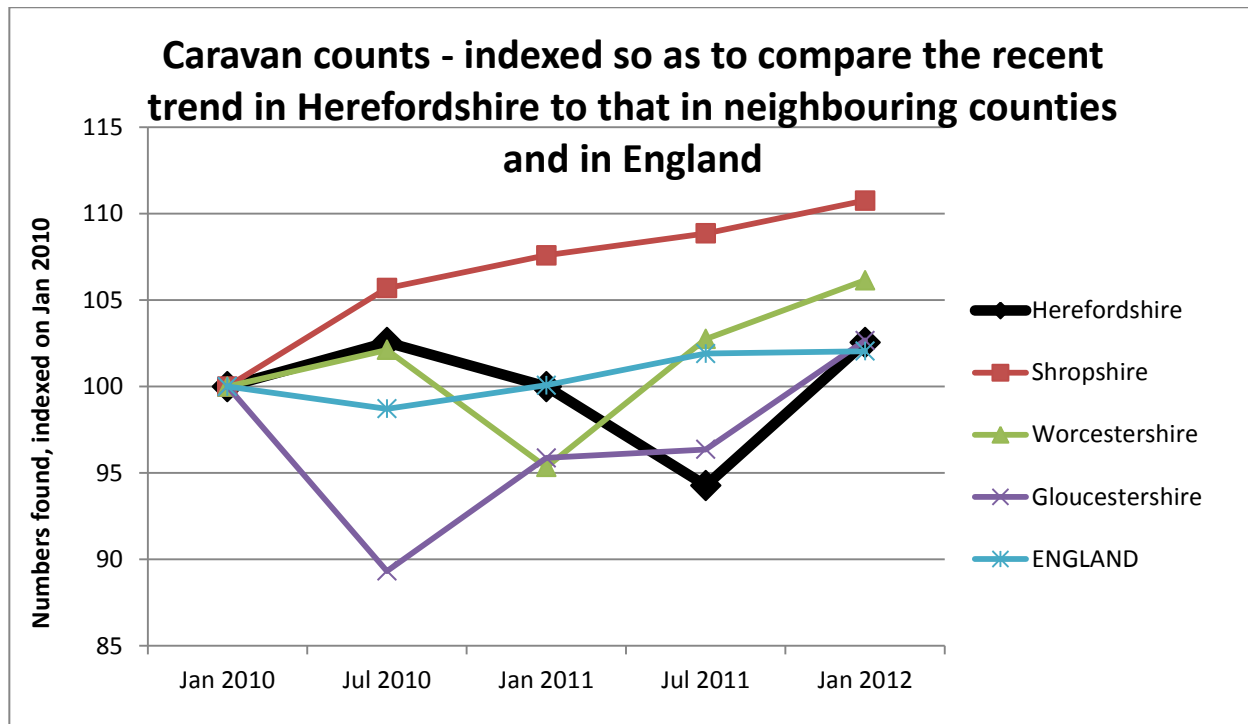
The total number of Gypsy and Traveller caravans in Herefordshire, in January 2012, was 161. Although this is up by 13 caravans on the figure from 6 months previously, numbers have fluctuated over the last 2 years, averaging at around 157. Out of the areas shown in the table above, only Shropshire has shown a marked change in the number of caravans over the last 2 years (an increase of 11%). As the chart below shows, the majority (83%) of caravans are on authorised sites and are roughly equally divided between local authority owned and privately owned. The proportion of authorised sites is consistent with the country as a whole and Herefordshire's neighbours, with the exception of Shropshire which has a relatively larger proportion (95%).

Figure 1 Count of Gypsy and Traveller Caravans since January 2010, showing the relative proportions of those on authorised and unauthorised sites



¹⁰ Only partial information on the January 2012 count was received.

Figure 2



Health issues for Gypsies and Travellers

A Local Government Information Unit Policy Briefing, published in May 2012 states that “sufficient information is available to conclude that Gypsies and Travellers can expect reduced life expectancy and poor levels of health at all stages of life, exacerbated by social factors. In addition to failings on the part of health providers, individuals experience a number of difficulties in obtaining medical treatment, including obstacles in accessing primary care.”

See <http://www.lgiu.org.uk/briefing/gypsies-and-travellers-two-new-government-reports/>

A survey of the Health needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Herefordshire, carried out by key workers in the Primary Care Trust and the Council in 2008, found that a third of respondents felt their health was bad or very bad, which is much higher than for the general population. A high proportion (just under half) stated they had a disability, long term illness or health problem which limited the daily activities or work which they could do. (Source: Herefordshire Council Research Team report)

The Travellers Health Programme (THP), Wye Valley Trust (based in Leominster), was set up to address some of these issues.

This programme is staffed by a manager plus a health visitor, a community nursery nurse, and the mobile unit driver.

The mobile unit goes out once a week, to visit local authority sites at pre-arranged times so that the site residents know when to expect it. The rest of the time, the THP staff are able to make individual visits as required. Members of the Gypsy & Traveller Community can contact the project using a mobile phone number which is circulated widely – there is also an e-mail address that can be used – see contact details in Appendix 3

Programme staff can offer minor first aid, but their main role is to support clients in accessing existing health provision whether a GP, dentist, etc. Programme staff will assist clients in making appointments, and will attend with the client to support them in cases where this is helpful. They will also encourage clients to take up screening appointments, immunisation and other preventive health care provision.

Current and planned site provision in Herefordshire

Local authority sites

There are 6 local authority sites in Herefordshire which are currently in use, plus a further site at Madley see table below, and map at Appendix 1

Table 7: Local authority sites

Site name	Total pitches	Vacant pitches as at 24/10/12	Total caravans as at 24/10/12
Romany Close, Grafton, Hereford	9	2	10
Orchard Park, Watery Lane, Hereford	11	0	16
Tinker's Corner, Bosbury	7	0	10
Openfields, Bromyard	2	0	4
Springfield Close, Croft Lane, Luston	10	0	15
Turnpike, Pembridge	6	0	8
Madley transit site	17 pitches but currently unusable – could be brought back into use		
Total usable pitches	45		

* This is the number of pitches currently available, until the Bromyard site is refurbished (pending funding application)

There are only 2 vacant pitches, out of a total of 45 pitches, a vacancy rate of 4%, and one of these is due to be filled shortly by a family moving from an unauthorised site. The other vacancy is also likely to be filled in the fairly short term, possibly by a family wishing to transfer from one of the other sites, due to friction on the site. It is accepted that, with all types of accommodation, the vacancy rate is always greater than zero due to turnover or “churn” – basically the fact that households do not remain in the same accommodation for ever. The accepted vacancy rate for bricks and mortar housing, used in population work, is 3%¹¹ - the 4% found on local authority sites is in line with this, bearing in mind the total number of pitches as compared to several thousand dwellings used in the population work.

Over 5 years, the total turnover on the local authority sites has been 45 pitches, ie. 20% of all pitches per year. Orchard Park has had the most stable population, with only one pitch changing hands over 5 years. Pembridge has had the highest turnover with 12 pitches changing hands. Where turnover is high in a particular year on particular sites, this is usually due to inter-family tension causing several families to leave at once. (*Source: Gypsy officer*)

At the present time, the local authority sites are full (or any vacant pitches have been offered to a new occupant who is likely to accept) and there are 5 additional households who have applied for sites. Going forward, over the next 5 years, vacancies on these sites will not realistically provide an additional supply to set against the requirements in Tables 1 and 2 because the model shows a “steady state” where vacancies on sites are quickly filled by new households coming forward, or, in several cases, families requesting transfers between sites.

(The 2012 survey which reached 41 respondents on local authority sites, found one family wishing to transfer from one site to another.)

¹¹ Source: Herefordshire Council Population Projections and Forecasts

Private sites

The private sites have been classed into 3 groups, see Tables 8, 10 and 12 below

Table 8: Private sites – authorised, with full planning permission

Village or general location	Total pitches
Bartestree	3
Ledbury	2
Bishop's Frome + another site in that area	5
Bosbury (4 sites)	6
Weobley area	1
Bodenham	2
Much Cowarne	2
Pembridge (2 sites)	2
Burghill	2
Much Marcle	1
Stoke Prior	1
Marden	1
Upper Hill (south of Leominster)	22
Aymestry	1
Upton Bishop area	1
Wigmore	2
Ocle Pychard	2
TOTAL PITCHES	56
TOTAL SITES	22

See map at Appendix 1

Table 9: distribution of number of pitches found on private sites

Number of pitches on the site	Number of sites
1	10
2	9
3	2
22	1

Nearly half of the private sites have just a single pitch, and nearly nine tenths (86%) have either one or two pitches. This ties in with the finding in the GTAA 2008 that there was “a strong preference for family-owned small sites. This is equivalent to the widespread desire for owner-occupation in the settled community.”¹² Once in place, the small private sites apparently usually cause no problems¹³ and this is in contrast to the larger sites where there can be hostility between different groups or families¹⁴.

¹² GTAA 2008 para 13.17

¹³ Source: Travellers Support Group

¹⁴ Source: Herefordshire Council Gypsy Officer

Table 10: Private sites, strictly speaking unauthorised but tolerated long-term and recorded as provision in the Annual Monitoring Report

Village or general location	Total pitches
Burghill	3
Much Birch	1
Shobdon	10
Bishops Frome	2
Ashperton	4
Kings Pyon	5
Munsley	2
TOTAL PITCHES	27
TOTAL SITES	7

Table 11: distribution of number of pitches found on the tolerated sites

Number of pitches on the site	Number of sites
1	1
2	2
3	1
4	1
5	1
10	1

These long-term tolerated sites have a lower proportion of one- and two-pitch sites than do the authorised sites which have been the subject of planning permission.

Table 12: Other long-term unauthorised sites, not counted as tolerated so classed as unmet need

Village or general location	Total pitches
Trumpet	4
Much Birch	2
TOTAL	6
TOTAL SITES	2

Short-term encampments

Instances of short-term unauthorised encampments occur in the county every year. The council will take action on these where they are on council-owned land. In addition they only know about others on private land where the landowner has approached the Environmental Health department for advice.

The table below lists these over the last 4 years. The encampments are usually between 1 to 10 caravans, and most are passing through the area. The exception is that sometimes there will be a local family who may leave bricks & mortar housing for a while and appear on a roadside.

Table 13: Unauthorised short-term encampments over the last 4 years

Year	Recorded encampments (where the council has had some involvement)	An estimate for the number of unrecorded encampments	Estimate of total no. of encampments	Notes
2009	10	10	20	
2010	18	6-10	26	
2011	21	8-10	30	
2012	15	5	20	The most recent 3 encampments consisted of 10 caravans, possibly the same group

Encampments are most likely during the summer months, and particularly around bank holidays. Recent locations for the larger encampments, with 8-10 caravans, have been the Rotherwas Industrial Estate, Merton Meadow car park in Hereford, the Asda car park in Hereford, Hereford Racecourse, and car parks in Leominster. Ross used to be a popular location, but that has not been the case during 2012. Hereford is now the most popular location, followed by Leominster, and then Ledbury. From this it would appear that the A49 between Leominster and Hereford is a route used by Travellers, also the A438 to Ledbury. We do not have information on the routes used beyond Ledbury – possibilities would be the A417 and the M50.

The number of encampments has fluctuated up and down over the period since 2009, and no definable trend can be seen. However, it is interesting to note that the numbers are in-line with the statement in the GTAA 2008 that they would expect something in the order of 27 families per year to need transit provision. Table 13 supports the need for a transit site or suitable defined stopping places.

Planning applications for sites

Since 2008, there have been 19 planning applications for Gypsy & Traveller sites in Herefordshire, all small scale, see table below.

Table 14: Planning applications since 2008 – number of pitches applied for

Number of pitches on the site	Number of planning applications
1	9
2	7
3	2
4	1
Total applications	19
Total pitches	33

Of the 19 planning applications, nearly half (47%) are for a site with a single pitch, and over four fifths (84%) are for either one or two pitches. The average number of pitches per planning application is 1.7

2 of the 19 applications are still pending. The outcomes for the other 17 are shown in the table below.

Table 15: Outcomes of the 17 decisions

Decision	Number	%
Granted	6	35%
Granted on appeal	7	41%
refused (of these, the number taken to appeal and dismissed by the Inspector)	4	24%
	2	12%

Note: these 4 refusals account for a total of 10 pitches

Only 35% were granted initially, but a further 41% were granted on appeal, with the overall result that three-quarters of these small-scale site applications were eventually granted.

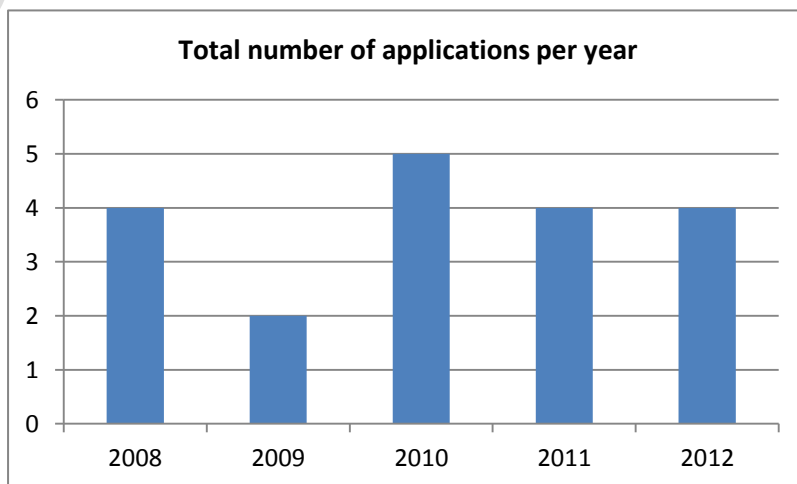
Trend in planning applications per year

The number of planning applications for private Gypsy & Traveller sites per year is as shown below.

Table 16 and Figure 3: Applications for private Gypsy & Traveller sites by year, 2008 – 2012

Year	Total applications per year
2008	4
2009	2
2010	5
2011	4
2012	4

Average applications per year = 3.8



Land for additional sites

As evidenced by the GTAA 2008 and the current work, there is an urgent need for land for additional sites in Herefordshire.

- In November 2010, Herefordshire council's planning department put out a "Call for Sites". 11 responses were received, of which 9 were unsuitable for various reasons, leaving 2 for further consideration. These two also present problems – in one case the high cost of a bridge that would be needed over a stream, in the other case, pollution problems on the site. Therefore it is unlikely that any viable sites will result from this exercise.
- Individual members of the Gypsy and Traveller Community with an accommodation need are constantly on the look-out for plots of land suitable for small private sites. An issue that has become apparent in recent years, and which reduces the supply of land, is that when plots are sold, sometimes there is covenant prohibiting any sort of residential use, either for a specific number of years, or increasingly often recently, in perpetuity¹⁵.

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The 2012 survey

Method

From April 2012, Gypsies and Travellers were surveyed face-to-face, and the responses were recorded on forms by the Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer, and the Gypsy Officer. The survey form included a map of Herefordshire on the second page to assist respondents in pinpointing areas where they would like to live. The survey form can be found at Appendix 2. Respondents' names were recorded as a double-check that no households have been double-counted. Consequently survey forms are held securely, according to the provisions of the Data Protection Act.

By 9th October, when the analysis took place, 59 forms had been completed.

The intention is to survey further households as and when contact arises naturally, but at the time of writing, no further households have been surveyed. Most contact with households is likely to be with either those that have already been surveyed, or with transient groups who are passing through and have little interest in answering questions about accommodation in Herefordshire. (Source: Environmental Protection Manager). The only contact with, and knowledge of, Gypsy and Traveller households in bricks and mortar housing was via the Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer, and this post no longer exists within the Council, therefore future approaches to families in bricks and mortar accommodation will not be possible.

The reason that few responses were obtained from private sites are as follows.

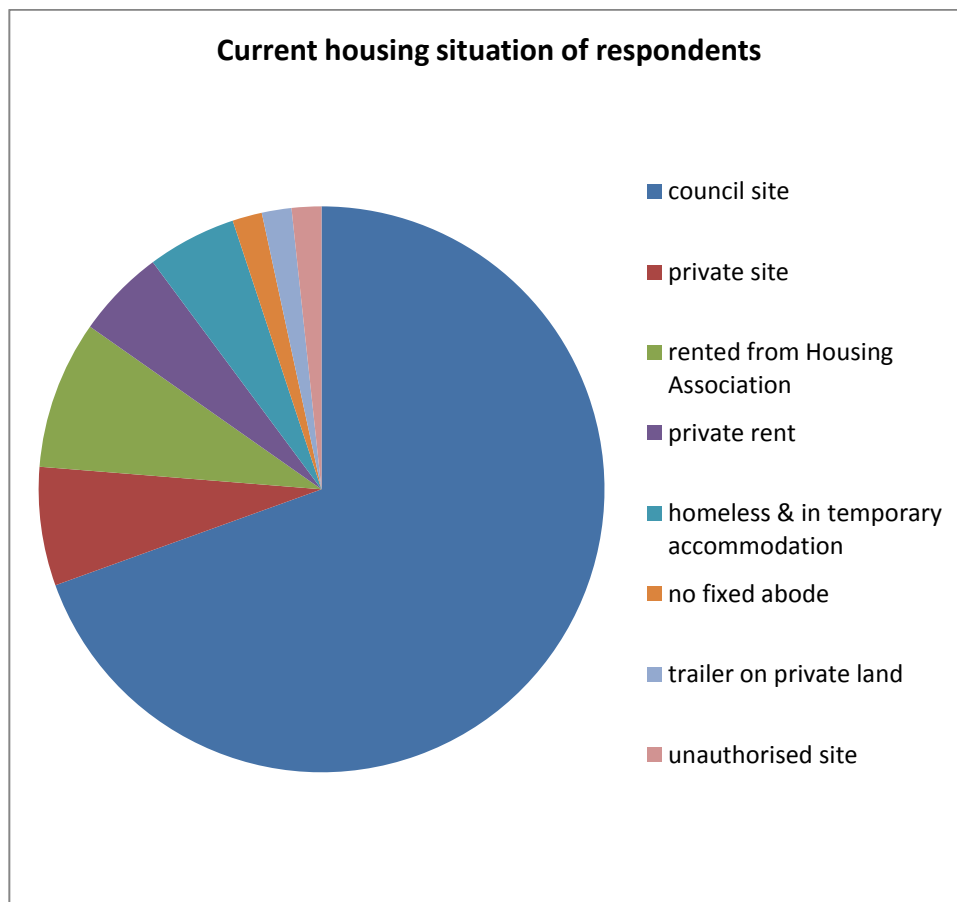
- Two of the private sites, amounting to 32 pitches in total, do not welcome Council officers. The decision was therefore made not to use the time of over-stretched staff in visits to these particular sites, where, in the opinion of experienced officers, such a visit would not yield results.
- The majority of planning applications over the last 5 years have been for small private sites with one or two pitches, to fulfil an accommodation need for a particular family. When planning permission is granted, their need is fulfilled by definition – for them to be approached by officers with housing needs forms would not be advantageous in terms of the Council's reputation and perceived use of officer time.
- Particular families occupying a total of 8 pitches on unauthorised sites (some tolerated and some not tolerated) declined to participate in the survey.

Results - coverage

Table 17: Current housing situation of respondents

	Number of respondents	As a % of all responses
council site	41	69%
private site	4	7%
rented from RSL (bricks & mortar)	5	8%
private rent (bricks & mortar)	3	5%
homeless & in temporary accommodation (bricks & mortar)	3	5%
no fixed abode	1	2%
trailer on private land	1	2%
unauthorised site	1	2%
TOTAL	59	

Figure 4



It can be seen that the survey achieved the greatest coverage among council site tenants. There is a low coverage of private site tenants, but on the other hand, as seen in Table 11, many private tenants are on one- or two-pitch sites where they have recently been granted planning permission, so by definition their needs are currently met for the time being.

Table 18: Location of surveyed households

	Number	% of forms
Bromyard area	4	7%
Hereford area	21	36%
Ledbury	1	2%
Bosbury	6	10%
Leominster	11	19%
Bodenham	1	2%
Pembridge	7	12%
Mortimers Cross	1	2%
Golden Valley	1	2%
No fixed abode / homeless	5	8%
Out of county ¹⁶	1	2%

Note: all in the city apart from 1 in Moreton-on-Lugg

¹⁶ This is a family in Gloucestershire with local connections to Herefordshire, therefore known to the Gypsy & Traveller Liaison officer who carried out the survey

Because 69% of respondents were on council sites, the spread across the county is largely determined by the location of these. Anecdotally, the reason why council sites are located in Hereford and the north of the county is due to the varying policies of the different District Councils before Herefordshire became a Unitary authority, which meant that South Hereford District Council did not provide sites.

Figure 5

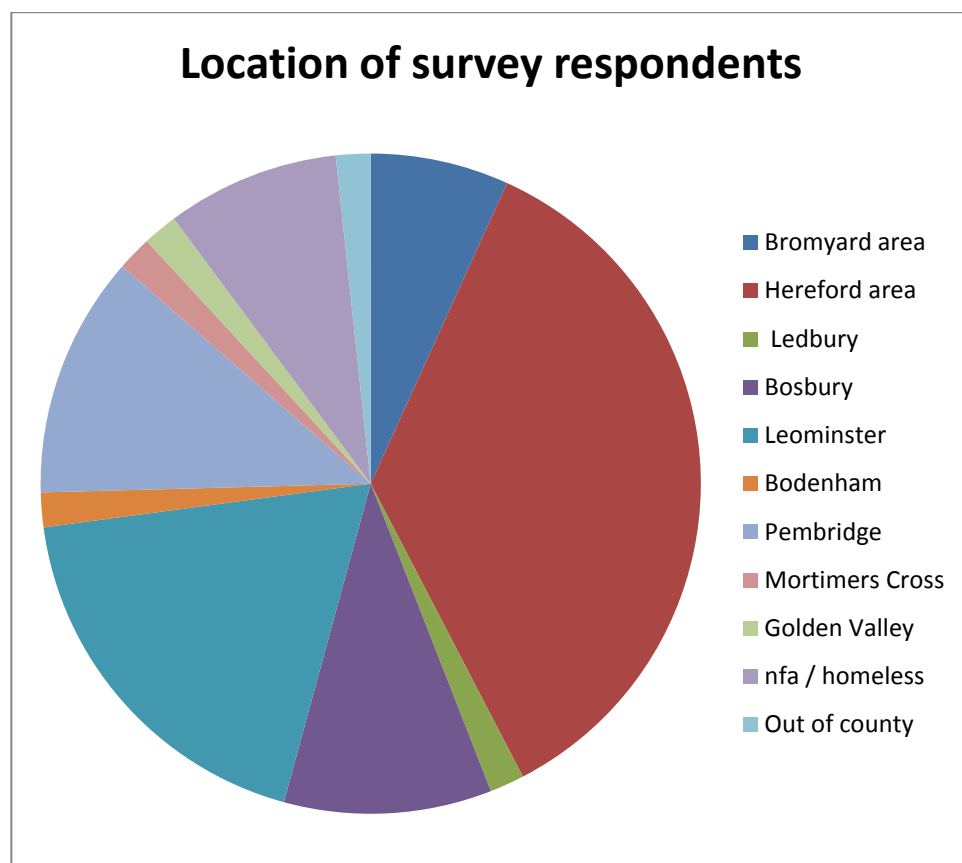


Table 19: Location of surveyed households by Housing Market Area

Housing Market Area	Number	% of forms
Bromyard	5	8%
Golden Valley	1	2%
Hereford	21	36%
Kington	7	12%
Ledbury	7	12%
Leominster	12	20%
No fixed abode / homeless	5	8%
Out of county	1	2%

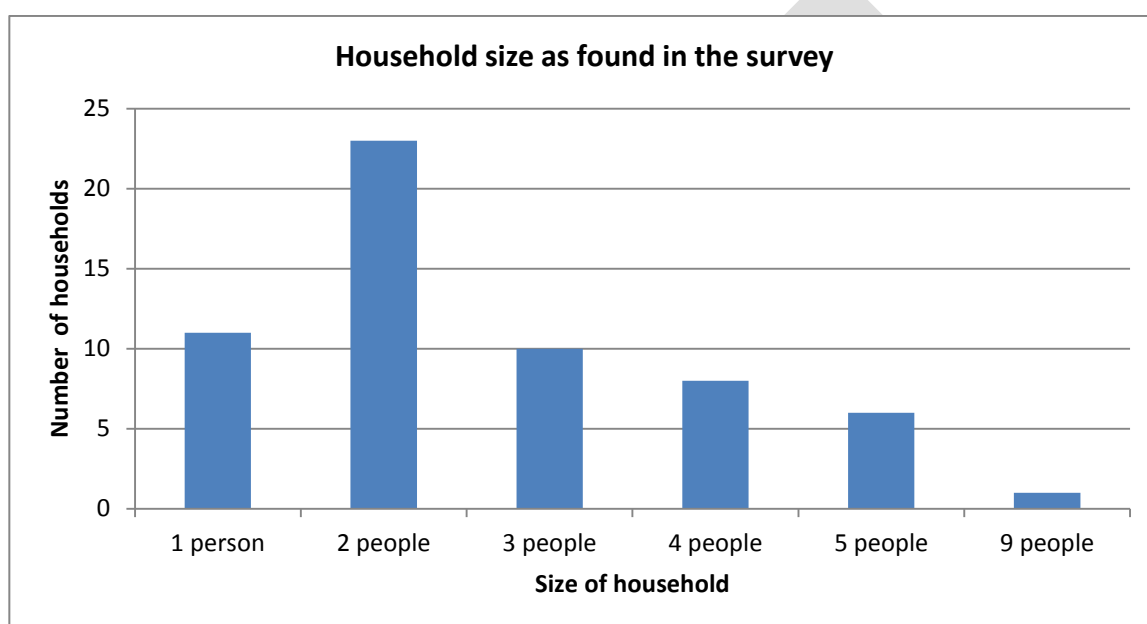
All Housing Market Areas are represented apart from Ross. It is known that there are Travelling Showpeople living in Ross and an attempt is being made to contact some of these families.

Household size

Table 20: Household size among the survey respondents

Household size	Frequency
1 person	11
2 people	23
3 people	10
4 people	8
5 people	6
9 people	1

Figure 6



The mean household size was 2.7 people. (By comparison, the mean household size in Great Britain in 2010 was 2.4 people, source: *Social Trends* published by the Office for National Statistics, Crown Copyright 2011) A mean household size of 2.7 is smaller than that found for Gypsy & Traveller families in the Herefordshire survey of 2006 where the mean was 3.5 people. However, because there is no defined sample frame for Gypsy & Traveller households, it is not possible to say definitively that household size in this group has decreased between 2006 and 2012.

The 2006 survey found that Gypsy & Traveller families in bricks and mortar housing tended to have a larger household size than those in trailers, with a mean of 4.4 people as against 3.5 people across all the households. The 2012 survey showed the same tendency with a mean household size of 3.0 people for house dwellers as against a mean of 2.7 people across all households.

Results – need

18 out of the 59 households surveyed (31% of households) indicated some sort of housing need – this included 1 household who wished to transfer from one council site to another.

Table 21: Top level breakdown of the 18 households who indicated some sort of need or desire to move

Number of households	Number of additional pitches needed by this h/h	Need for bricks & mortar housing
4	1	
2	2	
1	3	
1	transfer needed	This pitch has been included here for completeness but is not counted as part of the need given in the tables below
1		1 transfer + 1 additional unit for adult offspring
1		transfer to larger property needed
8		8 (1 wants to move out of county)

More detailed breakdowns are given below

Need for additional pitches

Table 22: Families currently in caravans who have a need for further pitches or who need planning permission

Current location	Does the existing household wish to move?	Do some family members wish to move into their own caravan?	Where is the need for further caravans?	How many caravans needed?	How many pitches needed?
Bromyard LA site	No	Yes	Bromyard LA site	3	3
Hereford LA site	No	Yes	Hereford LA site	1	1
Leominster LA site	No	Yes	Leominster LA site	2	2
Bosbury LA site	No	Yes	Would prefer a private site in Ledbury, Bosbury, or Bishops Frome area	2	2
Bodenham private site	No	Yes	Bodenham	1	1
Bromyard area	They occupy their own land & have put in a planning application to remain where they are			3	1
Total households in this table				6	
Total need for additional pitches shown in this table				10	

Assuming that the requirement for 3 pitches on the Bromyard LA site can be accommodated once that site has been refurbished, that leaves an additional requirement for 7 pitches from families already in caravans.

BUT the pitch requirement above where planning permission is being sought, has already been counted under the heading “Planning applications for sites”, above. Therefore the total additional requirement is for **6 pitches** from families already in trailers.

Table 23: Families currently in bricks & mortar who wish to move to a caravan

Current location	Does the existing household wish to move?	Do some family members wish to move into their own caravan?	Where is the need for further caravans?	How many caravans needed?	How many pitches needed?
Moreton-on-Lugg	Yes	No	Sutton St Nicholas area	1	1

When added to the 6 pitches from the previous table, this gives a total additional requirement for **7 pitches** arising from the survey.

In addition to the above, one household would like to transfer from the Bosbury council site to a Hereford council site.

Table 24: Summary of the reasons why the additional pitches are needed

Location required	Pitches needed	Need arising from
Bromyard Local Authority site	3 but will be accommodated by refurbishment of the Bromyard site	Family members want their own pitches
Bromyard, own land (planning application submitted)	Already counted in Planning applications section	Location is currently unauthorised
Leominster LA site	2	Family members want their own pitches
Hereford LA site	1	Family member who moved away wishes to return
Ledbury, Bosbury or Bishops Frome area	2	Family members want their own pitches
Sutton St Nicholas	1	Wish to move from a house to a trailer
Bodenham	1	Family member wants their own pitch

Need for bricks & mortar accommodation

As seen above, 10 households indicated a need for bricks & mortar accommodation – one of these had a need for 2 units, ie. a total of 11 units needed overall, but one wishes to move out of county, where they have a local connection, so 10 units are needed in Herefordshire.

Of these, 2 households are in temporary accommodation due to homelessness

- one needs 4/5 bedrooms in the Bromyard / Worcester area,
- one needs 2 bedrooms in the Ross or Ledbury area, and
- one, aged 17, is in a caravan in a temporary stopping place waiting to be old enough to take up a tenancy – this individual is being assisted by Shelter.

The current location and current tenure of the other 8 needs for bricks and mortar accommodation is shown below in Table 25.

Table 25

Current location	Current tenure				Total
	A caravan on private ground	Private rent	RSL	No fixed abode	
Hereford			1		1
Kingstone			2		2
Ledbury			1		1
Leominster		1			1
Mortimers Cross	1				1
Newent		1			1
No fixed abode				1	1
Total	1	2	4	1	8

The required location and bedrooms needed is shown below in Table 26.

Table 26

Area needed	No. of bedrooms needed					Total
	1	2	3	2/3	Not given	
Hereford		1				1
outskirts of Hereford		1	1			2
Ledbury area				1		1
Leominster		1				1
Monmouthshire					1	1
Rural area near Ludlow or anywhere in rural Hfds		1				1
Anywhere in rural Hfds	1					1
TOTAL	1	4	1	1	1	8

Households with no need

Of the 59 forms, 41 (69%) stated that they had no housing need. (This is very similar to the 2006 Herefordshire survey, where it was 71%).

36 of these live in local authority sites, broken down as follows.

Table 27: respondents from local authority sites who reported no housing need

Location of local authority site	No. of forms stating No Need
Hereford (one of these has stated a need for their chalet to be plumbed into the mains)	17
Leominster	8
Bosbury	5
Pembridge	5
Bromyard (currently 2 caravans on 1 pitch)	1
TOTAL	36

Of the remaining 5 who stated that they have no need, 3 are on private sites (2 in Pembridge area and one in the Bromyard area), one is in Marches housing in Leominster, and the other is renting privately in Hereford.

Follow-up from the 2006 survey

The 2006 survey reached more people in bricks and mortar housing, see Table 24 below.

Table 28: Current tenure of survey respondents, comparing the 2006 and 2012 Herefordshire surveys

Current tenure	2006 numbers	2006 %	2012 numbers	2012 %
house rented from Housing Association	23	42%	5	8%
council site	21	38%	41	69%
tolerated site	4	7%	1	2%
own land	4	7%	0	0%
roadside	1	2%	0	0%
private site	2	4%	4	7%
homeless & in temporary accommodation	0	0%	3	5%
private rent	0	0%	3	5%
No fixed abode	0	0%	1	2%
unauthorised site	0	0%	1	2%

Of the 23 people in bricks and mortar housing who were surveyed in 2006, 4 (17%) wanted to move to a site. Due to local knowledge of the Gypsy & Traveller Liaison Officer, it has been possible to find out what happened to these 4 households.

2 out of the 4 are now on a site, but not in Herefordshire – one household is in Shropshire and one in Wales (which county in Wales is not known).

One household is still in the same situation as in 2006 and this is still unsatisfactory; the 4th household no longer needs to move due to changed circumstances.

Therefore the follow-up to the 2006 survey showed one additional pitch requirement to be added to the total.

Note: because respondents' names were recorded in the 2012 survey, we can be sure that there has not been double-counting

Evidence of need from other sources

Evidence from site application forms

Application forms for the council sites are held by the Gypsy Officer, and these were analysed. There are 6 forms from households seeking a pitch, but 2 are from the same address, with a total of 3 people on both forms, so these two together have been taken as one pitch. There is no double-counting against the need for pitches found from the survey.

Analysis of the site application forms shows a need for 5 additional pitches.

If sites were found for these applicants, this would release 4 houses (all housing association).

Evidence from Home Point

Home Point operates the Choice Based Lettings register for affordable housing in Herefordshire. Home Point clients complete an application form and question 11 is "Please state your Nationality". On the 22nd August 2012, there were 4,866 clients on the Home Point database. Of these, only 2 had identified themselves as "Gypsy" "Traveller" "Romany" or any combination of these. Both had identified themselves as "Gypsy/Romany Traveller". One household was a couple living, on a temporary basis, in a privately rented bed-sit who described themselves as "of no fixed abode". The other was a household of 7 people living in a two-bed Housing Association property. Both were banded as Silver.

The back page of the Home Point application form is headed "Diversity Monitoring" and asks "how would you describe yourself". There are various categories – "white", "Asian" etc, with 3 of the categories being "Gypsy/Romany Traveller", "Irish Traveller", "Other Traveller".

10 clients gave their ethnicity as "Gypsy/Romany Traveller" and a further 2 gave their ethnicity as "Other Traveller" – all 12 of these clients gave their nationality as British.

The ethnicity data is kept separate from the rest of the Home Point data as it is only for statistical monitoring, therefore only limited analysis can be carried out on these clients.

However it is possible to combine all 14 clients for limited analysis, as follows.

Table 29: Current housing situation of the 14 Home Point clients identified as Gypsy and/or Traveller

RSL flat or bedsit	2
Private bedsit	2
RSL house or bungalow	5
Privately rented house	1
Living temporarily with other family members	1
caravan	3
Total	14

Half the clients are already living in RSL accommodation, whereas only a fifth are living in caravans.

Table 30: Home Point band allocated to the 14 Home Point clients identified as Gypsy and/or Traveller

Band	No. of clients (Gypsies & Travellers)	% for Gypsies & Travellers	% for the waiting list as a whole
Bronze	2	14%	38%
Silver	6	43%	43%
Gold	6	43%	19%

The clients identified as Gypsy / Traveller are more likely to be banded as Gold, and less likely to be banded as Bronze, than are the clients on the register as a whole. In other words, the Gypsy and Traveller clients have a high level of need.

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Housing-related support

Herefordshire council

Herefordshire Council's Equality, Human Rights and Partnership team provides support to members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities, as they do for other ethnic minorities. From time to time, the team has been approached by members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities over complaints of behaviour by the settled community ranging from minor bullying, through to hate crime and racist incidents.

The team has recently set up a new group around Hate Crime, attended by Equality Leads from the council's Housing Association partners. The issue of hate crime can impact on the allocation of social housing, eg. it can be a reason why families wish to move.

Registered Social Landlords

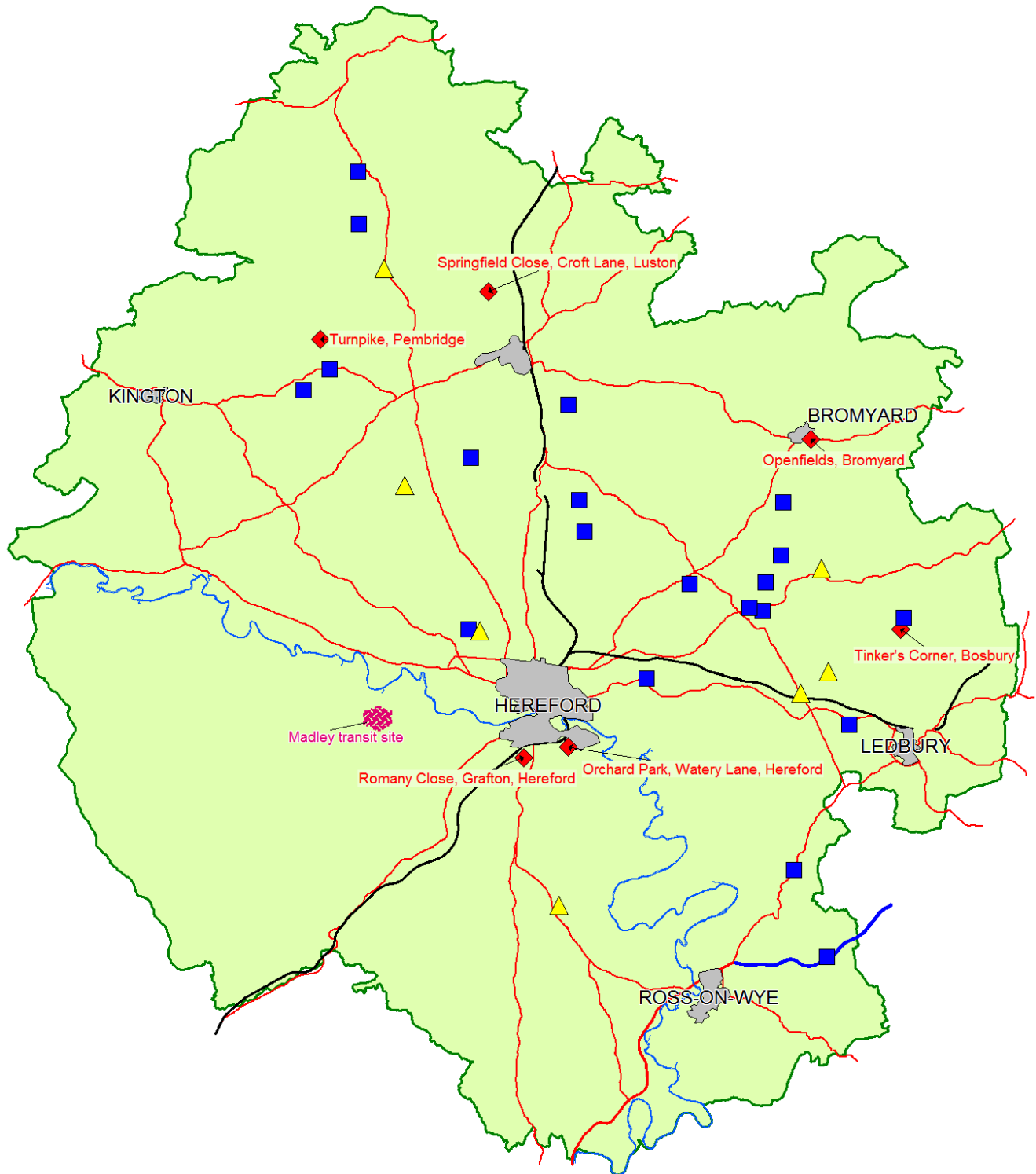
The RSL's have policies on Diversity issues. Information was obtained from the Customer Involvement Officer from one of the councils' RSL partners. The RSL actively sought contact with their residents from the Gypsy & Traveller community and gathered background information from sources such as the Traveller Times, and Rooftops Housing Association who provide Traveller sites in other areas of the country. This exercise should lead to the RSL being able to provide a better service to their residents from the Gypsy & Traveller community.

Provision for older people

Peter Fletcher Associates carried out a focus group with members of the Gypsy and Traveller Community as part of their work on the Accommodation Needs of Older People in Herefordshire. Issues raised included problems of fuel poverty for caravan dwellers and that caravans may be inappropriate for some older people, especially those with health problems. There is a very strong sense of family responsibility when it comes to care for older people and a strong aversion to moving into retirement accommodation or allowing elderly relatives to do so. When asked about what forms of traditional housing might be considered, family housing or bungalows that had car parking and other space were identified.

Appendix 1

Map of Gypsy & Traveller sites



Key

- Privately owned sites (authorised)
- ◆ Local Authority owned sites
- ▲ Unauthorised but tolerated sites
- A Road
- River
- Mway

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Ordnance Survey (100024168).

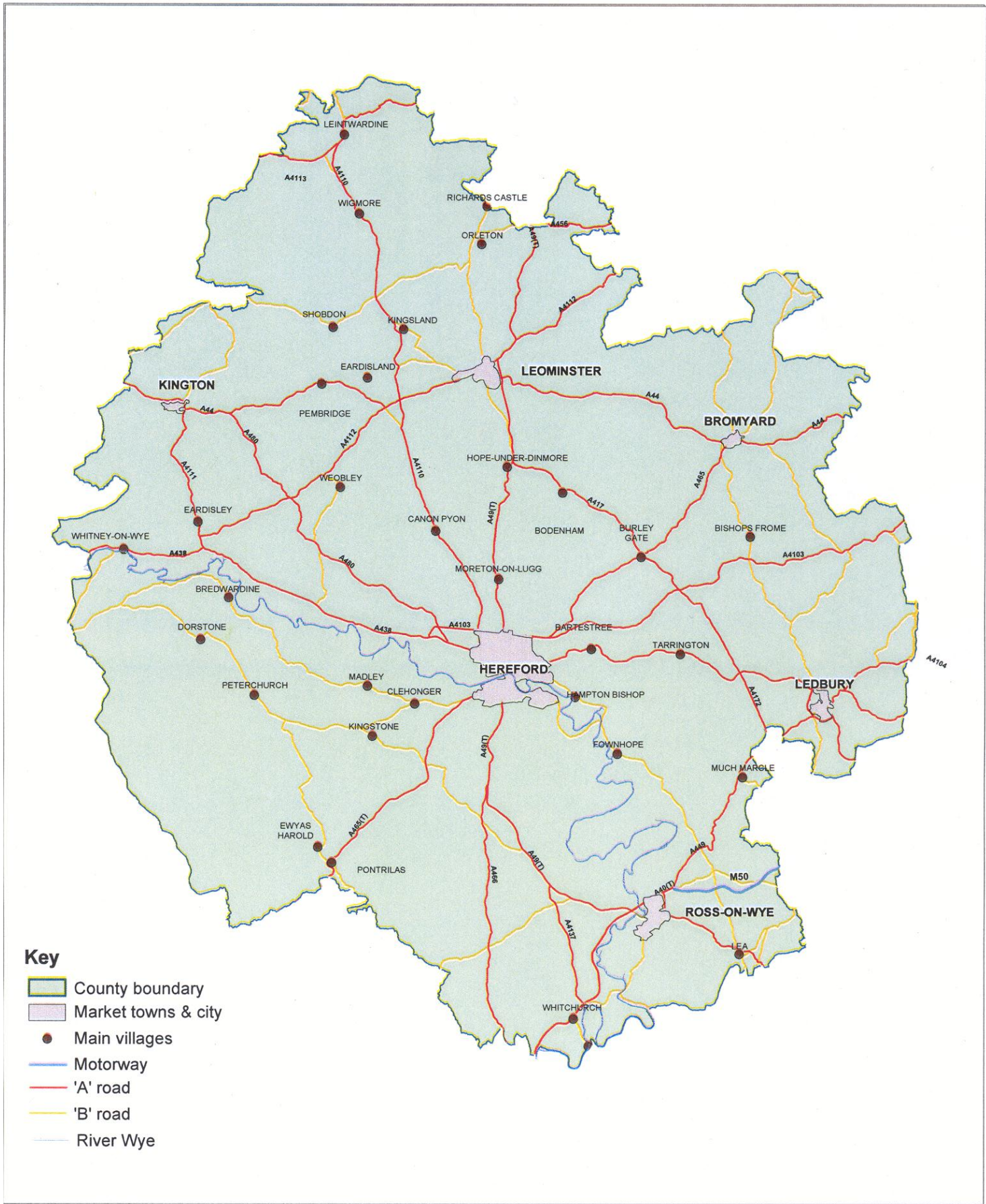
Appendix 2: Copy of the questionnaire used for the 2012 survey

Form Ref No:

Gypsy and Traveller Questionnaire - CONFIDENTIAL

Interview Date:	<input type="text"/>	Officer:	<input type="text"/>		
Name: <i>(optional)</i>	<input type="text"/>				
Current address:	<input type="text"/>				
Current landlord: <i>(if applicable)</i>	<input type="text"/>				
Number of household members:	0-15 <input type="text"/>	16-24 <input type="text"/>	25-64 <input type="text"/>	65 + <input type="text"/>	
If living in caravans, how many caravans is this household living in? and how many pitches do they currently occupy?	Caravans		Pitches		
	<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>		
Does this household have a housing need – either for the whole household who needs to find accommodation, or for any family members who want to set up home independently? If so, please explain the nature of the need	<input type="text"/>				
The questions below are only for households where there is a housing need. The current household could give rise to 2 or more households needing accommodation. For each household with a housing need, please fill in the following:					
If the need is for caravan accommodation, please state number of caravans and number of pitches required? (An average of 2 caravans per pitch)	Caravans		Pitches		
	<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>		
If the need is for bricks and mortar accommodation, please state how many bedrooms required?	<input type="text"/>				
Where does this household use the most local services and which local services do they use?	<input type="text"/>				
Is this household currently registered with Home Point?	<input type="text"/>				
Please state the village / area where this household would like to live if given a choice (use the map overleaf to assist).	<input type="text"/>				
Would you prefer to live on:	<input type="checkbox"/> A council/housing association owned site <input type="checkbox"/> A privately owned site				

There may be more than one form filled in for a household – all the forms for a particular household should have the same reference number written in at the top.



- Key**
-  County boundary
 -  Market towns & city
 -  Main villages
 -  Motorway
 -  'A' road
 -  'B' road
 -  River Wye



Location of main towns, city & villages in Herefordshire



SCALE 1: 220,000

Herefordshire Council
 Research Team
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 Plough Lane
 Hereford
 HR4 0XH
 Tel.: (01432) 260000

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Appendix 3: Useful contacts

Travellers Health Programme

telephone 07813104707

e-mail travellers.health@wvt.nhs.uk

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