



**Review of Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation  
Assessments Conducted in the East Midlands**

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## Executive Summary

- This report is an analysis of the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation assessments (GTAA) produced in the East Midlands between 2006 and 2008. It follows the six step process outlined in “Preparing Regional Spatial Strategy reviews on Gypsies and Travellers by regional planning bodies” (Communities and Local Government, 2007) and used to conduct similar analyses in other regions (e.g. South West Regional Assembly, 2008).
- Part funding from the East Midlands Regional Assembly made the completion of this work possible.
- Step 1 of the process is to assemble the GTAA information and complete a stock-taking process. The results of this process can be seen in Table 1 below.

GTAA area	GTAA residential pitch need		Caravan count figures	
	Minimum	Maximum	No. on Authorised sites	No. on Unauthorised Developments
Bassetlaw	25	25	52	8
Derbyshire	58	58	130	0
Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland	132	132	322	38
Lincolnshire	150	173	171	60
South Holland	15	15	25	47
Northamptonshire	57	57	257	24
Nottinghamshire	119	119	187	15
<b>East Midlands total</b>	<b>556</b>	<b>579</b>	<b>1144</b>	<b>192</b>

Table 1 - Summary of stock-taking

- Summarised in Table 2 below are the main themes emerging from step 2: Benchmarking GTAA information.

<b>GTAA</b>	<b>Main comments on robustness of assessment</b>
South Holland	Serious methodological shortcomings, probably due to GTAA being conducted before the guidance from central government emerged.
South Kesteven	Serious methodological shortcomings, probably due to GTAA being conducted before the guidance from central government emerged. These shortcomings were largely addressed by the joint Lincolnshire GTAA that was published later.
Bassetlaw	Generally robust methodology although this might have been affected by lack of information in certain areas like future intentions and Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar accommodation.
Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland	Appears to be a robust assessment based on analysis of a wide variety of factors that could affect need. Overcrowding is the only factor that may not have received enough attention.
Nottinghamshire	Estimation of baseline population and tailored questionnaires are examples of good practice that suggest the methodology is basically sound. However, pitch requirements from unauthorised encampments may be overestimated.
Lincolnshire	This GTAA has methodological weaknesses that suggest the estimates provided represent an underestimate. The omission of survey information on unauthorised developments is the most serious weakness undermining areas of good practice elsewhere in the GTAA.
Northamptonshire	A recent GTAA that appears to have made a generally robust assessment of accommodation need based on thorough survey methods and a sound evaluation of supply and demand. Some underestimation related to net migration seems probable.
Derbyshire	A relatively robust GTAA that is weakened by some areas of methodological weakness. The assessment of residential pitch needs is conservative but includes good information on the needs of Travelling Showmen.

**Table 2 – Summary of benchmarking robustness of GTAAs**

- The findings presented here indicate that the assessments conducted in the East Midlands vary in their robustness and that some are more likely than others to have made an accurate calculation of need. This benchmarking has focused solely on residential pitch requirements and therefore it is important to note that many GTAA's contain vital information not discussed here relating to transit pitch need, the needs of Travelling Showmen which differ from those of Gypsies and Travellers and wider issues relating to social needs and service provision.
- Steps 3 to 5 of the review process consist of filling gaps and stock-taking at both a regional and local authority level. Table 3 provides a summary of the adjustments that were made at the GTAA level. A full list of the recommended allocations at the Local Planning Authority (LPA) level are provided in Table 7.

<b>GTAA</b>	<b>Adjustment to be made to GTAA pitch requirements</b>
Bassetlaw	No adjustment needed to GTAA estimation of need
Derbyshire	No adjustment needed to GTAA estimation of need
Leicestershire etc.	No adjustment needed to GTAA estimation of need
Lincolnshire	No adjustment needed to GTAA estimation of need
Northamptonshire	Increase GTAA estimation of need by 10 per cent
Nottinghamshire	Reduce GTAA estimation of need by 4 per cent
South Holland	Increase estimate of need to level suggested by RSS adjustment formula

**Table 3 - Summary of adjustments to pitch requirements from GTAA's**

- The results of steps 1 to 5 suggest that the regional estimate of need for additional residential pitches to be 598, an increase of around 3 per cent on the figure suggested by taking a total of the recommendations of the GTAA's.
- Step 6 of the review process considers the needs of Gypsies and Travellers in the wider planning context. This should be conducted by EMRA as the regional planning body.
- Recommended issues for consideration prior to future assessments are outlined in the conclusions. These include the clarity and transparency of the process used to arrive at the assessment of need for residential pitches. There is also confusion as to the 'best' methodology to use in some aspects of the calculation, particularly those relating to supply and baseline population.

## Introduction

The aim of this project was to test the robustness of the GTAA's in the East Midlands area, to assess the accuracy and consistency of the estimates of accommodation need provided, and to provide alternative estimates of accommodation need where required. The GTAA's benchmarked here are those of Bassetlaw; South Holland; Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland; Lincolnshire; South Holland; South Kesteven; Northamptonshire; Derbyshire; and Nottinghamshire.

Many GTAA's include assessments of need related to transit sites and the needs of groups such as Travelling Showmen; however the following benchmarking process relates only to the residential pitch requirements indicated in GTAA's and related supply and demand issues. It does not include information on transit site accommodation or on the needs of different Gypsy and Traveller groups, nor on the useful analyses of service provision and related social factors which affect Gypsies and Travellers which are provided by many GTAA's. The process also only looks at the five year accommodation need figures, which are included in every GTAA; some GTAA's also provide assessments of need for years six to ten.

The benchmarking process has followed the format recommended in the Communities and Local Government report "Preparing Regional Spatial Strategy reviews on Gypsies and Travellers by regional planning bodies" (2007). A six step benchmarking process is outlined in this report:

Step 1: Assembling GTAA information and stock-taking.

Step 2: Benchmarking GTAA information.

Step 3: Filling gaps and assessing regional pitch requirements.

Step 4: Stock-taking information at local authority level.

Step 5: Filling gaps at local authority level.

Step 6: Considering principles which influence a 'strategic view of needs'.

This process has several limitations that have been recorded in other regional benchmarking reports (South East Regional Assembly, 2008). Benchmarking is based on the written GTAA reports and appendices produced in each area. Information provided in these reports does not always cover the benchmarking questions. The benchmarking process cannot check the factual accuracy of the research that has been conducted. Its focus is on assessing the robustness of the residential pitch allocation requirements. More general assessments of the GTAA process have been undertaken at both a national (Niner, forthcoming) and regional level (East Midlands Planning Aid Service, 2007).

## **Step 1: Assembling GTAA information and stock-taking**

The first step in the benchmarking process was to assemble copies of the GTAAs and take stock of the data available. Although a seemingly trivial task, this was actually complicated by the absence of a consistent representation of accommodation need within the reports; one GTAA even failed to state the residential need, leaving the reader to add component elements to obtain a total.

Bassetlaw, although part of the geographic county of Nottinghamshire, was not included in the Nottinghamshire GTAA; a single-authority GTAA was conducted for the district. South Holland and South Kesteven are both part of the geographic county of Lincolnshire and a single-authority GTAA was conducted for each; they were considered to different extents in the county-wide GTAA. The unitary authorities of Leicester and Rutland were explicitly listed in the title of the GTAA they were included in. Although not listed in the titles, Derby and Nottingham were also included in their respective county GTAAs.

The table below summarises the information obtained through the stock-taking process:

District Level	GTAA	GTAA residential pitch need		Caravan count figures	
		Minimum	Maximum	No. of caravans on authorised sites	No. of caravans on unauthorised developments
<b>Bassetlaw</b>	<b>Bassetlaw</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>8</b>
Amber Valley	Derbyshire	1	1	0	0
Bolsover	Derbyshire	1	1	16	0
Chesterfield	Derbyshire	0	0	0	0
Derby UA	Derbyshire	16	16	0	0
Derbyshire Dales	Derbyshire	2	2	2	0
Erewash	Derbyshire	0	0	0	0
High Peak	Derbyshire	0	0	0	0
North East Derbyshire	Derbyshire	19	19	48	0
Peak District National Park	Derbyshire	0	0		
South Derbyshire	Derbyshire	19	19	64	0
<b>Derbyshire Total</b>	<b>Derbyshire</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>0</b>
Blaby	Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland	13	13	91	1
Charnwood	Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland	9	9	0	0
Harborough	Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland	19	19	46	22
Hinckley & Bosworth	Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland	26	26	67	6
Melton	Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland	6	6	0	0
North West Leicestershire	Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland	32	32	72	9
Oadby & Wigston	Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland	1	1	0	0
Leicester City UA	Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland	24	24	40	0
Rutland	Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland	2	2	6	0
<b>Leicester, Leicestershire &amp; Rutland Total</b>	<b>Leicester, Leicestershire &amp; Rutland</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>38</b>
Lincoln	Lincolnshire	21	21	27	0
North Kesteven	Lincolnshire	19	22	20	0
West Lindsey	Lincolnshire	51	56	40	57
Boston	Lincolnshire	22	22	39	0



District Level	GTAAs	GTAAs residential pitch need		Caravan count figures	
		Minimum	Maximum	No. of caravans on authorised sites	No. of caravans on unauthorised developments
East Lindsey	Lincolnshire	8	11	0	3
South Kesteven <sup>1</sup>	Lincolnshire	29	41	45	0
<b>Lincolnshire Total</b>	<b>Lincolnshire</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>South Holland</b>	<b>South Holland</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>47</b>
Corby	Northamptonshire	1	1	1	0
East Northants	Northamptonshire	3	3	54	0
Kettering	Northamptonshire	2	2	53	12
Wellingborough	Northamptonshire	13	13	43	12
Daventry	Northamptonshire	5	5	43	0
Northampton	Northamptonshire	24	24	63	0
South Northants	Northamptonshire	9	9	0	0
<b>Northamptonshire Total</b>	<b>Northamptonshire</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>24</b>
Ashfield	Nottinghamshire	0	0	7	0
Broxtowe	Nottinghamshire	2	2	0	0
Gedling	Nottinghamshire	4	4	0	0
Mansfield	Nottinghamshire	5	5	0	0
Newark & Sherwood	Nottinghamshire	88	88	143	15
Nottingham City UA	Nottinghamshire	11	11	31	0
Rushcliffe	Nottinghamshire	9	9	6	0
<b>Nottinghamshire Total</b>	<b>Nottinghamshire</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>East Midlands Total</b>		<b>556</b>	<b>579</b>	<b>1144</b>	<b>192</b>

**Table 4 - Stock-taking of information from GTAAs and caravan counts**

<sup>1</sup> The Lincolnshire GTAAs figures are adopted for South Kesteven as these resolved many of the issues associated with the earlier single-authority GTAA.

## **Step 2: Benchmarking GTAA information**

The main analysis of the GTAAs comes under stage 2 of the review process. Twelve questions are used to assess the robustness of the pitch requirements provided by each GTAA. Criteria outlined in the guidance include checking survey methods, research techniques and ensuring all relevant factors related to supply and demand have been considered when calculating the residential pitch requirements for that area. Summaries of the key points emerging from these questions are provided in the summaries below.

The GTAAs are presented in the order in which they were published to reflect the fact that guidance and good practice have emerged during the GTAA process. Please note that the Lincolnshire districts of South Holland and South Kesteven commissioned their own needs assessments but that the residential pitch requirements for these districts were later discussed to differing degrees in the countywide Lincolnshire report. Consequently the benchmarking summary for each district also refers to the data presented in the countywide publication.

	<p><b>South Holland GTAA</b></p> <p><b><i>Conducted by Opinion Research Services. Published 2006.</i></b></p> <p><i>(The accommodation needs of South Holland are also discussed in the countywide Lincolnshire study)</i></p>
Survey methods	The preparation involved interviews with district and county council officers, officers from neighbouring local authorities, discussions with members of the District Travellers Forum, and a discussion with a representative of an organisation that advises the council on how best to accommodate Gypsies and Travellers. Thirty four interviews were conducted and these were split between authorised and unauthorised provision.
Base population	The only information on population size is derived from caravan count data.
Overcrowding and future household formation measurements	There is no allowance made for overcrowding, concealed households or future household formation. This is despite the questionnaire gathering information on the future moving intentions and accommodation needs of household members expected to leave their current household in the near future. It is also noted in the assessment that 38 per cent of households surveyed included children under 16 and it is reasonable to assume that within five years a proportion of these would require their own accommodation. The lack of information on this is likely to have resulted in a significant underestimation of need in the area.
Unauthorised developments	Recommendation of 15 additional authorised residential pitches to accommodate those caravans currently on unauthorised developments.
Unauthorised encampments	The accommodation needs of those on unauthorised encampments do not appear to be included in the calculation of need. This is supported in the Lincolnshire GTAA which refers to the needs of unauthorised encampments in South Holland as being unavailable when calculating pitch requirements across the county.
Movement between sites	There is no allowance of net movement between sites and housing when estimating residential need requirements. The assessment mentions one household on an authorised site which intends to

and housing	move to bricks and mortar accommodation– this would add a pitch to supply and should therefore be included in the calculations. Three households currently in bricks and mortar were also interviewed but there is no information about their future moving intentions.
Supply issues	It is acknowledged that the unauthorised developments in the area are unlikely to gain planning permission and therefore there is unlikely to be any additional pitch supply from this source. One household planned to move from an authorised pitch into bricks and mortar accommodation but this does not affect the calculation of pitch requirements.
Concluding comments	It is important to note that the South Holland assessment predates the ODPM Draft GTAA Guidance issued in February 2006; research for the South Holland GTAA was conducted in 2005 and it was one of the earliest GTAAs. Consequently it did not benefit from the advice and recommendations provided by the guidance. This is evident in the absence of a thorough approach which makes allowance not only for current pitch requirements but also for future requirements created by overcrowding, household movement and family formation rates. Calculation of need is unlikely to be accurate due to these methodological deficiencies.

	<p><b>South Kesteven GTAA</b></p> <p><b><i>Conducted by Fordham Research. Published February 2006.</i></b></p> <p>(The accommodation needs of South Kesteven are also discussed in the countywide Lincolnshire study)</p>
Survey methods	Stakeholder consultation with county council and three groups that represent Gypsies and Travellers. Thirteen interviews were conducted across the range of possible sites. No interviews were conducted with those in bricks and mortar housing in South Kesteven in either the district or countywide GTAA.
Base population	Use of caravan count data and liaison with South Kesteven District Council helped identify sites.
Overcrowding and future household formation measurements	<p>The sample indicated no concealed households and no overcrowding with a small amount of under-occupation in some places. A 10 per cent overcrowding figure was applied in the calculation of need in the Lincolnshire GTAA.</p> <p>South Kesteven projected a 6 per cent increase in the number of households over the following five years; however this did not alter the recommended residential pitch requirements which were derived from the need created by unauthorised sites. This is corrected in the Lincolnshire GTAA which adjusts the family formation figure to a calculation derived from assumptions made elsewhere which suggest a 3 per cent growth rate per annum with the assumption that 70 per cent require residential caravans (Niner, 2002).</p>
Unauthorised developments	<p>The South Kesteven report recommends up to 20 pitches to provide accommodation for those families on unauthorised sites, but developments and encampments are not differentiated between in the assessment of need. (The primary unauthorised site referred to in the report appears to be an unauthorised encampment.)</p> <p>The Lincolnshire study conducted in 2007 makes reference to another private site seeking planning permission which appears to be classified as an unauthorised development. The estimation of need in the Lincolnshire study counts all those on unauthorised developments as requiring residential need in line with other</p>

	GTAAs.
Unauthorised encampments	No unauthorised encampments were recorded in the caravan counts preceding the research but South Kesteven District Council indicated that four unauthorised encampments had been recorded outside the caravan counts. Recommendations of up to 20 additional residential pitches to meet the demand caused by unauthorised sites are based on survey data that indicates permanent accommodation is desired by those on the encampments. The Lincolnshire GTAA quoted a recommendation of 10 – 19 residential pitches in South Kesteven to meet demand from unauthorised encampments; presumably the South Kesteven assessment of ‘up to 20’ played some part in that estimate.
Movement between sites and housing	There were no interviews with Gypsies and Travellers in bricks and mortar accommodation so movement from housing into sites is unknown. One respondent in the South Kesteven GTAA indicated a preference to move from an authorised site into bricks and mortar.
Supply issues	South Kesteven survey data revealed that:  One household expressed a preference to move from authorised site accommodation into housing. When asked about their accommodation expectations rather than preferences, a second household stated they expected to move into housing.  Three households on authorised sites expected to move from that site within 24 months.  The pitch requirement recommendation of ‘up to’ 20 residential pitches does not explicitly consider the possible creation of these vacancies which would help meet need.
Concluding comments	It is important to note that the South Kesteven assessment predates the ODPM Draft GTAA Guidance issued in February 2006; the South Kesteven GTAA was conducted in 2005 and published in February 2006. Consequently it did not benefit from the advice and recommendations detailed in the guidance, and does not appear to be particularly robust. Its recommendations are unlikely to have provided an accurate estimate of residential need in the area due to the omission of Gypsies and Travellers in housing, the lack of consideration given to issues on the supply side of the model and a low family formation figure for the following

	<p>five years (6 per cent over five years is significantly different from the 3 per cent growth per annum commonly used elsewhere). The recommendations made by the South Kesteven GTAA have since been amended in the countywide study.</p>
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	<p><b>Bassetlaw GTAA</b></p> <p><i>Conducted by Fordham Research, published March 2006.</i></p>
Survey methods	<p>Thirty six interviews were conducted out of the residents of 81 caravans (identified as 50 family units). One interview was undertaken per family unit to ensure a variety of responses across a range of sites. Interviews were conducted by two fieldworkers with travelling backgrounds. Comprehensive stakeholder consultation was undertaken with six different stakeholder organisations.</p>
Base population	<p>Base population established through liaison with Bassetlaw District Council who identified all the authorised and unauthorised sites in the area that they were aware of. Researchers were then able to estimate the population based on site capacity figures and average caravan per pitch occupancy. Respondents were unaware of any further sites and neither the council nor the respondents knew of any Gypsies and Travellers in bricks and mortar. This approach is likely to be more comprehensive than the caravan count data.</p>
Overcrowding and future household formation measurements	<p>Overcrowding is applied to each specific site. For one private site it is deemed not to be an issue and so no allowance is made. Assumptions made elsewhere recommend a 10 per cent overcrowding figure to be applied to council sites (Niner, 2002); this is deemed to be an appropriate estimate. For the remaining private site – Stubbing Lane – a figure of 15 per cent is applied based on the characteristics of the site such as higher caravan occupancy rates and bigger families.</p> <p>Future household formation is likely to have been calculated accurately; analysis of the age composition of surveyed families and their survey responses as to future accommodation requirements inform the extent of newly-forming need. Adjustments are made for those intending to leave the area. These adjustments are scaled up to the Bassetlaw population as a whole and combined with assumptions made elsewhere that 70 per cent of newly-forming need will require residential site provision (Niner, 2002).</p>
Unauthorised developments	<p>There were no recorded unauthorised developments in Bassetlaw at the time of the study.</p>



<p>Unauthorised encampments</p>	<p>Three unauthorised encampments identified who need total space for four caravans, which equates to three additional residential pitches based on average caravan-to-pitch occupancy. One family on an unauthorised site expressed a wish to move into bricks and mortar and the total level of need is adjusted accordingly. This follows benchmarking guidance and a danger of overstating need by avoiding the assumption that all unauthorised encampments equate to residential pitch need.</p>
<p>Movement between sites and housing</p>	<p>One family on an unauthorised encampment expressed a desire to move into bricks and mortar; allowance is made for this by the subtracting of one pitch from the final assessment of residential site need. However, the survey as a whole did not include those in bricks and mortar as neither local council officials nor respondents knew of any Gypsies and Travellers in bricks and mortar, so movement from housing into site-based accommodation does not affect the calculation of need.</p>
<p>Supply issues</p>	<p>All sites were full to capacity at time of research; however 45 per cent of residents on the local authority site in Bassetlaw expected to be living there for 12 months or less when asked what about their accommodation intentions. This is not considered in the calculation of need even though residents moving off local authority sites (and possibly out of the area) would create vacancies for others to move into.</p>
<p>Concluding comments</p>	<p>There are two main issues resulting from the benchmarking of Bassetlaw.</p> <p>Firstly there is the issue of the supply of residential pitches on local authority sites over the period. The findings obtained through asking about the moving intentions of those on local authority sites do not seem to have affected the need estimations and may consequently have overestimated pitch requirements as vacancies created on public sites would affect total supply. Alternatively those moving off public sites may intend moving to private sites and therefore this would not affect the total supply of residential pitches in the area. Information on the intentions of this group would be useful.</p> <p>Secondly the omission of those in bricks and mortar may result in an under-estimation of need in the future. This is not the fault of the GTAA as there were no Gypsies and Travellers in housing</p>

	<p>identified either by the council or by site-based survey respondents. However, this type of scenario illuminates the nationwide issue of a paucity of knowledge of housed Gypsies and Travellers.</p> <p>The GTAA is generally considered to be robust in its methods though the lack of information on Gypsies and Travellers living in the settled community may have harmed the study.</p>
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	<p><b>Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland GTAA</b></p> <p><i>Conducted by Centre for Urban and Regional Studies, University of Birmingham. Published April 2007.</i></p>
Survey methods	<p>Stakeholder consultation process which influenced the formation of the questionnaire: for example questions relating to income and benefits were omitted as a result of this process to avoid jeopardising the success of the interviews. Interviews were conducted by community interviewers who were given full training and the high survey response rate is attributed to the employment of these interviewers. Tailored questionnaires were also used for respondents in different accommodation and a large sample was achieved with the number of interviews conducted exceeding targets.</p>
Base population	<p>Use of survey data is prominent in determining the size of the local population – for each tenure the number of pitches/families (or estimates of) are multiplied by the average household size as determined in the survey. For the housed population the same approach is taken using the number of known households as a baseline with an acknowledgement that this is likely to be an underestimation.</p>
Overcrowding and future household formation measurements	<p>Overcrowding does not affect the calculation although recommendations are made for larger pitch sizes.</p> <p>Future household formation on sites and in housing is calculated separately. Adjustments are made for over-claiming and marriage within the population. This is in addition to adjustments for those in housing who will actually require site provision based on experience and assessments by local Gypsy and Traveller workers in the study area. This adjustment is supported by survey findings which indicate a high level of accommodation satisfaction amongst those in bricks and mortar.</p>
Unauthorised developments	<p>100 per cent of unauthorised developments assumed to be in need.</p>
Unauthorised encampments	<p>30 per cent of roadside respondents were interested in moving to a residential pitch; this is adjusted to 25 per cent to take account of over-claiming and the likelihood of their also being interested in areas outside the study area. This is treated as a one-off occurrence rather than a year-on-year flow of new families in</p>

	accordance with standard GTAA practice.
Movement between sites and housing	<p>Net movement between sites and housing is considered with the 7 per cent of survey respondents expressing a desire to move from sites into housing grossed to the authorised site population as a whole. The housing sample expressing interest in a move to site-based provision is not grossed upwards due to recognitions that levels of satisfaction in housing were high, firm movement intentions were low and that experience suggests that site provision would have to be particularly attractive for some Gypsies and Travellers to move from housing. Consequently it is assumed that 10 per cent of Gypsies and Travellers in housing need site accommodation as opposed to the high figure of 41 per cent who expressed an interest in such a move.</p>
Supply issues	<p>Pitch supply issues are comprehensively examined.</p> <p>No new planning applications were pending at the time of publication and no new sites were in the planning stage. One residential site creating six residential pitches (but as of December 2006 had not been developed) is taken into account on the supply side of the model.</p> <p>From 2006-2011 it was estimated that 25 new vacancies on socially rented sites would be created based on an average of five residential pitches being re-let in each recent year prior to the study.</p>
Concluding comments	<p>The Leicestershire GTAA appears to be robust in its methods with comprehensive survey preparation and techniques contributing to the process. Informed adjustments are made based on survey information, experience and liaison with those who work with Gypsies and Travellers in the area.</p> <p>One possible area of concern would be the issue of overcrowding which is not explicitly covered and does not feature in the calculation of residential pitch requirements. Issues surrounding 'space for their family's needs' were mentioned, often relating to issues such as parking space rather than their family home being too small to live in. A minority of respondents did state that they needed more and bigger caravans to meet their family's needs, indicating that their family unit is overcrowded and that a bigger pitch is needed.</p>

	<p><b>Nottinghamshire GTAA</b></p> <p><i>Conducted by Tribal Group. Published May 2007.</i></p>
Survey methods	Interviews were conducted with Gypsies and Travellers living on authorised sites, unauthorised sites and in bricks and mortar accommodation. There was a relatively small number of interviews with those on unauthorised sites but it is noted in the report that the number of roadside encampments was low at the time of the project. Involvement of community groups and the East Nottinghamshire Travellers Association provided useful knowledge and assisted in the survey design. Tailored questionnaires were developed to investigate the differing needs of those living on authorised sites, unauthorised sites and in housing.
Base population	The population residing in each authorised and unauthorised form of tenure is estimated by multiplying the household figures for each by 3.3 (the average household size derived from the survey). This appears to be a reasonably robust way of estimating the local population.
Overcrowding and future household formation measurements	The survey found an annual household growth rate of 3.7 per cent. This has been adjusted to 3 per cent per annum to take account of marriages between families in the area and to avoid problems of statistical distortion posed by small sample sizes. This adjustment is in line with assumptions made elsewhere which suggests a 3 per cent per annum growth rate of which 70 per cent require permanent residential accommodation (Niner, 2002). Consequently household formation is estimated at 2.1 per cent per annum.
Unauthorised developments	100 per cent of unauthorised developments are treated as residential need with allowances made for any sites that were expected to be granted planning permission. This discounted need is a reasonable approach, but the acquisition of planning permission by those sites must not count towards meeting the pitch allocations, and must be added onto the assessed need should they subsequently fail to get the expected planning permission.
Unauthorised encampments	The number of unauthorised encampments is calculated by taking an average of the last five caravan counts with 15 per cent uplift in the figure to reflect the likelihood of undercounting. This provided a figure of 16 households living in the survey area in encampments at any time; this can be seen as an element of good practice that

	<p>attempts to present as accurate an estimate of need as possible.</p> <p>Fourteen interviews on unauthorised encampments were conducted with 71.4 per cent indicating a preference for permanent site accommodation. However, even though this equates to 11 or 12 families requiring a pitch, the study instead assumes that all 16 unauthorised encampments require residential pitches. Although this approach is implied as correct in CLG guidance, assuming all encampments require a residential pitch fails to recognise the transient nature of the population and clearly overestimates need when only a certain proportion have expressed a desire for residential site accommodation.</p>
Movement between sites and housing	<p>Survey findings indicate nearly 40 per cent of those in housing expressed a need to move into site based accommodation. In order to clearly distinguish between aspirations and need this figure is adjusted to a figure of 33 per cent found in the Thames Valley GTAA which surveyed a larger sample (Clark, 2006).</p> <p>4.5 per cent of households in site accommodation expressed a desire to move into housing.</p>
Supply issues	<p>Annual pitch vacancy turnover is estimated at 8 per cent per annum taking into account vacancies created by Gypsies and Travellers giving up their accommodation when travelling, movement in and out of the study area and movement between local authority and private sites. The figure of 8 per cent represents a midway figure between local anecdotal evidence and national research figures. Account is also taken of supply created by moves from sites into housing and of authorised residential pitches expected to come back into use.</p>
Concluding comments	<p>The Nottinghamshire GTAA appears to be fairly robust. One area of concern is the possible overestimation of residential pitch need arising from unauthorised encampments; the research has assumed all those on encampments require residential accommodation despite the survey data indicating otherwise, leading to a probable over-estimate of 5 residential pitches. Aside from this, good practice can be observed in the way in which the baseline population is estimated and the use of tailored questionnaires for each tenure type.</p>

	<p><b>Lincolnshire GTAA</b></p> <p><i>Conducted by Outside Research &amp; Development. Published August 2007.</i></p>
Survey methods	<p>One hundred face-to-face interviews carried out over two waves. The breakdown of this sample was: 45 interviews on local authority sites, 24 authorised private sites, 11 bricks and mortar, 8 unauthorised encampments and 12 Travelling Showmen. There is clearly an issue here as less than 10 per cent of the sample was on unauthorised accommodation with interviews weighted towards those on authorised sites because unauthorised dwellings were 'expected to be more hard to reach and involve'. The survey methodology is likely to have produced a good picture of need in the population living on authorised sites, but is unlikely to be representative for those on unauthorised sites. It could be argued that those living on unauthorised sites are in the greatest accommodation need, so should be a major focus of a needs assessment.</p>
Base population	<p>Caravan count data was used to determine the population from which the survey sample would be drawn. Liaison with the Lincolnshire Traveller Education Service assisted the researchers in the process by supplying the names and addresses of those in bricks and mortar, helping to identify Gypsies and Travellers who may otherwise have been omitted.</p>
Overcrowding and future household formation measurements	<p>The 10 per cent overcrowding figure is applied to the majority of districts in accordance with assumptions made elsewhere (Niner, 2002). Exceptions to this are the districts of Lincoln and West Lindsey to which 20 per cent and 15 per cent overcrowding figures are applied; the overcrowding figure is adapted at district level based on survey results on overcrowding, concealed households and the high number of children in households. Adapting guidance to survey results rather than providing a broad figure demonstrates good practice.</p> <p>It appears that overcrowding allowances are only applied to authorised sites. This is likely to create an underestimate of need as overcrowding and expected household formation could also be relevant factors on unauthorised sites.</p>

<p>Unauthorised developments</p>	<p>The description of the methodology relating to unauthorised sites is somewhat unclear, as it refers first to unauthorised development figures (from caravan counts) and subsequently to adjusting for 'roadside encampments not seeking accommodation in the area'. A further indication of apparent confusion over the distinction between unauthorised encampments and unauthorised developments is seen when comparing the caravan count figures the GTAA used for its unauthorised site figures to the tabulated results. In some districts pitches appear to have been recorded under the wrong heading, while in others they are correctly assigned.</p> <p>The conflation of unauthorised encampments and unauthorised developments, combined with an adjustment based on the preferences of those on encampments, would tend to create an underestimate of need; those living on unauthorised developments are less likely to want to live outside the area, as a development is typically a 'residential' arrangement whilst some developments represent transit need.</p> <p>Caravan numbers are translated into pitch numbers using different caravan to pitch ratios. The ratios range from 1.6:1 – 2.4:1 and are based on survey data which indicates that the caravan to pitch ratios vary across the area. Using a range of ratios allows for flexibility at local level, although surveying those on unauthorised developments could have provided firm information on the number of caravans per pitch.</p>
<p>Unauthorised encampments</p>	<p>See unauthorised developments. Residential pitch requirements are adjusted for those unauthorised encampments not seeking permanent accommodation in the area.</p>
<p>Movement between sites and housing</p>	<p>Allowance is made for net movement between site-based accommodation and housing. Movement from housing to sites is calculated on survey data with the two respondents who stated a desire to move treated as need. This represented 18 per cent of the bricks and mortar survey sample but seems an appropriate figure to apply despite being higher than previous GTAAs (Home and Greenfields, 2006) which have indicated a 5 per cent transfer figure, as the housed survey sample is small. The assessment also clearly states that consideration should be given to applying the figure of 5 per cent should sufficient data on the total population of</p>



	Gypsies and Travellers in housing become available.
Supply issues	Figures for the supply of residential pitches are derived from survey findings. In calculating the supply that will be created by vacancies, there is a separation made between those intending to move into housing and those intending to move out of the area. This avoids scope for double counting. Movement from an authorised local authority pitch to an authorised private pitch (or vice versa) is not counted to avoid presenting a false picture of supply, as movement between authorised residential pitches does not alter total supply.
Concluding comments	<p>The Lincolnshire GTAA has notable elements of good practice which could be replicated in other assessments. The approaches to overcrowding and the work to obtain a sample of people living in bricks and mortar accommodation have enhanced the research.</p> <p>However, there are also significant gaps in the surveying, notably around the absence of interviews with those on unauthorised developments and the small sample of those on unauthorised encampments. Whilst the assessment attempts to quantify the accommodation needs of these groups, the omission of them from the survey process means that information relating to overcrowding, household formation, specific moving intentions and characteristics and the wider social needs of those on unauthorised developments are not explored. The nature of these omissions is such that need is underestimated.</p>

	<p><b>Northamptonshire GTAA</b></p> <p><i>Conducted by Fordham Research. Published March 2008.</i></p>
Survey methods	Thorough survey methodology; a pilot questionnaire was designed and refined following stakeholder consultation, tailored questionnaires were used according to accommodation circumstance and the number of interviews conducted took into account Gypsies and Travellers in all living conditions.
Base population	Survey data and information from stakeholders informs the estimates of the size of the local population.
Overcrowding and future household formation measurements	Survey data is used to calculate need arising from overcrowded households and emerging family units. To assess need arising from overcrowding, adjustments are made for those not seeking a residential pitch and for those households with an emerging family unit likely to leave the pitch. It is assumed that once the extra family unit leaves the pitch will no longer be overcrowded. This avoids double counting as emerging family units are accounted for under the need arising from future family formation. Adjustments here are made for marriage between Gypsies and Travellers, marriage to non Gypsies and Travellers and for those not seeking a residential pitch.
Unauthorised developments	100 per cent of unauthorised developments are counted as requiring residential pitches.
Unauthorised encampments	The requirement for residential pitches arising from unauthorised encampments is calculated by subtracting the number of Gypsies and Travellers who are expecting to leave the county and the number who had stated in the survey that they did not require a residential pitch. The number of residential pitches required includes long-term tolerated unauthorised encampments.
Movement between sites and housing	Net movement is calculated using survey data with adjustments made for those moving out of the study area. Assumption is made that problems relating to site management will easily be resolved and therefore respondents citing site management difficulties as their motivation for desiring a move from sites into housing are excluded. If these numbers were included it would create more vacant residential pitches and reduce the overall residential pitch requirement, however it is difficult to make any assumptions in this area through the benchmarking process and therefore it is

	reasonable to trust the assumptions of the researchers who had contact with these people.
Supply issues	Thorough evaluation of the supply of residential pitches over the period including the number of vacant residential pitches at the time of the project, the number of existing residential pitches expected to become vacant as a result of moves into housing and out of the study area, plans to bring vacant residential pitches back into use, and the number of existing residential pitches expected to become vacant over the following five years. The vacancies arising from the latter are calculated using mortality rates as applied in conventional Housing Needs Assessments.
Concluding comments	<p>The accommodation assessment for Northamptonshire can generally be viewed as robust – thorough survey methods, evaluation of supply and demand and the use of survey data rather than the standard percentages mean this GTAA is likely to have been reasonably accurate in its assessment of local residential pitch needs.</p> <p>One area that could represent a slight underestimation of need is the assumption that inflows to the area will balance outflows. Being close to popular travelling routes and in the centre of England, with indications from increasing caravan count figures, suggests that this assumption may not be appropriate in Northamptonshire.</p>

	<p><b>Derbyshire GTAA</b></p> <p><i>Conducted by Opinion Research Services. Published March 2008.</i></p>
Survey methods	<p>The researchers described the survey that was undertaken as a census. This is incorrect as up to 50 per cent of households in the area may not have been surveyed. Some groups may be under represented (e.g. those on unauthorised sites) and it is not possible to assert that the views expressed in the survey represent the whole population. Despite this erroneous assertion the methodology employed appears generally robust. The methodology is not always fully described but it has some notable areas of good practice. The needs of different groups are clearly addressed, for example through additional focus groups for Travelling Showmen and young people.</p>
Base population	<p>Survey data and information from stakeholders is used alongside caravan count data. The researchers identified and acknowledged the limitations of the data sources and suggest that they are providing a conservative population estimate.</p>
Overcrowding and future household formation measurements	<p>Evidence for overcrowding is found in the survey data but the researchers argue that larger residential pitches would provide a better response than increased provision. Future household formation is calculated clearly and the researchers are clear that even if these needs are met more provision will be required after 2012 for the next group of households.</p>
Unauthorised developments	<p>100 per cent of unauthorised developments are counted as requiring residential pitches.</p>
Unauthorised encampments	<p>Assessment of the need arising from unauthorised encampments is limited by difficulties faced by the researchers in accessing robust information on this issue. It appears that local authorities in the area do not have detailed records but suggested that there is a trend for less unauthorised encampments in the area.</p>
Movement between sites and housing	<p>Survey data is used to suggest that there is little appetite for movement between sites and housing. There is no reason to suggest that this assumption is incorrect. However, the researchers identified significant numbers of children and young people living in housing who may wish to move onto sites. This is supported by the focus group for young people that found the ability to move was</p>

	one of the best things about Gypsy and Traveller lifestyle.
Supply issues	A combination of survey data and local authority records (e.g. waiting lists) are used to estimate supply. The researchers rightly point out that their final calculation represents the minimum provision required to meet the needs of the population. Actual requirements could be significantly higher.
Concluding comments	The methodology used by this assessment appears to be generally robust and contains some areas of good practice. A separate focus group for Travelling Showmen identified different needs that are not identified in other GTAAs and would not be met through other forms of site provision. Overall, the assessment of residential pitch needs is clear and logical but may underestimate the level of need.

### Step 3: Filling gaps and assessing regional pitch requirements

The major part of step 3 of the process comprises ‘filling gaps’ – making an assessment of need in the following circumstances:

- Where parts of the region are not covered by a GTAA.
- Where benchmarking suggests that a GTAA is likely to be very inaccurate.

Every part of the East Midlands is already covered by at least one GTAA, so the only reason for filling gaps will be where significant issues have been identified with the GTAA.

There are two possible ways in which GTAA figures can be amended. If the GTAA figure is felt to be inaccurate, but the amount and direction by which it is inaccurate can be estimated with confidence, the figure can be amended accordingly. If, however, the figure is felt to be irredeemable, then it must be replaced by a figure calculated on a formulaic basis. It is, of course, preferable to adopt the former approach where possible, to ensure that the data gathered in the GTAA is used to the maximum extent its quality permits.

The formula that is suggested by the CLG guidance is based on the caravan count<sup>2</sup>. The formula used was:

*“Pitch requirement for an area equals the number of unauthorised development pitches in the area plus 40 per cent of the number of authorised pitches in the area (CLG, 2007: p37).”*

This formula is referred to as the ‘RSS adjustment formula’ from this point onwards. The guidance acknowledges that the formula is “essentially pragmatic and devised for its simplicity rather than its sophistication”, and that it is open to criticism. However, it should provide a reasonable estimate of pitch requirements where a figure provided by the GTAA is not felt to be robust.

A summary of the need estimates is tabulated below. The caravan count figures used to calculate the RSS adjustment formula can be found in the table presented in Step 1.

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<sup>2</sup> The caravan count is a biannual survey of Gypsy and Traveller Caravans that is undertaken by Local Authorities in England (Communities and Local Government, 2008).

<b>GTAA</b>	<b>GTAA pitch assessment</b>	<b>Findings from benchmarking</b>	<b>RSS adjustment formula</b>	<b>Use to be made of GTAA and formula figures</b>	<b>Adjustment of GTAA pitch requirements</b>	<b>Recommended pitches</b>
Bassetlaw	25	Generally robust.	17	Adjustment formula not used as GTAA found to be robust.	No adjustment needed to GTAA estimation of need.	25
Derbyshire	58	May be a slight underestimate.	31	Benchmarking suggested that this GTAA might have underestimated need, however the formula provides no indication that the estimate from the GTAA should be increased.	No adjustment needed to GTAA estimation of need.	58
Leicestershire	132	Robust.	98	Adjustment formula not used as GTAA found to be robust.	No adjustment needed to GTAA estimation of need.	132
Lincolnshire	150-173	Probably underestimates need.	76	Like Derbyshire, benchmarking suggested that this GTAA might have underestimated need, but the formula provides no indication that the GTAA estimate should be increased.	Adopt maximum figure from range of GTAA estimation of need.	173

<b>GTAA</b>	<b>GTAA pitch assessment</b>	<b>Findings from benchmarking</b>	<b>RSS adjustment formula</b>	<b>Use to be made of GTAA and formula figures</b>	<b>Adjustment of GTAA pitch requirements</b>	<b>Recommended pitches</b>
Northamptonshire	57	Generally robust, but tending towards underestimation.	75	Although the Northamptonshire GTAA appears relatively robust the formula supports the observation that it may have underestimated need in the area. A small increase in the GTAA estimation would cancel out any underestimation that may have occurred.	Increase GTAA estimation of need slightly (10 per cent).	63
Nottinghamshire	119	Robust, with specific possible overestimate by 5 pitches.	53	Adjustment formula not used as GTAA found to be robust. Adjustment recommended to account for the clearly identified (small) over-estimate.	Reduce GTAA estimation of need by 4 per cent.	114
South Holland	15	Serious methodological weaknesses.	33	Adopt figure from adjustment formula in light of significant methodological weaknesses.	Adopt estimate of need suggested by RSS adjustment formula.	33

**Table 5 - Adjustments to GTAA pitch requirements**



As shown in the table, only the South Holland GTAA estimation requires major revision.

The remaining part of step 3 is to calculate the regional requirements, which can be found by taking the sum of the values in the final column of the table above. This gives a regional pitch requirement of 598. This figure is slightly higher than that obtained by considering the pitch requirements provided by the GTAAs.

## Step 4: Stock-taking information at Local Planning Authority level

CLG guidance (2007: p47) states that

“steps 4 and 5 are purely preliminary, aimed at providing Regional Planning Bodies (RPBs) with the basic material from which they can explore pitch allocation options from a strategic regional viewpoint”.

Step 4 has two elements; the first element is breaking down GTAA assessments by local authority where the GTAA fails to do so. This is not required in the East Midlands as every GTAA provides assessments by authority.

The other task in this step is to identify which approach joint GTAAs have taken in allocating pitch requirements between authorities. This can be on one of two broad approaches – meeting need where it arises or meeting it where it should be met. Allocating residential pitches to local authorities on the basis of needs arising may reinforce existing provision patterns (CLG, 2007). Therefore, the guidance recommends that GTAAs should also adjust the allocations based on the preferences expressed by Gypsies and Travellers during the consultation. Where allocation is made solely by needs arising it is suggested that regional planning bodies should take a more strategic approach and consider spreading allocations between authorities.

The allocation method used by each GTAA is outlined below to support the regional planning body in its strategic review of pitch allocation.

<b>GTAA</b>	<b>Method for allocating pitch requirements between authorities</b>
Bassetlaw	N/A: GTAA only covered one local authority.
Derbyshire	Pitch requirements are provisionally allocated by ‘needs-arising’ but the GTAA suggests that final allocation should spread new residential pitches across the county.
Leicestershire	This GTAA used needs arising as the basis for allocating pitch requirements. It was suggested that regional and local authorities should also consider ‘need where it should be met’ in conjunction with local Gypsy and Traveller populations.
Lincolnshire	Needs arising is used as the basis for allocation of residential pitches in this GTAA. It suggests that county-wide estimates are relatively robust but district level estimates will require verification with local Gypsy and Traveller populations.

<b>GTAA</b>	<b>Method for allocating pitch requirements between authorities</b>
Northamptonshire	Pitch requirements for each local authority and sub region are allocated to reflect needs arising.
Nottinghamshire	This GTAA used needs arising as the basis for pitch allocations but took into account the preferences of concealed households.
South Holland	N/A: GTAA only covered one local authority.

**Table 6 - GTAA allocation of pitch requirements between districts**

## Step 5: Filling gaps at Local Planning Authority level

The task outlined in the guidance for step 5 is to provide information that regional planning bodies can make allocation decisions based on, and specifically to describe how GTAA's have distributed pitch allocations between districts. The guidance provides six scenarios that could arise as regional planning bodies seek to allocate pitch requirements to local authorities. Three of these scenarios are relevant to the GTAA's in the East Midlands. They are:

- **Scenario 1.** LPAs covered by a GTAA which makes pitch allocations based on need where it arises. No adjustment has been made at Step 3. LPA pitch requirements from the GTAA are used.
- **Scenario 2.** LPAs covered by a GTAA which makes pitch allocations based on need where it arises. Adjustment has been made at Step 3. LPA pitch requirements from the GTAA are adjusted upward or downward as appropriate so that LPAs still take the same share of total requirements. For example, four LPAs covered by a GTAA had pitch requirements initially assessed as 20, 40, 40 and 100 in the total requirement of 200. The Step 3 adjustment reduced total requirements to 150. The LPAs will now have requirements of 15, 30, 30 and 75.
- **Scenario 6.** LPAs covered by a GTAA which covers that area only. GTAA figures are used, adjusted as at Step 3 if necessary as a result of the GTAA benchmarking process in Step 2.

GTAA	Scenario for adjustment of pitch requirement allocations at a local level
Bassetlaw	Scenario 6
Derbyshire	Scenario 1
Leicestershire	Scenario 1
Lincolnshire	Scenario 1
Northamptonshire	Scenario 2
Nottinghamshire	Scenario 2
South Holland	Scenario 6

For the two GTAA's under scenario 2, where adjustments have been made at the GTAA level, the following adjustments are recommended to be made at the LPA level:

Nottinghamshire (reduce by 4 per cent)

<b>District</b>	<b>GTAA</b>	<b>Adjusted</b>
Ashfield	0	0
Broxtowe	2	2
Gedling	4	4
Mansfield	5	5
Newark & Sherwood	88	84
Nottingham City UA	11	10
Rushcliffe	9	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>114</b>

Northamptonshire (increase by 10 per cent)

<b>District</b>	<b>GTAA</b>	<b>Adjusted</b>
Corby	1	1
East Northants	3	4
Kettering	2	2
Wellingborough	13	14
Daventry	5	6
Northampton	24	26
South Northants	9	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>63</b>

The table below summarises the allocations by district for the region. The table features allocations to the nearest pitch. The guidance (CLG, 2007) states that it would be appropriate to round allocations to the nearest five residential pitches.

District	Allocation	Source
Amber Valley	1	Derbyshire GTAA
Bolsover	1	Derbyshire GTAA
Chesterfield	0	Derbyshire GTAA
Derby UA	16	Derbyshire GTAA
Derbyshire Dales	2	Derbyshire GTAA
Erewash	0	Derbyshire GTAA
High Peak	0	Derbyshire GTAA
North East Derbyshire	19	Derbyshire GTAA
Peak District National Park	0	Derbyshire GTAA
South Derbyshire	19	Derbyshire GTAA
Blaby	13	Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland GTAA
Charnwood	9	Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland GTAA
Harborough	19	Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland GTAA
Hinckley & Bosworth	26	Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland GTAA
Melton	6	Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland GTAA
North West Leicestershire	32	Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland GTAA
Oadby & Wigston	1	Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland GTAA
Leicester City UA	24	Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland GTAA
Rutland	2	Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland GTAA
Lincoln	21	Lincolnshire GTAA
North Kesteven	22	Lincolnshire GTAA
West Lindsey	56	Lincolnshire GTAA
Boston	22	Lincolnshire GTAA
East Lindsey	11	Lincolnshire GTAA
South Kesteven	41	Lincolnshire GTAA
South Holland	33	RSS adjustment formula
Corby	1	Northamptonshire GTAA +10%
East Northants	4	Northamptonshire GTAA +10%
Kettering	2	Northamptonshire GTAA +10%
Wellingborough	14	Northamptonshire GTAA +10%
Daventry	6	Northamptonshire GTAA +10%
Northampton	26	Northamptonshire GTAA +10%
South Northants	10	Northamptonshire GTAA +10%
Ashfield	0	Nottinghamshire GTAA -4%
Bassetlaw	25	Bassetlaw GTAA
Broxtowe	2	Nottinghamshire GTAA -4%
Gedling	4	Nottinghamshire GTAA -4%
Mansfield	5	Nottinghamshire GTAA -4%
Newark & Sherwood	84	Nottinghamshire GTAA -4%
Nottingham City UA	10	Nottinghamshire GTAA -4%
Rushcliffe	9	Nottinghamshire GTAA -4%
<b>East Midlands Total</b>	<b>598</b>	

**Table 7 - Allocation of pitches by district**

## **Step 6: Considering a ‘strategic view of needs across the region’**

The final step of the process outlined in the CLG guidance is to consider the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers “in a wider context so as to achieve a sustainable outcome which balances the needs of all communities within general planning principles” (CLG, 2007: p47).

This step falls under the remit of the regional planning body. Results from the previous steps are to be analysed by the planning body to create a positive strategic direction for the provision of residential pitches. The guidance highlights five basic planning themes that should be brought to bear upon deliberations:

- sustainability,
- equity and choice,
- social inclusion,
- environmental protection,
- the need for flexibility of provision.

A further six questions (with sub-questions) are then proposed to assist in deliberations on these issues. The main questions are:

- What is the scale of the issue to be addressed?
- What is the geographical starting point?
- What scope is there for ‘dispersing’ pitch requirement allocations beyond areas with concentrations of existing provision?
- What are the positive factors for pitch allocations?
- What are the main constraints on site development?
- What is the need for social and affordable site provision?

## Conclusion

The robustness of the GTAAs in the East Midlands varied considerably. It appears that the standard of GTAAs has improved over time with the later estimations of pitch requirements being more robust. This suggests that learning from the early GTAAs has improved the robustness of the process. A number of general observations can be made about the GTAAs conducted in the East Midlands. These should be combined with similar analyses from other regions and more general feedback on the process (Niner, forthcoming) to ensure that the next round of GTAAs is more robust.

The first issue is that there is still a distinct lack of information on the size of the Gypsy and Traveller population. This is particularly evident when estimating the numbers of Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar accommodation. Many GTAAs obtained the known number of housed Gypsies and Travellers through discussions with local residents, local officials and with stakeholders and then based their recommendations on these figures. Other assessments may follow assumptions used elsewhere which indicate that the percentage of Gypsies and Travellers in bricks and mortar is as high as fifty per cent of the population. It is impossible to judge the effectiveness of either approach simply from a desk-based benchmarking assessment; however it is clear that more accurate and clear information on this section of the population is essential.

The lack of an evidence base has the potential to exclude the 'hidden' Gypsy and Traveller population from the assessment process and may impair the estimations of need. Previous research has recommended that Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers should be included as ethnic categories in the 2011 Census (Building and Social Housing Foundation, 2007). Allowing Gypsies and Travellers to identify themselves in this manner would provide clearer information on the size and demographics of the Gypsy and Traveller population and would therefore enhance the accuracy of future accommodation assessments.

Care should be taken when estimating the residential pitch requirements arising from unauthorised developments and encampments. Some GTAAs assumed that all those on unauthorised developments and encampments would require residential pitches and in the case of the Nottinghamshire GTAA this was contrary to the data collected in the survey. Those GTAAs which appear to be the most robust made adjustments relating to future movement intentions and whether households on unauthorised encampments desired a residential pitch. It was also unclear in some GTAAs whether a distinction was being made between unauthorised developments and unauthorised encampments, or whether they were simply using a general category of unauthorised sites. This relates to the following point on issues of transparency.



Some GTAA's were lacking in clarity as to how and why figures used in the calculation were arrived at. Others did not appear to use information garnered in their survey. For example South Holland's assessment of pitch requirements did not appear to include judgements on overcrowding, emerging family units or movement from sites into bricks and mortar accommodation despite including questions related to future movement intentions and accommodation needs in their survey. It is reasonable to assume that this omission will have resulted in an underestimation of pitch requirements. The lack of transparency is frustrating because it undermines the estimates of need; the figures are not necessarily always incorrect, it is just not clear how they have been calculated. This makes it difficult to make an informed judgement on the accuracy and robustness of the GTAA's where this information is omitted. Future GTAA's should ensure that all information collected in the survey which may affect the calculation of need is included in the assessment and presented in a clear, transparent manner. This would assist any future benchmarking reports and provide a stronger case basis for the accommodation pitch requirements that have been calculated.

Future GTAA's should ensure that key stakeholders are involved in the process and formulation of questionnaires. The GTAA's included stakeholder involvement to varying extents but some appeared to take advantage of their expertise more than others, using community interviewers and 'gatekeepers' to help maximise the interview response rate.

It is also important to note that there are still several grey areas in the calculations of need, particularly relating to cross-boundary issues. It is evident that it is difficult to make assumptions about migration into the area which would impact upon the residential pitch requirements. It is clearly easier, from survey responses, to make an assessment of the proportion of residents who are considering leaving an area than to make an assessment of how many people outside the area would like to move in; naturally if every GTAA across the country considered those leaving but not those entering there would be a considerable pool of hidden need. GTAA's generally include some form of recommendation for the provision of transit pitches in the area which would be beneficial to those travelling through the area.

There are also issues on the supply side of the model with GTAA's employing different methods to calculate the future supply of residential pitches. Some used survey data to indicate the number of expected vacancies while others used average pitch turnover rates from recent years to calculate a percentage of pitches expected to become vacant in the future. It is impossible to judge from this benchmarking process which approach is 'best'.

There remain issues surrounding clarity and transparency, the full use of data collected and whether it is more advisable to trust survey data or national estimates

on particular subjects. It is hoped that this benchmarking will act as a valuable resource in assessing accommodation needs at a regional level and to those involved in conducting GTAAs in the future.

In conclusion, this review process has confirmed the broad findings of the GTAAs (albeit with some amendments to the details) that across the East Midlands in excess of 550 pitches are needed. That represents hundreds of households of identified accommodation need – it is important that steps are taken to meet that need.

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