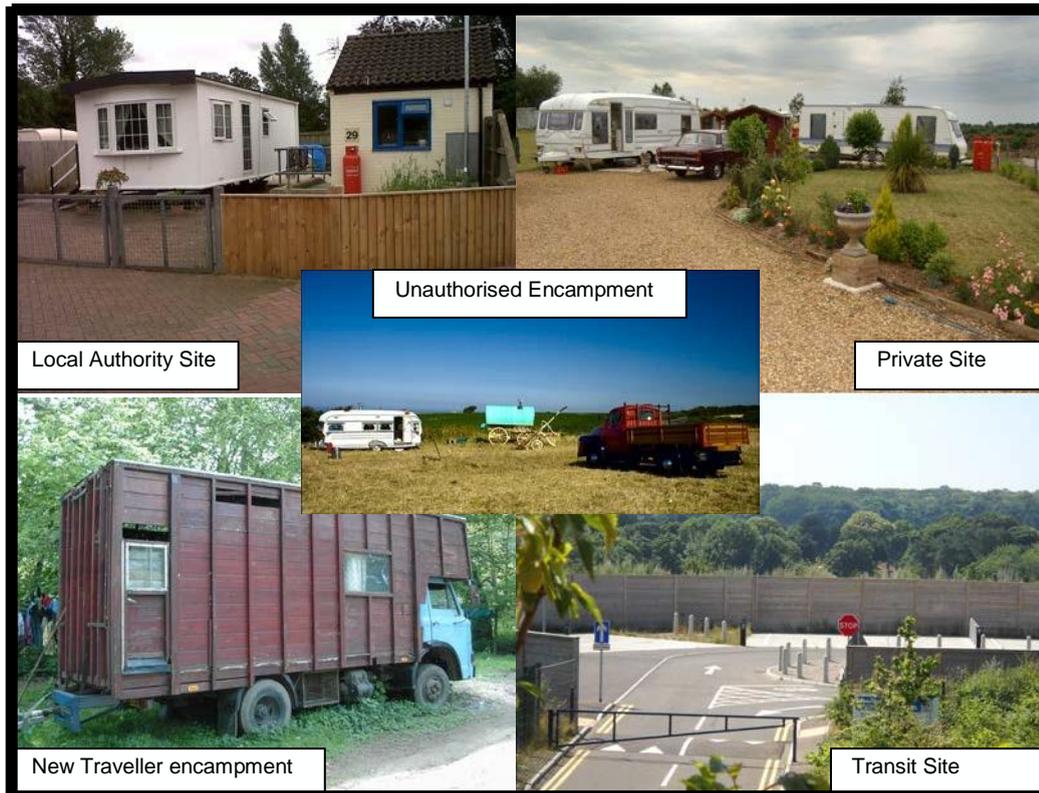


Gypsy and Traveller Strategy



A Partnership Document for Norfolk and Suffolk

Gypsy and Traveller Strategy for Norfolk and Suffolk: A Partnership Document

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Gypsies and Travellers have been part of the UK community since at least the 16th Century. Gypsy and Travelling communities in the UK have often been marginalised and have lived on the peripheries of society, without access to mainstream services and with a shortage of places to stay.

Changes in government legislation have necessitated a revision to policies concerning Gypsy and Travellers.

The Equality Act 2010 is the primary legislation which deals with discrimination and aims to achieve equal opportunities in the workplace and in wider society. The Act replaced previous anti-discrimination laws including the Race Relations Act.

The Housing Act 2004 introduced the statutory duty to undertake Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessments, as well as changes to the definition of 'Gypsies and Travellers'.

Until August 2011 Norfolk and Suffolk operated independently of each other. The strategies were separate, as were the objectives and actions.

The Gypsy and Traveller Strategy will cover Norfolk and Suffolk, as the county councils have merged resources making the service more efficient. The new merged service will continue to support Gypsies and Travellers by providing a framework for:

- Improving community cohesion by promoting good relations between Gypsies and Travellers and settled communities
- Increasing awareness and understanding of Gypsy and Traveller needs, culture and lifestyle
- Managing unauthorised encampments in Norfolk and Suffolk, helping to ensure that accommodation needs and other welfare issues are addressed
- Further generating knowledge and understanding of hate crime and incidents and encouraging Gypsy and Traveller communities to report them
- Working to reduce and eliminate harassment and discrimination towards Gypsy and Traveller communities
- Improving fire safety and personal welfare for Gypsies and Travellers in Norfolk and Suffolk
- Improving access to learning for pre-school children, young people and adults on Gypsy and Traveller sites and encampments
- Reduce health inequalities, improve health and wellbeing, and promote health education and awareness amongst Gypsies and Travellers

The strategy shows how agencies and authorities can work cohesively to address the key issues facing Gypsies and Travellers. It has been influenced by, and complements both the "working together" conference and the three Gypsy and Traveller subgroups which operate across Norfolk and Suffolk.

Norfolk and Suffolk both have protocols for managing unauthorised encampments, which continue to reflect the aims of this document. The protocols aim to provide guidelines for partner agencies in terms of both welfare and enforcement issues arising from unauthorised encampments. This is described in more detail in point 6.3. This document will be revised as necessary to ensure it remains effective.

Each county's protocol will remain separate at this time due to slightly different operational working procedures.

The Gypsy and Traveller Steering Group action plan (section 7) identifies priority areas of need for Gypsies and Travellers in Norfolk and Suffolk, which partners from district and borough councils are committed to achieving over the next two years. The action plan will be reviewed every six months by the Norfolk and Suffolk Gypsy and Traveller County-Wide Steering Group.

The priority areas are divided into six areas of need: **Accommodation; Community Cohesion; Community Safety; Education; Health and Wellbeing**. These areas are divided into three themes in the action plan and represented by three subgroups in each county under the headings of 'Accommodation', 'Community Cohesion', 'Education, Health and Wellbeing'. The action plan within the strategy will guide the focus and aims of each subgroup.

ACCOMMODATION

Partner agencies are committed to meeting the accommodation needs of Gypsy and Traveller communities by consulting with Gypsies and Travellers themselves, as well as other stakeholders. The Protocol for Managing Unauthorised Encampments will continue to be the main tool for balancing the rights of both the settled and travelling communities when responding to unauthorised encampments.

COMMUNITY COHESION

The strategy aims to improve relations between Gypsies and Travellers and settled communities, by increasing shared knowledge and awareness and by providing mechanisms to ensure both groups have their needs and rights protected. In order to promote good relations between statutory bodies and the Gypsy and Traveller communities, it is our duty to identify and eliminate potentially discriminatory practices within the county, district and borough councils.

Suitable accessible media will be used to inform Gypsies and Travellers and the settled community about events and issues happening in Norfolk and Suffolk pertaining to their communities.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Gypsies and Travellers, like all members of society have the right to live their lives in safety. Improving personal safety and wellbeing on Gypsy and Traveller sites is a priority. Norfolk and Suffolk's Fire and Rescue Services

are committed to raising awareness of fire hazards on all Gypsy and Traveller sites and unauthorised encampments.

EDUCATION

The Strategy aims to build on the work of the Traveller Education Support Service and other Children and Young People's Services to improve access to learning for those from a Gypsy Traveller background. This includes linking early year's settings to key Gypsy and Traveller sites and promoting parental engagement with schools to encourage greater learning amongst Gypsy and Traveller children as well as promoting learning for adults. Norfolk and Suffolk work in a slightly different way as outlined below:

Norfolk Traveller Education Service

Norfolk Traveller Education Service actively supports the process of inclusion that enables Traveller children and young people to have their needs and aspirations met within local educational provision, where they feel valued, secure, have a sense of belonging and where barriers to participation and achievement are identified and removed.

Norfolk Traveller Education Service provides support for young people from Traveller backgrounds; they offer guidance and advice to their families and work in partnership with other agencies that support the Traveller community.

They have a dedicated outreach team to support the inclusion of the most vulnerable children and their families, and to signpost to partners and other support agencies.

Their work with schools and settings, and their partnership work is focused around 6 priorities:

- **Ascription**
They offer support to Traveller families so that they feel confident about declaring their children to be part of the Traveller community. This will help us to monitor and support their progress.
- **Attendance**
They encourage and help Traveller children to attend school regularly.
- **Achievement**
They support schools in their efforts to raise the standards achieved by Traveller pupils' at all key stages.
- **Relationships with Parents and the Community**
They work positively with all partners to improve relationships with Traveller parents and the wider Traveller community.
- **Curriculum Development**
They support schools in their efforts to ensure that the curriculum is culturally reflective and inclusive.

Suffolk Equalities & Minority Ethnic Attainment Team (EMEA)

In Suffolk, the Equalities & Minority Ethnic Attainment Team (EMEA), a team within the Learning and Improvement Service (LIS) has a key focus to raise attainment and narrow attainment gaps for all minority ethnic pupils, including Gypsy, Roma, Traveller (GRT) pupils. Advisers in the EMEA team have a generic role to promote high attainment for all minority ethnic pupils, but there are two advisers with a GRT specialism. There are also two part-time GRT Engagement Officers. They work in partnership with other LIS advisers, other staff within Children and Young People's Services and outside agencies to promote access, attendance, integration and achievement within educational settings. The key priorities are to:

- Support, challenge and advise schools to monitor and improve the progress and achievement of GRT pupils.
- Undertake targeted work in schools/settings with GRT pupils on roll and gaps in attainment, including building their capacity for self-reliance.
- Build trust with GRT families (with children who are vulnerable to underachievement) and provide support so that they are able to engage positively with the education system in all phases (0-19)
- Support all schools and settings to be proactive in meeting their equality duties.

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

The ultimate aim of the NHS in Norfolk and Suffolk is to improve the health and wellbeing of people residing in both counties.

This includes Gypsies and members of the Travelling community who may not be accessing a range of health services including vaccination and immunisation programmes for children, screening programmes for women and chronic disease management, which are readily provided by the NHS to all communities including public health information and targeted health intervention programmes.

Councils will be responsible for the delivery of public health programmes in the community, and raising awareness for health promotion and health intervention programmes. Work will continue with NHS Norfolk and Suffolk, district and borough councils, and the Gypsy and Traveller service, to identify and provide the appropriate support and signposting in accessing health services to prevent ill health and promote health and well being. This will help meet the needs of Gypsies and the Travelling community.'

2. CONTEXT

2.1 The National Context

There are a number of relevant Acts and pieces of legislation that apply to Gypsies and Travellers which aim to ensure their needs are taken into consideration in service provision, for example, the Equalities Act 2010. These are listed in more detail in section 5.

Recent government legislation includes changes to the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008, section 318, which once brought into force; provides the rights and obligations contained in the Mobile Homes Act 1983, and will be applied to local authority sites. This Act already applies to privately run sites. More information can be found at www.legislation.gov.uk. It is advisable to check the above website for up to date policy and legislation.

2.2 Funding for Gypsy and Traveller sites

The Homes and Communities Agency (a Government department) has made up to £30 million available in the eastern region for 2011 – 2014, to improve existing Traveller sites, or build sites. This three-year grant aims to address the current shortfall in pitch provision, and tackle the issues around unauthorised encampments. Applications for funding are subject to an independent assessment of value-for-money and sustainability. The impact of Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments (GTAA's) in the eastern region will result in local authorities applying for the grant to ensure they meet the demands recognised in their respective area. In the east and south east region during January 2012, the Homes and Communities Agency allocated £2.227 million between Broadland Housing Association, Cambridge City Council, Orwell Housing, West Sussex County Council and Town and County Housing Group.

2.3 The Local Context

Gypsies and Travellers in Norfolk and Suffolk live in a variety of accommodation types. Some are settled in permanent housing or in caravans on authorised sites. Others live in temporary encampments, either authorised or unauthorised by the landowner. Still others live on land they own, but where they do not have planning permission.

There are no Transit sites in Suffolk at present. Norfolk currently has four transit sites. One of the Strategy's aims is to identify and develop a network of transit sites across Norfolk and Suffolk over the next two to five years to improve provision for Gypsies and Travellers and thereby reduce the number of unauthorised encampments.

Where unauthorised encampments are established, the relevant Protocol for the Management of Unauthorised Encampments is applied.

There are several publicly and privately managed sites in Norfolk and Suffolk. On these sites the residents are tenants, and pay for their pitch, council tax, electricity and water. Across the counties there are also privately owned pitches.

3. WHO ARE GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS?

3.1 Definition of Gypsies and Travellers

Gypsies and Travellers, including those of Irish heritage, are recognised ethnic groups under the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000, and, as such, are identified as having shared beliefs, language and culture. Case law established Gypsies as a recognised ethnic group in 1988 and Irish Travellers in England and Wales in 2000.

In January 2007, the Department of Communities and Local Government issued a new definition of Gypsies and Travellers for local authorities to take into account when carrying out their accommodation assessments, in accordance with duties imposed by section 225 of the Housing Act 2004.

Gypsies and Travellers are now defined as:

Persons of a nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, and all other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism and/or caravan dwelling.

For the purposes of the National Planning Policy Framework "Gypsies and Travellers" means:

Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling Showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.

1. For the purposes of the National Planning Policy Framework, "Travelling Showpeople" means:

Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family's or dependants' more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or

This is because different legislation applies to showpeople, who rarely camp illegally, and who are not an ethnic group.

3.2 Gypsy and Traveller Community Information

a) Groups with recognised ethnic status

The following are groups who are currently recognised as a distinct ethnic group in UK law.

English Gypsies/ Romanichals

The word 'Gypsy' is believed to have come from the word 'Egyptian', because people thought this is where Gypsies had originally come from. This was probably because of their dark complexion, colourful clothing and the fact that many of the groups arrived into Europe from the Middle East. However, it is more likely that Gypsies came from India, since the Romany language used by Roma Gypsies throughout Europe has linguistic links to Sanskrit, which is the root of many Indian languages. Within the English Gypsy community there is a very strong sense of culture, tradition and religion, along with strong family ties.

Travellers of Irish Heritage

Irish Travellers are a minority native Irish group set apart from the settled community by their nomadic lifestyle, culture and language. In the past they were known as 'Tinkers' because a large number of them were tinsmiths. Irish Travellers have their own language, known as Gammon or Shelta that is thought to date back possibly as far as the 13th century. It is thought that events in Irish history like the potato famine forced families to again take to a nomadic way of life.

European Roma

Many European Roma Gypsies share a similar history, culture and identity to those from Britain.

b) Gypsies and Travellers currently not recognised as ethnic groups

The following are groups who are currently not recognised as distinct ethnic groups in UK law. Some are arguably ethnic groups, and may receive legal recognition as such in due course. Others are groups who are categorised by occupation or lifestyle choice, without having a common ethnic background. In either case, they may share similar needs (particularly with regards to accommodation need) to those ethnically recognised groups.

Scottish Gypsies/ Travellers

Scottish Travellers are a traditionally nomadic minority community in Scotland who have a great deal in common with Irish Travellers and English Gypsies. They too have a distinct identity and a way of life, preserving age-old cultural beliefs, including their own language, called Cant.

Welsh Gypsies

Gypsies have been nomadic in Wales for many years, as shown by court records and Welsh literature. Welsh Gypsies were first recorded in 1579. It is thought many Welsh Gypsies came from Spain via France and landed in Cornwall, subsequently making their way to Wales.

Show people

Fairs have been held for hundreds of years, and traditionally bring together the elements of trade and festival. In the middle ages Royal Charters gave the fairs legal status, enabling them to develop their economic importance. People who work on fairs today are called showpeople. Much of the work is seasonal, and many showpeople own grounds to pull onto during the winter months. All owners of the fairs must belong to the Showmen's Guild. The rules of the Guild cover safety, environmental health and facilities for showpeople.

Circus People

Circus People also have seasoned patterns of travelling and tend to spend winter months on their own ground. Circuses travel all round Europe, and often have many nationalities in their troupe.

New Travellers

'New Travellers' started to take to the road around 30 years ago. Most New Travellers are from settled communities, although some children may have been born into New Traveller communities. There are different reasons why people choose this lifestyle. Some live this way because they feel alienated from modern society which they consider materialistic, others, as they see it as being more environmentally friendly, still others, because they are homeless or leaving care.

River Travellers or 'Bargees'

River Travellers traditionally lived and worked on barges on the canal systems throughout the UK. This is the smallest of the Travelling communities in the UK. There is also a small population of families that live on sea-going coastal boats that travel between the small harbours and ports of the south coast during the summer months. Many River Travellers live this lifestyle for similar reasons to New Travellers.

4. THE POPULATION OF GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS

4.1 National Population

Before 2011 there was no comprehensive source of information about the number of Gypsies and Travellers in England. Until then censuses did not include Gypsies and Travellers as a separate ethnic group. In the 2011 census Gypsies and Travellers were included as an ethnic group although the data has not yet been released. The Gypsy caravan count is the only recognised source of information about Gypsies and Travellers that gives any idea of the numbers and distribution of the Travelling communities. The count is based on two returns: the countywide count of caravans, and the provision of local authority Gypsy sites. The counts are held biannually, in January and July, and so only give a guide to the number of caravans in a particular area at a certain time. The count is done twice in order to give an idea of winter and summer trends in the locality. No reliable figures exist for the number of Gypsies and Travellers who live in “bricks & mortar” housing.

According to Communities and Local Government statistics, at the time of the July 2011 count, the total number of Gypsy and Traveller caravans in England was approximately 18,700. Of these, approximately 6,600 (35%) were on socially-rented sites; 8,100 (43%) were on privately-funded sites; 2,000 (11%) were in unauthorised developments on land owned by Gypsies or Travellers; and 2,000 (11%) were in unauthorised encampments on land not owned by Gypsies or Travellers. (Communities and Local Government ISBN: 978-1-4098-3226-3)

4.2 Local Population

In July 2011 the caravan count showed there were approximately 380 caravans in Suffolk and 477 caravans in Norfolk, the total for both counties therefore being 857. If we assume the accepted average of 2.9 persons per caravan we can estimate the total number of Gypsies and Travellers at approximately 2485 for the two counties combined. This shows a small increase since the last caravan count in 2011. This figure (which does not include those living in settled accommodation) is provided by Communities and Local government. More information can be gained from the document ISBN 978-1-4098-3226-3

5. RELEVANT NATIONAL LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

The following is a list of some of the relevant policies and laws:

- **The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994**
This Act withdrew the duty on local authorities to provide caravan sites for Gypsies and Travellers. This led to an increased number of unsuccessful retrospective planning applications from Gypsies and Travellers. A reassessment of this issue has led to further guidance and, whilst not reinstating the duty, there is now a requirement that local authorities include an assessment of the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers when reviewing housing needs, as described below.
- **National Policy Planning Framework (NPPF)**
As far as the delivery of Gypsy and Traveller sites is concerned, the new NPPF needs to be read with the new Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS), which was published at the same time as the NPPF. The PPTS supersedes Circular 01/06 'Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Sites' and Circular 04/07: 'Planning for Travelling Show People.'

Districts and boroughs will be responsible for making their own assessment of need for the purposes of planning.

The Government has given local planning authorities (districts and boroughs) 12 months from the publication of the PPTS to identify five years worth of specific deliverable sites. "Deliverable" means the site should be available now, should offer a suitable location for development, should be achievable with a realistic prospect that development will be delivered within 5 years, and should be viable.

This means that by March 2013, districts and boroughs need to publish an up-to-date list of 5 years worth of specific deliverable sites against locally set targets. In years 1 – 5 this list must be updated annually.

Section 25 of the PPTS, which comes into effect in April 2013 provides that failure by a local planning authority to demonstrate an up to date five year supply of specific deliverable sites will be a material planning consideration in any subsequent planning decision (note, if it is clear from January 2013 that a local planning authority is making no progress in identifying 5 years worth of specific deliverable sites, it is arguable that is also a material planning consideration).

For years 6 – 10 and, where possible, for years 11 – 15, local planning authorities must identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth.

To achieve this, a robust evidence base to establish accommodation needs to inform the preparation of local plans and make planning decisions will need to be undertaken.

Norfolk and Suffolk districts and boroughs are at different stages of completion with regards to providing robust evidence required to meet local demand.

- **Gypsy and Traveller HCA funding**

Up to £30 million has been made available in the eastern region for 2011 - 2014 to improve existing Traveller sites, or build new ones. The three-year grant aims to address the current shortfall in provision and tackle the issues around unauthorised encampments. Applications for funding are subject to independent assessment of value-for-money and sustainability. The impact of GTAAs in the region will result in many authorities applying for the grant to ensure they meet the demands recognised in their area. In the east and south east region during 2011 £3,589,850 was allocated.

- **The Human Rights Act 2000**

This Act incorporates the European Convention on Human Rights into English law. The relevant articles, protocols and clauses of the Act with regards to Gypsies and Travellers are as follows:

Article 6 – Everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal established by law.

Article 8 – Everyone has the right to respect for private and family life, his home and correspondence.

Article 11 – Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and to freedom of association with others.

Article 14 – The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this convention shall be secured without discrimination on any ground, such as sex, race, colour, language or religion.

When considering evicting Gypsies and Travellers from unauthorised sites, the Act requires authorities to regard whether the action is necessary and proportionate in the circumstances.

- **The Equalities Act 2010**

This Act replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act to make the law simpler and to remove inconsistencies. This makes the law easier for people to understand and comply with. The Act also strengthened protection for marginalised groups and individuals in some situations.

The Act covers nine protected characteristics, each of which must be considered by local authorities. Every person has one or more of the

protected characteristics, so the Act protects everyone against unfair treatment. The protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

The Equality Act sets out the different ways in which it is unlawful to treat someone, such as direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, victimisation and failing to make a reasonable adjustment for a disabled person.

The Act prohibits unfair treatment in the workplace, when providing goods, facilities and services, when exercising public functions, in the disposal and management of premises, in education and by associations (such as private clubs).

6. EXISTING PROVISION AND SERVICES FOR GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS

6.1 SPECIALIST SERVICE PROVIDERS

Settled communities can often take mainstream service provision for granted, whereas some members of the Gypsy and Traveller community may have difficulties in accessing services, particularly healthcare and education. There are service providers that can offer specialist services to the Gypsy and Traveller communities in Norfolk and Suffolk. These service providers aim to work in partnership at all times, often through the medium of Gypsy Traveller Support Groups.

Adult and Community Services (ACS), Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils

Adult Community Services have a duty to promote wellbeing amongst all of the population, including Gypsies and Travellers. The service commissions and provides a range of services relevant for Gypsies and Travellers. These include: welfare rights advice, disability services, social care, and access to libraries.

Children and Young People's Services (CYP)

CYP works to ensure equality in education for Gypsy and Traveller children and young people. For a variety of reasons it is not always possible for Gypsy and Traveller children to attend mainstream education, or to attend for a sustained period of time.

CYP is also responsible for ensuring the safeguarding of children from all communities, under the Children's Act 1989.

District and Borough Councils

District and borough councils have a dual role of enforcement and welfare. Where unauthorised encampments occur on district or borough land, the relevant local council will be responsible for making the ultimate decision about whether the encampment will be tolerated or evicted, as well as to ensure the welfare needs of the Gypsies and Travellers are met. They will also be responsible for any clearance of land that is necessary after the encampment moves on. District and borough councils also provide services to Gypsies and Travellers, as to the wider community, for example, housing and planning advice and community facilities.

Access to Faith Communities

Under human rights law, Gypsies and Travellers have the right to 'freedom of thought, conscience and religion' (Refer www.yourrights.org.uk Search for 'freedom of thought').

Many Gypsies and Travellers are Christians, and Priests and Ministers are usually held in considerable respect and trust. They will conduct baptisms,

first communions, weddings and funerals as well as give support in bereavement and trauma. Irish Travellers with Christian beliefs are predominantly Roman Catholic. From time to time huge Christian (evangelical) conventions will be held for the community, with families travelling large distances to attend.

On authorised sites and private sites, access to a faith community may have already been established. If help is required to make a connection, officers should be able to provide the relevant information.

On unauthorised sites officers attending could ask Gypsies and Travellers if they would like to make contact with the local priest or minister. Within UK law, the Church of England can minister to anyone (of any faith or none) residing in a parish, and so it can be advised that contact can be made initially with the local clergy. Help in establishing that initial connection can be offered through the Diocese.

For faiths other than Christian, Suffolk Inter Faith resource or SIFRE can be contacted. SIFRE aims to advance public knowledge and understanding of the teachings, beliefs, traditions and practices of the different religions and philosophies of communities in Britain and in particular, communities in East Anglia. It can help people to make links to their faith communities, which can be particularly difficult for transient groups including Gypsies and Travellers.

Equality and Diversity Teams

The Equalities working group activities range from ensuring that the Councils are informed, competent and confident about meeting their statutory public sector equalities duties, to working with partners across the county on issues related to inclusion, to support the needs of vulnerable people and communities as well as reducing inequalities.

The range of activities undertaken is broad and includes a number of statutory functions and areas of work requiring specialist knowledge. The extent of the equalities and inclusion work undertaken within the Gypsy and Traveller community and the key priorities that will be developed in 2012/13 will be outlined in the action plan. A number of strong partnerships with other agencies and services have been developed and facilitated to support these areas of work. In addition to this, the team acts as a knowledge portal, providing strategic advice, training and support to both service areas within the Council and partner agencies on a wider range of policy areas in relation to tackling inequalities and promoting inclusion.

Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies

The Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies aim to support all communities, especially individuals who have been victims of crime. They have specialist Diversity Units to support different communities, and ensure that the constabulary policies reflect their needs. It works to protect and support victims of racial harassment.

The police in both Norfolk and Suffolk work closely with local authorities, and support the approach of involving partnership discussion, and dialogue with Gypsy and Traveller groups, to achieve a negotiated solution to unauthorised encampments, where possible.

Norfolk and Suffolk Fire and Rescue

The Fire and Rescue Service will provide fire and safety advice, as well as other practical support concerning safety on encampments, to Gypsies and Travellers across both counties. This will further support the work undertaken to date in providing smoke detectors and home fire safety checks. Risk to Gypsies and Travellers was highlighted in a tragic incident where lives were lost in a fire a few years ago. Provision of fire safety DVDs have been provided by the Fire and Rescue Service and follow-up work to ensure smoke detectors are provided and continue to remain effective. We are also looking to train members of local Gypsy and Traveller communities as fire officers.

'Hard to Reach' groups are being targeted through our Integrated Risk Management Plan.

The NHS in Norfolk and Suffolk (including Great Yarmouth and Waveney)

The ultimate aim of the NHS in Norfolk and Suffolk (including Great Yarmouth and Waveney) is to improve the health of everyone. This is a 'universal offer' as all people have the right to access health services. Gypsies and Travellers, may not be accessing a range of health services including vaccination and immunisation programmes for children, screening programmes for women and chronic disease treatment. Members of these communities may also be unaware of any health promotion and preventative health initiatives. The NHS works with all district and borough councils, as well as the Gypsy and Traveller service, to identify and meet the health needs of Gypsies and Travellers in the wider community.

Supporting people

Supporting People provides a signposting and referral service to help improve basic needs such as access to suitable living conditions, access to information on benefits, healthcare including mental health and other services. We also ensure that those living on unauthorised encampments have access to basic amenities such as water or sanitary provision.

One Voice for Travellers

One Voice is a charity project with a mission to reduce violence and promote equality of opportunities and good relationships between Gypsies and Travellers and the settled community.

They work with and support members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities experiencing need, hardship or distress caused by or associated with violence. This then enables them to make informed choices and encourage

engagement and participation within Gypsy and Traveller communities and also with the wider community.

They also promote good relationships by raising the cultural competence of service providers.

Home Space Sustainable Accommodation

Home Space is a registered Community Interest Company (CIC), which is a not-for-profit business to provide affordable, sustainable accommodation options for Local Authority Gypsy and Traveller site owners and managers including, Housing Associations and Registered Social Landlords. Home Space work to ensure that:

- the rights and responsibilities of all communities are paramount;
- they have strong relationships with the local authority, local communities and the police;
- all communities are consulted when new sites are being identified and developed;
- the use of sustainable and carbon friendly materials is encouraged;
- anti social behaviour is dealt with promptly and effectively;
- site residents are supported in employment, education, health and training;
- partners are supported through consultation and training.

NPS Property Consultants Limited

“NPS Property Consultants Limited” provides Gypsy and Traveller Site Management Services throughout Norfolk.

NPS works with Gypsy and Traveller Site Managers who oversee the day-to-day running of those sites. NPS and Site Managers provide accommodation related support for residents on their managed sites. NPS also works closely with other key partner agencies to improve accommodation, access to services, training and education opportunities for Gypsies and Travellers.

6.2 GYPSY AND TRAVELLER STEERING GROUP

The aim of the Norfolk and Suffolk Gypsy and Traveller Steering Group is to proactively seek ways to address the recommendations made by national legislation and guidance. The group works in partnership to provide a corporate approach to improving community cohesion around Gypsy and Traveller issues by representing the interests of both the travelling and non-travelling communities. All of the organisations mentioned above have representatives on the steering group, which regularly reviews its membership. The involvement of Gypsies and Travellers on the steering group is vital to understand their needs.

6.3 PROTOCOL FOR MANAGING UNAUTHORISED ENCAMPMENTS

The counties, districts and boroughs along with other statutory agencies continue to implement the Protocol for Managing Unauthorised Encampments

While there must be a wide-ranging and strategic approach to service and site provision for Gypsy and Traveller groups, the Protocol is solely concerned with the management of unauthorised encampments.

The aims of the Protocol are to:

1. Address the need for an effective, multi-agency approach to the management of unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller encampments, whilst ensuring that the rights of Gypsies and Travellers are met.
2. To clarify and agree working arrangements around unauthorised encampments amongst the county, district and borough councils, the police and health sector.

The Protocol has proved to benefit both the settled and travelling communities, in providing clear guidelines that enable the settled community to use land for its intended purposes, whilst ensuring that the needs of the travelling community are met, and that they have proper access to services. It is envisaged that as partners explore the need for additional pitch provision across the counties, this may allow for community tensions to be managed in a more effective way.

During the life of this strategy both counties, will set up a cross boarder working group, to revise the current protocol. The working group will include membership from both district and borough councils, county councils, health and fire and rescue services to ensure a consistent approach across both counties.

7. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS

7.1 IDENTIFYING NEED

The Gypsy and Traveller Steering Group action plan identifies priority areas of need for Gypsies and Travellers. The future actions were identified through the Norfolk and Suffolk “Moving Forward Together” conference 2012, attended by Gypsies, Travellers, statutory and non-statutory partners. The action plan continues to incorporate the findings and recommendations from national research.

The priority areas are divided into three themes in the action plan:

- **Accommodation**
- **Community Cohesion**
- **Education, Health and Wellbeing**

The action plan aims to cover all aspects of priority need, and the aspirations of Gypsies and Travellers living in Norfolk and Suffolk.

7.2 DELIVERY AND MONITORING OF STRATEGY

The action plan will be delivered by a team of partners, and covers a wide range of targets as laid out in the action plan at the end of this document. The targets are specific and measurable, and will be subject to monitoring by the Norfolk and Suffolk Gypsy & Traveller Steering Group. The action plan is subject to review every six months. Representation, participation and input from Gypsy and Traveller communities will be strongly encouraged.

Gypsy and Traveller Countywide Action Plan 2012-2014:
Community cohesion

Objective; To promote cultural understanding throughout Norfolk & Suffolk and further enable Community Cohesion and Community Safety.

	Aim	Actions	By When	Lead Agency	Relationship to other strategies	Six monthly review	Date achieved
1	Challenge media misrepresentation	Organise positive media events Monitor local and national media coverage Constructively challenge unfair or inaccurate coverage Share positive stories and best practice	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	All All All All			
2	Promote Safety	Annual visits from Fire & Rescue Service to offer free fire safety advice/ fire alarms. Provide animal welfare/safety/guidance.	Annually	Fire and Rescue Trading Standards			

		<p>Run personal safety courses</p> <p>Domestic violence awareness</p>		<p>Police</p> <p>One Voice for Travellers</p>			
3	Restorative and Mediation Approaches / breaking down barriers	<p>Instil restorative approaches within the Protocol</p> <p>Seek to use restorative approaches wherever possible with young people</p> <p>Explore other mediative tools such as circles to use within communities</p> <p>Integration and cohesion events</p>		<p>Gypsy and Traveller Liaison service Parishes Police</p> <p>Traveller Education service</p> <p>Police</p> <p>Gypsy and Traveller liaison service County Restorative Team</p> <p>Police Fire GTLO</p>			

Gypsy and Traveller Norfolk and Suffolk Action Plan 2012 -2014:
Education, health and wellbeing

Objective: To improve access to education among the Gypsy & Traveller community and to focus on health & wellbeing issues

	Aim	Action	Time scale	Partners involved	Relationship to other strategies	Six monthly review	Date achieved
1	Establish a consistent approach to information sharing and distribution.	Any material created should be shared with the subgroup. All relevant partners are included in information about unauthorised encampments	April 2013	Gypsy and Traveller Liaison service to coordinate			
2	Ensure procedures are co-ordinated and not duplicated	Operational roles in each organisation should be defined and risk of duplication highlighted. Create mini teams in each geographical area.	Ongoing September 2012	City Reach Red Cross Health trainers Health visitors Traveller Education			
3	Improve academic attainment and	Support and challenge schools and settings	Ongoing	Traveller Education	Traveller education service plan		

	progress						
4	Improve access to mainstream services through identifying need on both authorised and unauthorised sites	Identify need through visiting sites, canvassing opinion and conducting research.	September 2013	Red Cross Healthwatch – Traveller Education	Red Cross basic health checks research Healthwatch LINK programme	LINK	
5	Continue providing training and development to Gypsy and Traveller communities to promote health and wellbeing Consult with communities to offer what they need	Training subjects: Citizenship PSHE Cultural awareness Life style Prevention Sale of Goods Act Stop and Search Organise 3 to 4 workshops per year, look to include unauthorised encampments	September 2013 Schedule by September 2012	Ormiston Health Trainers Red Cross One Voice Red rose chain project Red Cross “first aid” training		Red rose chain project Gypsy and traveller liaison service plan	
6	Raise cultural awareness in all areas	Develop and deliver cultural awareness training programmes	April 2013	Gypsy and traveller liaison service Traveller Education			

Gypsy and Traveller Countywide Action Plan 2012-2014:
Accommodation

Objective - Developing and delivering accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers in Norfolk and Suffolk

	Aim	<i>Action</i>	Time scale	Partners Involved	Relationship to other strategies	6 monthly review	Date achieved
1	To identify and deliver residential Gypsy and Traveller accommodation	<p>To provide up-to-date robust Accommodation Needs Assessments</p> <p>Identify suitable land in accordance with NPPF where need identified</p> <p>Identify County Councillor representatives for Norfolk/Suffolk on Accommodation subgroups</p> <p>To be aware of neighbourhood plans, liaising with town and parish councils at local level to start to identify need and land.</p> <p>Utilise Communities</p>	<p>April 2013</p> <p>March 2013</p> <p>December 2012</p> <p>March 2013</p>	<p>All District and Borough Councils</p> <p>All District and Borough Councils with the Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Service</p> <p>Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Service</p> <p>All Local Authorities</p> <p>All Local Authorities with the</p>	<p>National Planning Policy Framework</p> <p>Up-to-date Accommodation Needs Assessments</p>		

		and Local Government funding to all Local Authority and Registered Social Landlord sites	September 2014	support from the Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Service			
2	Identify locations and develop transit provision across both counties	<p>Create a sustainable and relevant network of transit sites across the counties, each one no larger than 8-10 pitches.</p> <p>Local authorities to work together to secure funding to deliver the provision</p> <p>Local authorities to work together to influence political members to promote the requirement of provision.</p> <p>Develop a joint protocol for managing unauthorised encampments that reflects the use of transit sites as a shared approach across both counties.</p>	<p>September 2014</p> <p>September 2014</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>September 2014</p>	<p>All local Authorities with the support from Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Service</p> <p>All local Authorities with support from the Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Service</p> <p>All local authorities</p> <p>All local authorities with the Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Service</p>	Up to date Accommodation Needs Assessments		

3	To work together to ensure that a consistent approach towards policy and procedure is reached	Over next 2 years, look at a consistent methodology of approach towards accommodation need, with the aim towards synchronising all qualitative and quantitative data required to deliver assessments across the two counties.	September 2014	Accommodation subgroups			
		Have a consistent approach with regards to recording and registering Gypsy & Traveller movements.	March 2013	Accommodation subgroups			
		To develop one accommodation register of need across the two counties for all socially rented sites.	June 2013	Accommodation subgroups			
		To aim to establish a consistent approach to what is a 'what is a local connection' giving a commonality of approach with regards to allocations policies.	June 2013	Accommodation Sub Groups			

		<p>Offer Gypsies & Travellers accommodation 'options' – raising their awareness of accommodation opportunities across the two counties.</p> <p>Both counties have Provision of accommodation floating support services, including Gypsy and Traveller representation</p>	<p>April 2013</p> <p>January 2013</p>	<p>Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Team and Local Authorities</p> <p>Supporting People Commissioning Body</p>			
4	<p>Increase knowledge and understanding of accommodation needs within the local authorities across both counties.</p>	<p>Deliver accommodation awareness raising events to:-</p> <p>Increase Gypsy & Traveller awareness with District and Borough planners.</p> <p>Increase Gypsy & Traveller awareness with Town and Parish councils</p>	<p>September 2014</p> <p>September 2014</p>	<p>All local Authorities with the Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Service</p> <p>All local Authorities with the Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Service</p>			

8. USEFUL CONTACTS

Organisation	Phone number
Babergh District Council	01473 822801
Mid Suffolk District Council	01449 720711
Forest Heath District Council	01638 719000
Ipswich Borough Council	01473 432000
St Edmundsbury Borough Council	01284 763233
Suffolk Coastal District Council	01394 383789
Suffolk County Council	01473 583000
Waveney District Council	01502 562111
Breckland District Council	01362 656870
Broadland District Council	01603 431133
Great Yarmouth Borough Council	01493 856100
Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council	01553 616200
North Norfolk District Council	01263 513811
Norwich City Council	01344 980 33 33
South Norfolk District Council	01508 533633
Norfolk County Council	0344 800 8020
NPS Property Consultants Limited	01603 222674