

London Borough of Camden Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment



Addendum
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Opinion Research Services (ORS) were commissioned by London Borough of Camden to undertake a Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment in 2013. The final GTAA Report was published in October 2014. Subsequently during preparations for their Local Plan Examination it was noted that there were missing interviews with a 2 neighbouring planning authorities – namely Brent and Haringey
- 1.2 This Addendum contains a summary of the interviews that were completed with officers from these Boroughs.

2. Stakeholder Consultation

London Borough of Brent

Background and dealings

- 2.1 Interview completed with the Head of Planning and Transport Strategy. They have to prepare the development plan for the borough and meet the requirement in the NPPF to plan purposely for pitches/sites and recognise that neighbouring boroughs have a similar requirement.

Authorised

- 2.2 They have one large, long established site in Brent. It is one of the largest sites in London. It is called Lynton Close and it has 45 mobile homes/caravans on the site accommodating a total of 140 persons (2010 figures). It was thought that all of the residents are Travellers.
- 2.3 They are aware that there may be a need for further pitches to be provided in the borough. They know there is need for further pitches in London and the last time a needs assessment was done by the GLA it identified that Brent may require another 24 pitches but they think the figure may have come down more recently. They haven't done their own assessment of need.

Unauthorised

- 2.4 They are not aware of any recent unauthorised caravans, but did reference that there were a small number a few a number of years ago. There used to be problems at Fryent Country Park and but additional security was put in place to stop Travellers pitching on the park space.

Bricks and mortar households

- 2.5 Not aware of any Gypsies or Travellers living in bricks and mortar

Community cohesion

- 2.6 The site that exists in Brent is said to operate quite well without any noticeable impact on the local community, and it is thought that this is due to it being a long established site. The environmental conditions aren't ideal because it is on the edge of an industrial area but it is close to another housing estate that share access with the Travellers. Not aware of any community cohesion issues.

Is there a lack or a sufficient amount of accommodation provision at the moment?

- 2.7 They feel that they provide reasonably well compared to other boroughs in London. If there was more provision in London needed they think it should be located elsewhere, it would seem reasonable to spread it out more.

Cross boundary issues/working

- 2.8 Not aware of any groups at the moment and think that involvement in this GTAA is the closest they have come to cross-boundary working. They think it would be good to have better networking across the authorities but it seems that it is more of a role for the Mayor of London and the Strategic Planning Authority more so than individual boroughs. They are fortunate to have one in London so they can deal with the cross border issues.
- 2.9 The Duty to Cooperate isn't so much of an issue in London. It would be more of an issue if they were a borough on the outskirts of London and needed to cooperate with an authority with no strategic body. They would emphasise in bringing forward plans that the Duty to Cooperate is less important as it is outside of London.

Future

- 2.10 As a local planning authority they need to assess what needs there will be going into the future. They would focus efforts on trying to identify space for additional accommodation. They are committed to doing that through our Core Strategy and said they would do something when they brought forward their Development Management Policies which they are starting to but limited resources means they can only tackle one thing at a time and it isn't a priority at the moment.
- 2.11 They think that they ought to be making efforts locally to improve the environment around the existing Traveller site which is said to be poor.

London Borough of Haringey

Background

- 2.12 The London GTANA 2008 identified the Borough had a minimum need for 4 pitches 2007-2012 and 2 pitches 2012-17. The Council adopted a pitch provision target of 4 over the Local Plan period (2013-2026). As yet these pitches have not been developed because of the lack of site availability. The Council also undertook a Roma and Irish Traveller Needs Assessment in 2013 – although this did not look at specific accommodation need.
- 2.13 The Council owns two public sites (10 pitches) and both are occupied by Irish Travellers. The Council used to hold a waiting list for pitches but recently took a decision to fill any potential vacancies through the housing register. Some stakeholders held the view that the sites are in need of refurbishment and that there are concerns regarding overcrowding due to new family formation.
- 2.14 It was confirmed that there are no private sites, Travelling Showpeople yards, unauthorised developments or sites with temporary planning permission in Haringey.
- 2.15 They believe a new site or sites should be provided in Haringey. This is because all previous accommodation assessments had highlighted a need in the area. In addition to this there was a loss of two sites (approximately 22 pitches) in the past which have not been replaced. They also thought that the need for sites should be shared across London boroughs.
- 2.16 They believe any new provision should be publicly owned and smaller sites similar in size to existing sites in Haringey are preferred. It was suggested that the Council's old larger sites had been difficult to manage prior to their closure.
- 2.17 It was noted there is a significant shortage of available and affordable land within the Borough. Any available land is likely to be used to meet the demand for high density market sale or affordable housing. Traveller sites are low density and some suggested that the needs and/or aspirations of Gypsies and Travellers may be less of a priority than the need for affordable housing.

Bricks and Mortar

- 2.18 Homes for Haringey manage Haringey Council's housing stock and there are a number of other RPs operating in the area. The Council operates a Housing Register and properties are bid for through Home Connections.
- 2.19 Whilst there was anecdotal evidence of housed Travellers living in Haringey they did not know exactly where they lived or knew them personally. It was also highlighted that Gypsies and Travellers were more likely to be living in poor quality housing not suited to their needs e.g. high rise flats.

Unauthorised Encampments

- 2.20 A decline was reported in the number of unauthorised encampments over the last few years. Last year approximately 5 encampments were reported in Haringey; it was said that at time it was the same three families moving around the area. One encampment were not Travellers, they were Eastern European

migrant workers seeking a cheaper alternative to housing and one encampment had been New Travellers passing through. When encampments occur they are said to be for short periods of time.

Accommodation for Travelling Showpeople

- 2.21 There are known to be Travelling Showpeople living in Bromley and Croydon but there are no yards in Haringey; therefore they had little to say about Travelling Showpeople and what their needs may be in the area.

Cross border issues, partnership working and the Duty to Cooperate

- 2.22 In relation to partnership working Haringey were part of the GLA London-wide GTANA published in 2008 but it is said there had been little joint working London-wide since that time. There was some evidence that Haringey has in the past and is currently working in partnership:
- 2.23 They were of the view that Haringey is complying with the Duty to Co-operate by engaging with neighbouring authorities on their GTANA, but not in terms of sharing site/pitch opportunities.
- 2.24 They also highlighted that the Duty to Co-operate is more complex than merely engaging with neighbouring authorities when undertaking a GTANA. It was said that more work needed to be undertaken London-wide and/or sub-regionally to jointly meet the need for more pitch provision in London.

Future Priorities

- 2.25 The current situation in Haringey appears largely static and there are no significant trends relating to Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople. The only issue raised was in relation to those living in private rented accommodation and the effects of Welfare Reform, but these issues are experienced by many tenants and not just Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople.
- 2.26 The lack of funding to provide sites was highlighted, as was the lack of available and affordable land and the priority for the Council to provide bricks and mortar housing to meet all needs.
- 2.27 Another priority raised was the need to improve the public's perception of Irish Travellers and Roma in particular in Haringey. The following ideas were suggested as bringing positive messages to the general public:
- Events to celebrate differences in culture;
 - Inviting theatre and dance groups from these cultures; and
 - Arranging art or photography exhibitions that would celebrate these cultures.