



# Accommodation Needs Assessment of Gypsies/Travellers in Grampian

**2008-2009**

**Report**



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by

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Background

- 1.1. In December 2007 Craigforth was commissioned to conduct a wide-ranging accommodation needs assessment of Gypsies/Travellers in Grampian. Recognising the potential for economies of scale and strategic oversight as well as the potential for maximising the sample population, the research was jointly commissioned by Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council and The Moray Council.
- 1.2. The research was commissioned specifically to assist the three local authorities in developing and updating their local housing strategies (LHS) to include accommodation for Gypsies/Travellers. It followed a brief very similar to that used in a previous accommodation assessment for Gypsies/Travellers in West Central Scotland, adapted from 'mainstream' housing needs assessments.
- 1.3. The three authorities have a history of working together on issues related to Gypsies/Travellers. The Gypsy Traveller Education and Information Project (GTEIP) works in all three authorities to provide educational support, housing support and advice and advocacy services. Each authority has a separate service level agreement with GTEIP and uses it as frontline service delivery in selected areas. GTEIP workers also perform advocacy roles for Gypsies/Travellers families in their respective areas.
- 1.4. The three authorities also work together through a Gypsy/Traveller Inter - Agency Group. This meets on a regular basis to discuss issues relating to accommodation, encampments, environmental health and discrimination and has representation from all three authorities. The Tenant Involvement in Islands Grampian and Highland Rural Areas (TIGHRA) group works in the Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire area to improve relations between the local authority and Gypsy/Traveller tenants.

### National Context

- 1.5. Since the inception of devolved government in Scotland, there has been considerable activity in policy and legislation focused on the Gypsies/Travellers population. The report of the Scottish Parliament's Equal Opportunities Committee (EOC, June 2001) inquiry into Gypsies/Travellers and Public Sector Policies<sup>1</sup> and the subsequent response from the then Scottish Executive initiated an ongoing reassessment of policy related to Gypsies/Travellers.
- 1.6. The EOC's final report covered almost all aspects of government policy from education to healthcare, as well as covering site accommodation and housing. Specifically the report recommended that local needs assessments for Gypsies/Travellers accommodation be a component of LHS.
- 1.7. The report also recommended that the term 'Gypsy Traveller' or 'Gypsy and Traveller' be capitalised and that they be officially recognised as a distinct

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<sup>1</sup> Inquiry into Gypsy Travellers and Public Sector Policies, Equal Opportunities Committee's 1<sup>st</sup> Report, The Scottish Parliament, 2001

ethnic and cultural minority and as a 'specific community of interest in the implementation of the Parliament's equality strategy'.

- 1.8. While 'Gypsies/Travellers' (the contracted term now in official use) have still to be confirmed as a racial group, Scottish Government guidance requires local authorities to treat them as a *de facto* ethnic group, including a requirement to incorporate Gypsies/Travellers into their ethnic monitoring systems. In October 2008 an Employment Tribunal Judge ruled that 'Scottish gipsy travellers' have ethnic origins in reference to the 1976 Race Relations acts. This also means that Gypsies/Travellers have to be considered under Equality Impact Assessment for new policies in relation to the Human Rights Act.
- 1.9. Published in October 2001, the Executive's response to the EOC<sup>2</sup> placed the regulation and inspection of the management and provision of Gypsies/Travellers sites within the remit of Communities Scotland (then Scottish Homes and now abolished). The executive agency was also charged with working with local authorities to assess accommodation needs for both sites and housing and to work with social landlords to develop innovative models of housing provision, in consultation with Gypsies/Travellers.
- 1.10. The 2001 Housing (Scotland) Act requires local authorities to prepare Local Housing Strategies for their area; the majority of these were first produced in 2004. Guidance on developing LHS makes specific reference to assessing the accommodation needs of Gypsies/Travellers. This responsibility has been re-emphasised by a request for authorities to report on progress in assessing and meeting the needs of Gypsies/ Travellers in their LHS annual updates.
- 1.11. In 2002, in line with its new responsibilities in relation to Gypsies/Travellers services and as part of its wider performance standards applied to social landlords, Communities Scotland set the following standard against which local authorities performance will be assessed:
 

*We plan and provide or arrange good quality, serviced stopping places for Gypsies/Travellers. We let pitches in a way that ensures fair and open access for all. We take Gypsies/Travellers views into account in delivering our services, and we are responsive to their needs.*
- 1.12. To test performance initially against this standard and to inform future regulation and inspection practice, the executive agency's Regulation and Inspection team conducted a thematic study involving eight local authorities which was published in 2003.

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<sup>2</sup> Response to the Equal Opportunities Committee Report 2001, Scottish Executive, 2001  
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- 1.13. Although it gave a positive assessment of Local authorities' efforts to improve strategic planning, site facilities and to negotiate fair electricity tariffs, it identified significant weaknesses in long-term planning for site improvements, financial planning, the cost of renting a pitch and a lack of robust information on what Gypsies/Travellers both needed and wanted. The report identified a number of 'areas for improvement' to be considered by all local authorities in Scotland. These included:
- providing more robust information and evidence on the needs, preferences and aspirations of Gypsies/Travellers;
  - better information on the affordability of rents;
  - information for long term planning for site improvements and finances; and
  - Providing better information for Gypsies/Travellers on finding and using pitches.
- 1.14. A follow up thematic study was undertaken in 2005/06 involving a further six local authorities. Communities Scotland found progress to have been intermittent and in some cases disappointing. The report recommended that local authorities should make improvements in the following specific areas:
- Include Gypsies/Travellers as a specific group in ethnic monitoring processes;
  - Review the approach to consultation with Gypsies/Travellers on established sites and elsewhere in the community;
  - Improve the handling and monitoring of satisfaction and complaints;
  - Review site rents and service charges on a regular basis to ensure they are affordable and reasonable;
  - Put in place and fund cyclical maintenance programmes to maintain and improve site amenities;
  - Ensure Gypsies/Travellers needs and aspirations are properly reflected in strategic planning documents – specifically in LHS; and
  - Assess training needs for site managers – and ensure that they attend courses.
- 1.15. Further studies contributed to a more robust understanding of the issues facing Gypsies/Travellers. In 2005 the Scottish Parliament's EOC published a report reviewing progress since its first report in 2001 discussed above. Although final recommendations have yet to be made in relation to accommodation issues it was concluded that progress has been 'inadequate' and 'disappointingly slow'. It was recognised that there remains a lack of accurate and up to date data on Gypsies/Travellers and their accommodation needs and that needs assessments should be undertaken across Scotland.

- 1.16. The reason firm recommendations were not made in the 2005 EOC report was that the Scottish Executive had set up a short life Strategic Group on Gypsies/Travellers to examine issues highlighted by its recent Race Equality Review. This group aimed to develop an action plan to improve services to Gypsies/Travellers and considered accommodation issues as part of its remit. This group completed its work in June 2006.

### **Current Situation**

- 1.17. In late 2007 and early 2008, the three local authorities were considering plans for halting sites in their areas to alleviate the growing incidence of unauthorised encampments.
- 1.18. Aberdeen City Council was consulting on proposals for four halting sites, two in the north of the City and two in the South. Towards the end of this research, the Policy and Strategy Committee at Aberdeen City Council approved Neighbourhood Services' recommendations to note the difficulty in identifying short-term halting sites, to stand down from the search to find halting sites and to prepare details for the upgrading of the Clinterty site to include halting site provision, including consultation with the users of Clinterty, the neighbouring community and Gypsies/Travellers on unauthorised encampments.
- 1.19. As of December 2008, Aberdeenshire Council was trying to identify land to be developed as a transit site. Moray Council is committed to identifying potential sites for provision, but have not done so as yet.
- 1.20. This research followed closely after another piece of research by a former Gypsies/Traveller liaison officer with Grampian Police. Part of a PhD in Law, the final thesis, entitled *Moving On – Again*, drew on the original Moving On study published in 2000<sup>3</sup>. The researcher spoke to a number of Gypsies/Travellers households in the Grampian area on issues relating to consultation, rights and advice. Although slightly different in focus the *Moving On - Again* report provided background useful to the accommodation needs assessment.
- 1.21. As the research was being planned in early 2008 the *Moving on - Again* study, and other consultations in the Grampian area had just taken place. In this context a number of initial field contacts argued that the Gypsy/Traveller population may be suffering from 'research fatigue'. This does not seem to have affected the research too adversely, although there were indications – such as the scoping focus groups, and from anecdotal evidence and asides from Gypsies/Travellers consulted in the study, that this might have affected Gypsies/Travellers willingness to participate. However, the sample is relatively large compared to other studies and there were no obvious indicators that fatigue had a significant effect on the achieved sample.

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<sup>3</sup> *Moving On: A Survey of Travellers' Views*, Scottish Executive Central Research Unit, 2000  
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## Aims and Objectives of the Research

- 1.22. The overall aim of this study was to identify and quantify Gypsies/Travellers' accommodation needs over the next 5 years in Grampian<sup>4</sup> as well as providing some insight into likely longer term requirements. The research brief asked to identify the need for accommodation and services in relation to:
- Private sites;
  - Socially rented residential sites;
  - Transit/short stay/halting sites;
  - Affordable bricks and mortar housing (short stay and permanent) and
  - Where in broad geographical terms any identified needs might best be met.
- 1.23. A detailed specification for the scope of the study was provided as well as a range of anticipated outcomes. These can be summarised as follows.
- To profile the population and household characteristics and existing accommodation circumstances of Gypsies/Travellers within the area;
  - To explore key motivations, intentions and preferences regarding travel and lifestyle patterns and how these impact on accommodation requirements;
  - To assess satisfaction with existing accommodation solutions and arrangements and whether they meet household needs (including any particular needs) and preferences;
  - To profile and estimate households with identifiable accommodation needs (both current and emerging) that will require to be addressed within the next 5 years; this should include what types of accommodation should be provided and broadly where;
  - To explore household intentions to move and whether this will free up spare accommodation capacity;
  - To identify any wider support requirements and service needs;
  - To consider current provision in terms of its fitness for purpose, quality and management;
  - To gather information on unauthorised sites;
  - To gauge levels of awareness among Gypsies/Travellers of their rights and their experiences in exercising these;

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<sup>4</sup> As defined by the boundaries of the 3 commissioning authorities.

- In addition the study was asked to consider a means of annually updating its findings that would be cost and time effective, as well as more generally improving consultation with the Gypsies/Travellers population.

1.24. At the first Steering Group meeting it was agreed that the research would not include Show Traveller or New (Age) traveller populations as these were not included in the official definition of the Gypsies/Travellers ethnic community and did not identify with that community.

### **Research Methodology**

1.25. The following is a summary of the research methodology used in the study. Further information can be found in the technical appendix.

1.26. The research method used for this study had 4 key strands:

Stage 1	Collaborative Research Planning and Design
Stage 2	Literature Review and Analysis of Existing Data Sources
Stage 3	Household Survey of Gypsies/Travellers
Stage 4	Assessment and Consultation on Research Findings and Emerging Priorities

1.27. The above strands were not sequential but overlapped to some extent especially in the research's earlier stages. The study started in February 2008 with a view to reporting by the end of November 2008. This meant that the study could sample from both the summer and winter populations. The study period was lengthened for a number of reasons, including the difficulties of locating an encampment population in Aberdeenshire, the potential for a larger number of interviews than were gained in the initial period and difficulties in arranging an options appraisal focus group with representatives from different departments of the three local authorities. The first draft of the final report was submitted in January 2009.

### ***Stage 1 - Collaborative Research Planning and Design***

1.28. The approach to planning and design of the research involved consultation with key stakeholder interests including local authority representatives, site managers, leading agencies with experience and knowledge of the Gypsies/Travellers population and Gypsies/Travellers themselves.

1.29. This stage of the research firstly involved a programme of *key telephone interviews* with individuals who represented a wide range of interests, responsibilities and perspectives including Grampian Police, GTEIP, Education Departments, Housing Services, Equal Opportunities Teams, Tenants' Liaison, Site Managers, Environmental Health and Elected Members. These interviews explored participants' knowledge and experience of the Gypsies/Travellers population and accommodation related issues. Interviewees were invited to provide an overview of Gypsy/Traveller-related issues (including priorities for change) and were asked for advice on how best to access the research population and ensure their participation.

1.30. Several other opportunities to gain an insight into Gypsy/Traveller issues at the local authority level arose during these early stages. As a public

consultation was ongoing over the creation of Halting Sites in the Aberdeen city area, a Craigforth researcher attended one of the events, as well as meetings of the inter-agency group involving representatives from the three Local authorities and other agencies including the Gypsy Traveller Education and Information Project. The Craigforth researchers also spoke with a planning consultant who was presently engaged in assisting a Gypsy/Traveller family set up a site in Aberdeenshire.

- 1.31. Thereafter 2 *focus groups* were held – one with agency and local authority representatives and one with Gypsies/Travellers. The agency focus group included some of those who had taken part in the earlier key interviews but in addition invited representatives from environmental health, housing management and community development within the local authorities. The focus group involved representatives from GTEIP and those who had worked most closely with Gypsies/Travellers. The Gypsies/Travellers focus group invited residents from the council site at Clinterty, though in the event none were able to attend.
- 1.32. The interviews and focus group had an important influence on the ultimate shape and direction of the fieldwork. This collaborative approach to research planning and design ensured that Gypsies/Travellers and those who worked with them could ‘buy into’ and invest in the research, as well as preparing the research team for the task of conducting what was to be an extensive programme of fieldwork.

### ***Stage 2 - Literature Review and Analysis of Existing Data Sources***

- 1.33. This stage involved reviewing the content of recent research publications and government reports on Gypsies/Travellers focusing on findings in relation to how best to research this population and on identifying accommodation needs and preferences. Key publications reviewed included:
  - Twice Yearly Counts of Gypsies/Travellers in Scotland by the former Scottish Executive and Scottish Government;
  - EOC reports and Scottish Executive responses;
  - Communities Scotland Thematic Studies (2002 and 2005/06);
  - Department of Communities and Local Government draft practice guidance on Gypsies/Travellers accommodation assessments; and

- A variety of recent relevant research studies, including *Moving On* (2000)<sup>5</sup>, *Moving on Again* (2007)<sup>6</sup>, *The Road Ahead*<sup>7</sup>, *The Health Status of Gypsies and Travellers in England* by the University of Sheffield<sup>8</sup> and *An Accommodation Needs Assessment of Gypsies/Travellers in West Central Scotland* (2007)<sup>9</sup>.
- 1.34. The Twice Yearly Counts provided an essential framework for understanding the Gypsies/Travellers population in the study area and this was of great assistance in the early planning of the research. They also provided a summary of current knowledge on site provision and recent encampment activity in the 3 local authority areas, which was then able to be tested through the research, and provided information. In addition to this, a series of data requests were issued to each of the participating local authorities and GTEIP.
- 1.35. Information collected about the official site in Clinterty and rents was generally the most comprehensive and reliable data available. This gave information on tenancies, applications and turnover.
- 1.36. Questions on race/ethnicity on the three local authorities' housing application forms are voluntary, and information on the number of Gypsies/Travellers households living in bricks and mortar housing in the three areas may not be robust. GTEIP consider that they are likely to underestimate the true number of Gypsies/Travellers households living in bricks and mortar housing. Two of the local authorities (Aberdeenshire and Moray) circulated regular encampment alerts that gave useful information on the nature of encampments in the area, and allowed us to build up a detailed picture of activity over the period.

### **Stage 3 - Household Survey of Gypsies/Travellers**

- 1.37. The fieldwork stage of this study involved a *large scale household survey* that aimed to speak to as many households as could be reached, based on a questionnaire covering a wide range of topics but focused largely on profiling households and identifying accommodation needs and preferences. In depth face to face interviews between the researchers and Gypsies/Travellers were used to complete the survey in the majority of cases, although a number of housed travellers were interviewed by telephone.
- 1.38. The household survey involved 3 different questionnaires with common core questions for:
- Gypsies/Travellers living on official council or private sites;
  - Gypsies/Travellers living on encampments;
  - Gypsies/Travellers living in bricks and mortar housing.

<sup>5</sup> Lomax et al, 2000, *Moving On : A Survey of Travellers' Views*, Scottish Executive Social Research Unit

<sup>6</sup> Taggart, I, 2007, *Moving On – Again?* University of Aberdeen (unpublished)

<sup>7</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government, Dec 2007, *The Road Ahead: Final Report of the Independent Task Group on Site Provision and Enforcement for Gypsies/Travellers*, London: CLG Publications

<sup>8</sup> Parry et al, 2004, *The Health Status of Gypsies & Travellers in England*, Sheffield: University of Sheffield

<sup>9</sup> 2007, *An Accommodation Needs Assessment of Gypsies/Travellers in West Central Scotland*, Various Local authorities

- 1.39. Questionnaire design was very much an iterative process from the early consultation stage through to finalisation. Drafts were prepared and circulated to all members of the Steering Group for comment and approval, and then to participants in the focus groups and key individuals knowledgeable in Gypsies/Travellers research.
- 1.40. The final questionnaire consisted of a largely open ended interview schedule to reflect the great variety of potential responses that were anticipated in the case of the majority of questions. However for certain core questions answers were categorised at the time of interview or later where this proved feasible.
- 1.41. The research proceeded on the basis that one person from each pitch/ household on official sites would be interviewed, and to achieve whatever was possible with encampments, private sites and housed Gypsies/ Travellers. In the event, a more open approach was necessary, including the use of group interviews due to constraints of time and space, especially if this allowed the research team to interview a young person or male respondent.
- 1.42. A provisional target of 65 interviews for the research was agreed with the Steering Group, and further provision made for up to 85. A total of 73 interviews were achieved. Since more than one member of the same household was interviewed in several cases, these 73 individuals represented 55 households. While the concept of a household can be difficult to define, it was generally taken that younger people who were still financially dependent on their parents or who did not have the capability to move around independently of them were part of their parents' household. Adults who were unable to move around independently but who had their own trailer/ chalet and own source of income, considered to be a household in their own right. A detailed breakdown by location and accommodation type is provided below.

**Table 1.1 Individuals Interviewed by Local Authority and Type of Site and Number of Households Represented by Individuals Interviewed**

<b>INDIVIDUALS</b>	<b>Council Sites</b>	<b>Encampments</b>	<b>Housed</b>	<b>Private</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Aberdeen City	14	12	1	3	30
Aberdeenshire	10	9	3	-	22
Moray	-	16	4	1	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>HOUSEHOLDS</b>	<b>Council Sites</b>	<b>Encampments</b>	<b>Housed</b>	<b>Private</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Aberdeen City	9	9	1	3	22
Aberdeenshire	10	4	3	-	17
Moray	-	11	4	1	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>55</b>

Source: Craigforth Household Survey 2008

- 1.43. According to the most accurate estimate of the total Gypsies/Travellers population in the Grampian area that the research team were able to make (see 2.14 below for more details), there are between 500 and 650 Gypsies/Travellers currently living in Grampian. Based on this estimate, the 73 adults (16 and over) interviewed represent between 11% and 15% of the total Grampian Gypsies/Travellers population. These individuals represent 55 households from a total estimated 151 Gypsies/Travellers households living in the Grampian area, meaning that the research contacted over a third (36%) of all Grampian Gypsies/Travellers households. If a count of all the family members of the individuals interviewed is undertaken, 210 people were reached in total, representing between 32% and 42% of the total estimated population.
- 1.44. Assuming that the age structure of the estimated population of Grampian Gypsies/Travellers is similar to the age structure of the sampled population, 44% of the Grampian Gypsies/Travellers population is under 16, between 220 and 234 children<sup>10</sup>. On the same assumption, 56% of the Grampian Gypsies/Travellers population is over 16, between 280 and 364 people. Thus the research interviewed almost a quarter of the total adult population of Gypsies/Travellers in Grampian.
- 1.45. According to the estimate made below (see Table 1.2), council site based households account for 23% of the total number of households, encampments for 37%, housed households for 23% and households based on private sites for 17%. In the sample, both private based and housed households are under-represented. In the case of housed households, this can often be attributed both to an unwillingness to self-identify as Gypsies/Travellers for fear of discrimination impacting on willingness to participate in research, and to the difficulties of the research team of identifying housed households. Gypsies/Travellers on private sites are often reluctant to reveal their whereabouts and are generally reluctant to involve themselves with outside parties for fear of harassment, discrimination or unwelcome interference in their affairs. Based on previous experience of conducting research with Gypsies/Travellers living on private sites the research team were aware of the difficulties with regard to gaining access to these populations and considered even this small number of households contacted to be of significant importance<sup>11</sup>. The support and assistance of GTEIP were essential in accessing this population.
- 1.46. The council site based and encampments based populations were over-represented in the survey sample. This was partly related to ease of identification and access to council sites and encampments, but was also a conscious decision on the part of the research team, since these two populations had valuable insights and experiences of site and encampment-based living and the encampment based population had the potential to be particularly disenfranchised from mainstream accommodation options for Gypsies/Travellers.

<sup>10</sup> By 'sampled population' we mean those Gypsies/Travellers identified directly through face to face interviews. The estimated population figure is based on this number, cross-checked with site records, the Twice Yearly Count and an estimate of the housed Gypsies/Travellers population.

<sup>11</sup> Accommodation Needs Assessment of Gypsies/Travellers in West Central Scotland, Craigforth 2007

**Table 1.2: Number of Households by Type – Grampian Gypsies/Travellers and Sample - April 2008**

	Estimated Number of Households in Grampian Area *	%	No of Households reached through Interview – Sample**	%
<b>Council</b>	35	23%	19	35%
<b>Encampments</b>	56	37%	24	44%
<b>Housed</b>	37	24%	8	15%
<b>Private</b>	25	16%	4	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>100%</b>

NB Estimates cross checked data from a variety of sources to ensure that double counting was avoided.

Source: \*Local authority estimates from survey research, Clinterty and Greenbanks site records plus Scottish Government *Twice Yearly Count*, Encampments from survey research, local authority records and Scottish Government *Twice Yearly Count*, Housed estimates form local authority and housing association records, plus GTEIP estimates, Private sites from survey research, Scottish Government *Twice Yearly Count*

\*\*Craigforth Household Survey 2008

- 1.47. On the official sites, 24 interviews were achieved from 36 tenancies (one of them could not be admitted to the survey due to age restrictions). This represents an excellent response rate of two thirds of council site tenants. There were two isolated incidents where interviewees objected to the idea of being paid to participate in research and preferred not to take part. Establishing a good rapport, building up trust and securing the co-operation of site managers, other service managers and members of the Gypsies/ Travellers community was very important and proved a critical success factor in achieving this rate of response.
- 1.48. However, it was sometimes difficult to secure co-operation within the study timescale and this was particularly true in relation to private sites<sup>12</sup>. Some interviews were achieved at a private site owned by Gypsies/Travellers in Aberdeen and a single interview at a site in Moray. A privately owned seasonal site offering pitches to Gypsies/Travellers in Aberdeenshire was approached without success, due to reluctance of the management to identify the Gypsies/Travellers who were living there.
- 1.49. All three local authorities experienced some encampment activity during the time of the research, and efforts were made to ensure research visits coincided with these wherever possible. Great care was taken to ensure that visits to such encampments were safe and local experts were consulted before each visit. The challenging geography of Aberdeenshire meant that catching some encampments proved difficult.

<sup>12</sup> While there were passing mentions by Gypsies/Travellers of private sites in other local authority areas these were not confirmed by the local authorities concerned.

- 1.50. It was recognised from the outset that Gypsies/Travellers settled in bricks and mortar housing were something of an unknown – not included in the Twice Yearly Count and not usually captured through ethnic monitoring used in social housing and homelessness application and allocation processes (although there is anecdotal evidence from GTEIP that this is beginning to change). Such individuals were often reluctant to identify themselves as Gypsies/Travellers. Nevertheless, the research team conducted 8 interviews with housed Gypsies/Travellers.
- 1.51. The majority of survey respondents were female, reflecting to some extent the matriarchal nature of Gypsies/Travellers society but perhaps more so, the tendency for females to take the lead role in public life/dealings with non Gypsies/Travellers<sup>13</sup>. Craigforth attempted to address this issue by varying the times at which site visits were made, between daytime and evening visits.
- 1.52. In the event, 63% of interviewees were female and 37% male. This compares with a 52% female, 48% split estimated among the national population. Although this is somewhat gender-imbalanced, it compares well against other recent studies of Gypsies/Travellers; 29% of those interviewed in the Tayside Accommodation Needs Assessment (2006) were male (from a small sample of 34) and Craigforth's previous *Accommodation Needs Assessment of Gypsies/Travellers in West Central Scotland* yielded a gender split of 25% male and 75% female.
- 1.53. The 73 completed interviews provided a wealth of data on Gypsies/ Travellers households currently living in Grampian. All details of completed questionnaires were data entered and tabulated into a data analysis programme to aid interpretation of research results and cross referencing.

#### **Stage 4 - Assessment and Consultation on Research Findings and Emerging Priorities**

- 1.54. During this final stage the results of the fieldwork were triangulated with data and information gathered in the earlier stages of the research to build an overall picture of existing provision and possible future requirements. A presentation of interim findings was made to the Steering Group.
- 1.55. This was followed by *focus groups and workshops* which discussed the key findings, issues arising and considered options for moving forward in addressing the emerging priorities.
- 1.56. There were also 2 further meetings held with Gypsies/Travellers organised on a geographical basis to discuss the research findings and options for addressing future accommodation needs. The first involved a visit to the Clinterty Tenant's Group to discuss future provision while the second involved a visit to an encampment in Aberdeenshire, whose occupants had expressed an interest in subsequent stages of the research. In the first of these events a small but vocal group of Gypsies/Travellers participated, while the second meeting was more of an informal follow-up interview to the previous visit.

<sup>13</sup> Gypsy Masculinities and the School-Home Interface: Exploring Contradictions and Tensions, Martin P. Levinson and Andrew C Sparkes, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, Vol. 24, No.5, November 2003.

- 1.57. The research team also presented selected findings on attitudes to halting sites to the Gypsy Traveller Inter-Agency Group, and checked facts and findings with a number of key individuals across the three local authorities.

### **Structure of this Report**

- 1.58. The main body of this report is structured as follows:

**Section 2** examines the Gypsies/Travellers population in Grampian, including cultural definitions, population/ household distribution and characteristics, emerging households etc. It also considers aspects of the population's behaviour (e.g. Travelling) and summarises current provision made available to this group.

**Section 3** considers the factors that influence accommodation choice and aspiration among Gypsies/Travellers in Grampian, including family, access to services and harassment/discrimination. It will look at their experience and awareness of services, as well as preferences for future services, participation and being kept informed.

**Section 4** deals with accommodation need and aspirations among Gypsies/Travellers in Grampian, including drivers of satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

**Sections 5 and 6** set out a range of overarching and local priorities for consideration and action arising from the research findings.

**Appendix 1** Local Area Profiles - a series of profiles for each local authority area covering existing provision, issues and future priorities for consideration

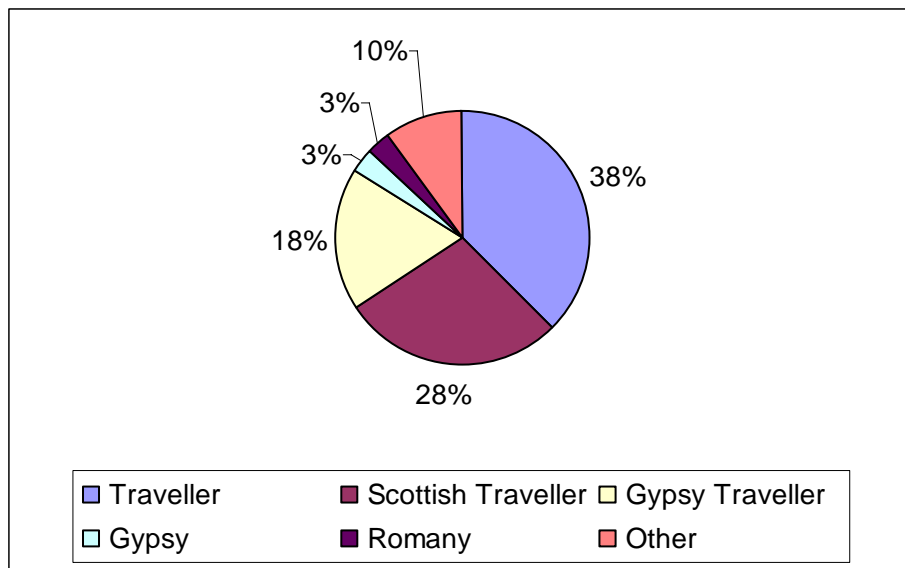
**Appendix 2** Household Survey Form - used for surveying those Gypsies/ Travellers living on official sites (abridged versions of this form were used to survey those living in unauthorised encampments and in housing).

**Appendix 3** Summary Survey Form for Updating Purposes – an abridged version of the full survey form that can potentially be used for updating accommodation needs and preferences data on an ongoing basis.

## 2. GYPSIES/TRAVELLERS IN GRAMPIAN

### Defining Gypsies/Travellers

- 2.1. Gypsies/Travellers are one of a number of Minority Ethnic Groups living in Scotland today. While they have yet to be legally recognized as a separate racial group, the presumption on the part of the Scottish Government and the former Scottish Executive has always been to formulate policy around the idea that they are a racial/ethnic group in their own right. The description of the group as Gypsies/Travellers is intended to reflect a shared culture which places a strong emphasis upon a nomadic lifestyle.
- 2.2. That said, it is important to recognize that the Gypsies/Travellers living within the Grampian area do not belong to one homogeneous group but rather identify themselves according to a number of ethnic and cultural criteria. 'Gypsies/Travellers' is a catch-all term which seeks to embrace various sub-groups within this population, reflecting diverse national and cultural origins including - Scottish Travellers, Irish Travellers, Roma/Romany, English or Welsh Travellers and those who identify as Gypsy Travellers/Scottish Gypsy Travellers. The latter term(s) can be interchangeable with Gypsies/Travellers, but can also relate more specifically to those who claim a mixed Romany/Scottish Traveller ancestry. The definition of the Gypsies/Travellers population excludes Occupational Travellers (Travelling Show People/Show Travellers or Circus People) and New/New Age Travellers.
- 2.3. In the past few years, large numbers of East European Roma have entered the country with asylum seeker or immigrant status. Although an aspect of the wider Roma/Romany Diaspora with which some Gypsies/Travellers identify, their current status with regard to the Gypsies/Traveller identity in Scotland is currently unclear. They are not included in current studies or counts of Gypsies/Travellers in Scotland.
- 2.4. Identities among the Gypsies/Travellers population can not only be fluid but they can also involve further distinctions among and between sub groups, especially between Scottish and Irish Travellers, and Scottish/Irish Travellers and Roma/Romany. Recognising that the term Gypsies/Travellers was not necessarily favoured (or recognised) by all the population; this research encouraged all interviewees to self-identify. A list of known definitions was supplied, but respondents were not limited to these choices.
- 2.5. The table below shows the breakdown of respondents by ethnic identity. There were 6 respondents who did not give an answer to this question, resulting in a sample of 67 responses. In this Grampian research area 'Travellers' are by far the biggest group representing over 1 in 3 (37%) of the Gypsies/Travellers population. The next biggest groups were Scottish Travellers, representing over 1 in 4 (28%), followed by Gypsy Traveller, representing just under 1 in 5 (18%). A few described themselves as Gypsy or Gypsy Traveller. Those descriptions falling under 'other' included three people who preferred to think of themselves as 'just human beings', two people who called themselves British Travellers, one Scottish Gypsy and one person who did not think of herself as a traveller because she had 'married into it'. The research team did not encounter anyone who described themselves as Irish or English Travellers.

**Figure 2.1 Self Definition of Ethnicity**

Source: Craigforth Household Survey 2008

**Table 2.1 Self-Definition of Ethnicity**

	Council	Encampment	Housed	Private	Total	%
Traveller	10	12	3	0	25	38
Scottish Traveller	7	11	1	0	19	28
Gypsy Traveller	4	3	3	2	12	18
Gypsy	0	2	0	0	2	3
Rom/Romany	2	0	0	0	2	3
Other	1	5	0	1	7	10
Total	24	33	7	3	67*	

Source: Craigforth Household Survey 2008

\*NB Six people declined to answer the question.

- 2.6. Only around 10% of respondents chose not to use the main known definitions. There was evidence of some 'fluidity' between the Gypsy Traveller category and categories such as Gypsy or Scottish Traveller.

### Counting Gypsies/Travellers

- 2.7. The Gypsies/Travellers population is well-known for being difficult to quantify. While the level of travelling activity partly accounts for this, many Gypsies/Travellers (especially those in bricks and mortar housing) are themselves resistant to being counted or identified as such and accordingly slip through the 'net' of many surveys and studies, including the Census.
- 2.8. The Twice Yearly Count of Gypsies/Travellers in Scotland<sup>14</sup> takes place in January and July of each year, and has done so since 1998. Funded by the Scottish Government, actual responsibility for counting Gypsies/Travellers households rests with the local authorities. It is the single most important source of available information on the Gypsies/Traveller population.

<sup>14</sup> Gypsies/Travellers in Scotland: The Twice Yearly Count, Scottish Executive Social Research, 1998-2006 (ongoing)

- 2.9. The Twice Yearly Count quantifies the number of occupied pitches on official sites and trailers on encampments. Generally a pitch or trailer is assumed to represent one household unless there is information to suggest otherwise (which can be the case on official sites where more detail tends to be known about household structures and relationships). Estimates of total population are based on actual population and household counts on official sites and the application of an average household size (based on data from official sites) to the number of pitches/trailers in private sites and encampments.
- 2.10. The average household size assumption has varied quite considerably since the count began and a small degree of change in the assumption of household size, e.g. from 3.0 persons per household to 3.5 persons can mean a relatively large change in estimated population levels. It has to be recognised that the Count is more an estimate of households based on a count of pitches/trailers than it is an estimate of the population. The count does not extend to Gypsies/Travellers who are living in housing and is therefore essentially a count of the site/encampment based population only.
- 2.11. The Twice Yearly Counts in England and Wales have been subject to some criticism about their accuracy and it is a commonly held view that they underestimate the level of the Gypsies/Travellers population<sup>15</sup>. Identified issues include inconsistency in data gathering and recording, underestimating unauthorised encampments etc. As a result, the count system there has recently been the subject of review<sup>16</sup>.
- 2.12. In terms of the Scottish count, it is acknowledged that a lack of detailed knowledge of private sites and the true extent of unauthorised encampment activity (e.g. Outside of the count dates<sup>17</sup>) leads to underestimation of the true numbers of Gypsies/Travellers in Scotland. While recent changes to the Twice Yearly count have led to encampment data being collected over 6 months, recording methods differ between local authorities and so cannot guarantee a complete picture. It is likely however, that 'in demand' areas tend to collect encampment information more rigorously. All three Grampian authorities, who could be individually classified as 'in demand', regularly collate encampment data.
- 2.13. This research attempts to go beyond the scope of the Count to estimate not only the site based population but also numbers living in ordinary housing, thus providing total population estimates for the Grampian area.

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<sup>15</sup> The UK Parliament: Select Committee on ODPM: Housing, Planning, Local Government and the Regions, Thirteenth Report, 2004

<sup>16</sup> Gypsies Travellers in West Midlands, Pat Niner, Centre for Urban and Regional Studies, 2005

<sup>17</sup> Gypsies/Travellers in Scotland: The Twice Yearly Count, Scottish Executive Social Research, July 2006 p.15

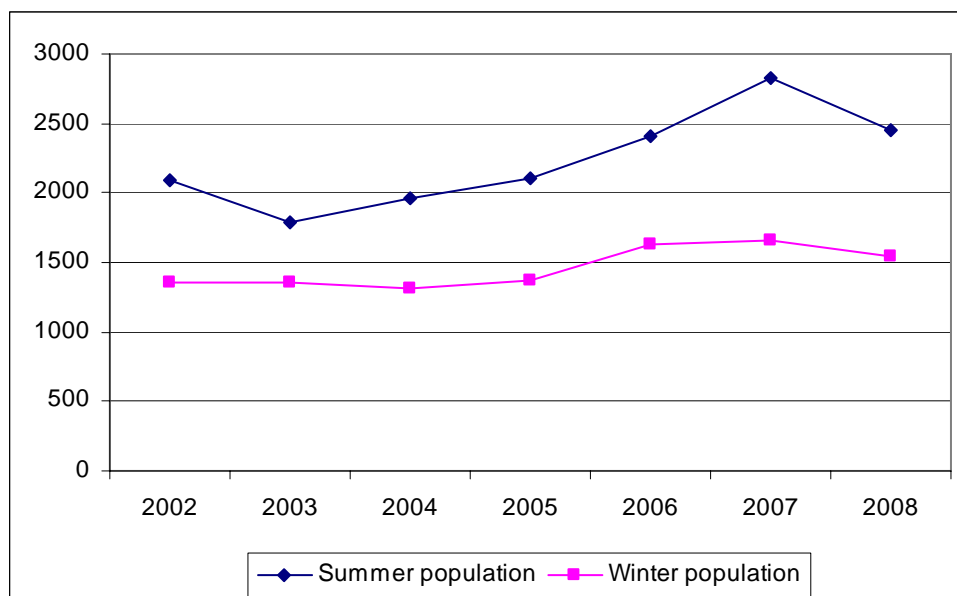
## The Gypsy/Traveller Population in Grampian

### *Estimating the Population of Gypsies/Travellers in Grampian*

- 2.14. The size of the Gypsy/Traveller population in Grampian was estimated by performing a two stage calculation. First, the total number of households living in the region was calculated from data available on the number of households living at each of the four different types of provision: council sites, encampments, private sites and bricks and mortar housing. Data on households living on council sites came from the *Twice Yearly Count*, site records and the survey; encampment data came from the *Twice Yearly Count* and the survey; data on private sites came from the *Twice Yearly Count* and from the survey. The *Twice Yearly Count* does not include Gypsies/Travellers living in bricks and mortar housing and therefore data on these households was sourced from the survey itself, GTEIP and RSL and local authority records. All the data available from sources other than the survey was cross checked with the survey data to ensure accuracy and to avoid double-counting.
- 2.15. The second stage of the calculation involved multiplying the total number of households by an average household size (3.5) calculated from the survey data, to give a population figure.
- 2.16. Based on these calculations, it is estimated that there are 500-650 Gypsies/Travellers living in Grampian although based on intelligence from those who work with Gypsies/Travellers on a regular basis this is likely to be conservative and potentially higher than this range.
- 2.17. As no further evidence could be supplied to confirm a higher range for the Gypsy/Traveller population, the following analysis of the Gypsy/Traveller population works on the basis of a range between 500-650 people. This represents around 0.1% of the study area's total population.
- 2.18. These population estimates should be treated with caution, given the difficulties in calculating Gypsies/Travellers populations. In particular, the following should be noted:
- The general lack of information available on housed Gypsies/Travellers;
  - The difficulties of identifying the actual total population on authorised and unauthorised sites due to issues such as periodic absence/presence, non disclosure of overcrowding;
  - The particular difficulties in local authority areas where there is no site provision or known Gypsies/Travellers networks;
  - The reluctance to self-identify causing difficulties with ethnic monitoring among local authority services; and
  - The risks associated with applying an average household size to a household estimate to produce a population estimate.

**Figures from the Twice Yearly Count**

- 2.19. The most reliable source of information on the overall numbers of Gypsies/Travellers is available from the Scottish Government's *Twice Yearly Count of Gypsies/Travellers in Scotland*.
- 2.20. The most recent national estimate of July 2008 reported that there were just over 2,455 Gypsies/Travellers living on sites in Scotland. This compared with a January 2008 population of 1,547.
- 2.21. The summer 2007 population is almost 60% larger than the winter one and there are almost 1,150 more Gypsies/Travellers on sites/encampments at that time of year. Data from the last five years indicates that the average winter population is 1,501 people and the average summer population of Gypsies/Travellers is 2,350, representing an increase from winter to summer of 57%.
- 2.22. This higher summer population is likely to be associated with an influx of families from other parts of Scotland and the UK, most notably Ireland and England, coming to seek work, to go on holiday and/or visit family (provenance of households is recorded on the Twice Yearly Count form, if known). However, during this research, the team did not encounter any Gypsies/Travellers from Ireland or England in the Grampian region and indeed all of the encampments surveyed were occupied by Scottish Gypsies/Travellers.
- 2.23. At national level both the summer and winter populations have fluctuated slightly year on year since 2002<sup>18</sup>. Despite several years of slowly increasing population levels between 2003 and 2007, the 2008 figures indicate a small decrease (see Figure 2.2 below).

**Figure 2.2 Population of Gypsies/Travellers in Scotland**

Source:  
Scottish  
Government,  
*Twice  
Yearly  
Counts  
2002-  
2008*

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<sup>18</sup> See Scottish Government, *The Twice Yearly Counts of Gypsies/Travellers*  
Accommodation Needs Assessment  
of Gypsies/Travellers in Grampian  
Report by Craigforth: May 2009

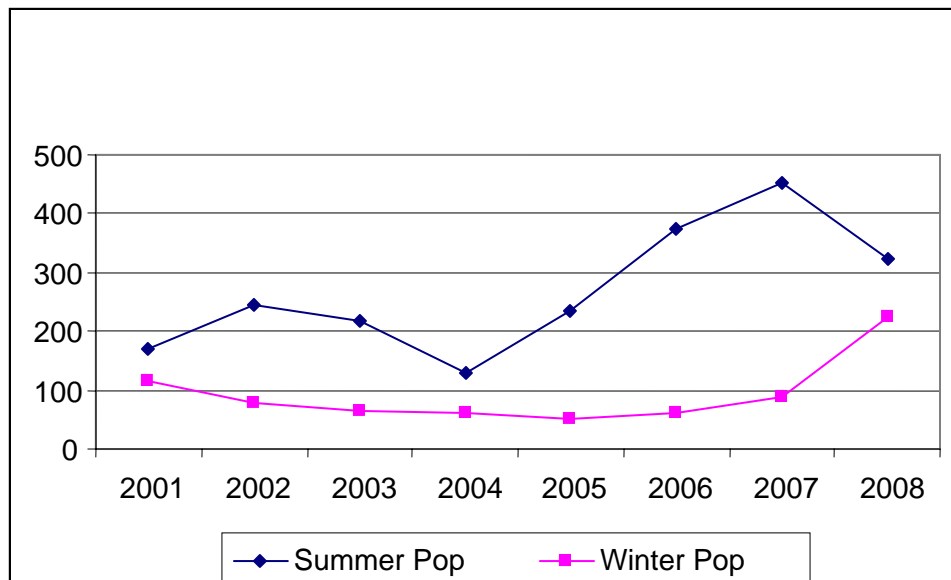
pian level<sup>19</sup> (see Figure 2.3 below), the count suggests that the summer population has increased since 2001, despite a dip in 2004 (which may have been associated with the closure of the Channonry site in Moray due to flooding; some Gypsies/Travellers from this site may have moved into housing -not recorded by the count- or may have left the Grampian area). Over the last five years, the summer population has averaged at around 300 people, although it has reached as many as 449 people.

- 2.25. The winter population on the other hand dipped slightly between 2001 and 2005, before increasing again in 2006. Over the last five years, the winter population in Grampian has averaged at almost 100 people.
- 2.26. The summer population in Grampian is higher by around 100 people than the winter one; although there has been a rise by as much as 300 people in 2007. The high population in summer 2007 is partly explained by the presence of a very large encampment of Irish Gypsies/Travellers in Aberdeen City. In fact, encampment based households accounted for 75% of the total number of households recorded in July 2007
- 2.27. The apparent dip in summer 2008 in fact represents a return to 2006 levels after figures were somewhat skewed by a particularly large number of Irish Travellers entering the region in summer 2007.
- 2.28. The increase in population in winter 2008 can be attributed to a combination of a higher than average household size being recorded, plus all three local authorities recording a higher than average number of households on encampments– in both Aberdeen City and Moray the number of households on encampments was around five times greater than average.

**Figure 2.3 Population of Gypsies/Travellers in Grampian**

Source:  
Scottish  
Government  
*Twice Yearly  
Counts  
2001-2008*

2.29. The summer population recorded by the Scottish



Government *Twice Yearly Count* in Grampian has accounted for an average 11% of the national Gypsies/Travellers population over the last five years but

<sup>19</sup> Population has been calculated by multiplying the number of households by the average household size on local authority sites appropriate to each year,

in 2007 was as high as 16%. The winter population accounted for on average 6% of the national Gypsies/Travellers population.

### ***Distribution of Gypsies/Travellers in Grampian***

- 2.30. Our estimate is that around 36% of the Gypsies/Travellers population is living in Aberdeen City, 33% are in Aberdeenshire and 31% are in the Moray area.

**Table 2.2 Estimated Population of Gypsies/Travellers in the Grampian Area by Local Authority and Type of Site**

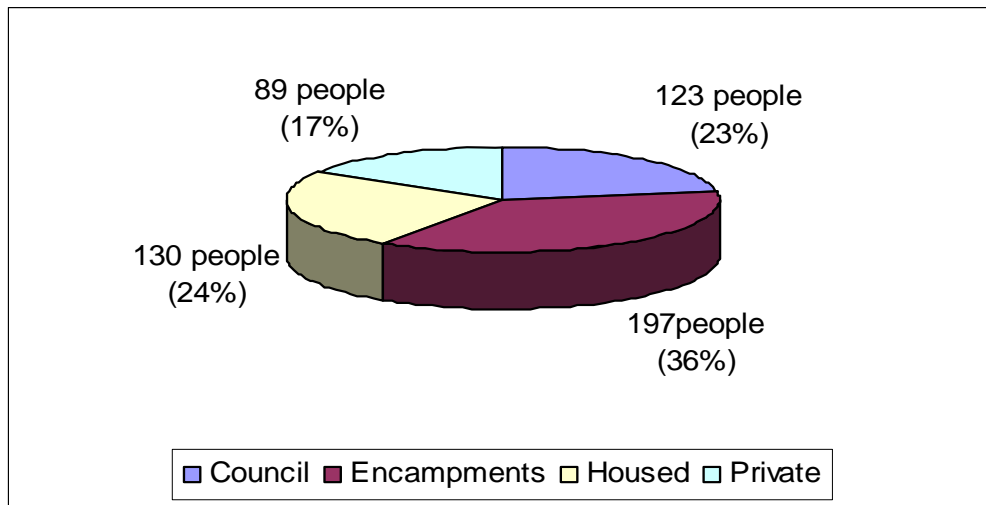
	Aberdeen City		Aberdeenshire		Moray		Total**	
	Households	People *	Households	People*	Households	People*	Households	People
Council Sites	15	53	20	70	-	-	35	123
Encampments	20	70	21	74	15	53	56	197
Housed	6	21	6	21	25	88	37	130
Private Sites	15	53	3	11	7	25	25	89
Total**	56	197	50	176	47	166	153	539

\*NB – People=Householdsx3.5.

\*\*Total columns – are the sum of the households and people columns

Source: Local authority site records, Scottish Government *Twice Yearly Counts*, GTEIP estimates, Craigforth Household Survey 2008

- 2.31. The evidence gained from the estimated population suggests that the Gypsies/Travellers population is fairly evenly distributed across the three local authorities. Slightly more households seem to be located in Aberdeen City, where 56 households or 37% of the Grampian Gypsies/Travellers population was to be found. The 6 families identified as housed are likely to be an underestimate, as there is anecdotal evidence from local authority Staff and GTEIP that a number of other families may be domiciled in either privately let or owned housing. Furthermore, as has already been stated, housing applicants are not obliged to answer the questions on ethnicity on application forms, so data on this is not robust.
- 2.32. Figure 2.4 shows the distribution of Gypsies/Travellers across certain types of provision. More than a third of Aberdeen City Gypsies/Travellers were living on an encampment, which raises the possibility that this population would be lower in the winter months.

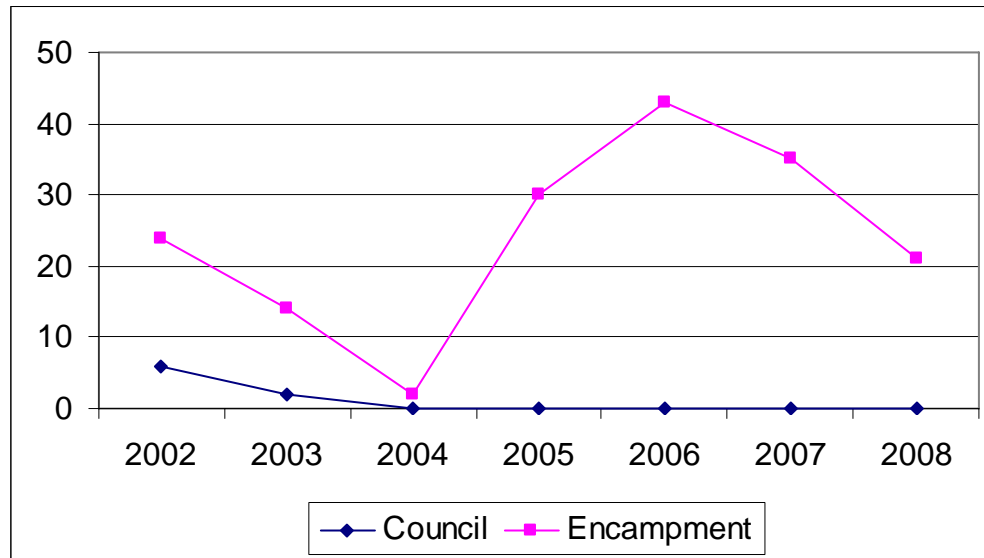
**Figure 2.4 Estimated Number of Gypsies/Travellers in Grampian by Site**

Sources:  
Local authority site records, Scottish Government  
*Twice Yearly*  
Coun

ts, GTEIP estimates, Craigforth Household Survey 2008

- 2.33. Within the region, there was some variation. In Aberdeenshire roughly similar proportions of the population were found on council sites (40%) and encampments (42%). Figures are likely to differ seasonally, firstly because the Local authority site there opens only in summer - all of the families residents on the Greenbanks site spend the winter outside of the local authority area, mostly in Fife and the north of England, Highland or West of Scotland. Secondly, the availability of traditional work, fruit and flower picking, other agricultural work and fish processing will vary according to the time of year.
- 2.34. In Moray, there is currently no local authority owned site for Gypsies/Travellers. As can be seen in Figure 2.5, the local authority saw a steep rise in the number of households on encampments since the closure of the local authority site at Channonry in 2004. This reached its peak in 2006, and has since reduced.

**Figure 2.5 No. of Households on Council Sites/Encampments in Moray, July 2002-July 2008**



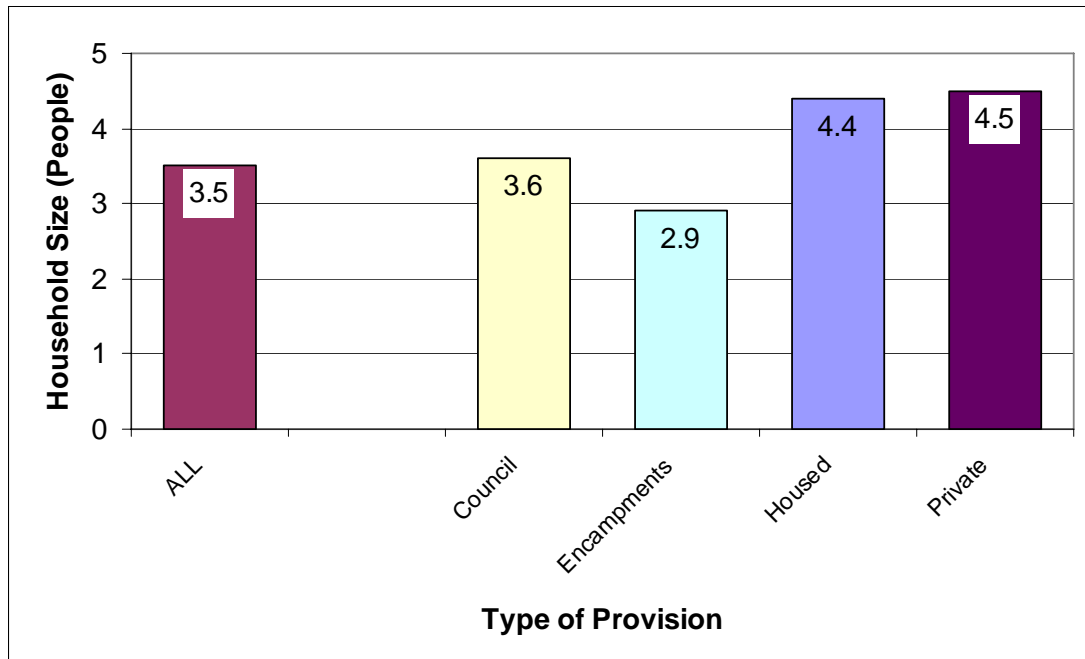
Source: Scottish Government, *Twice Yearly Count of Gypsy Travellers*, July 2002 onwards

- 2.35. There is a significantly larger population of housed travellers in Moray than in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire, though, as noted above, it is likely that the figures for housed travellers from both of these authorities are on the conservative side –additional information on housed Gypsies/Travellers in Moray was provided by GTEIP, who may have a more accurate picture of the situation due to the trust built up with housed Gypsies/Travellers. However, GTEIP did not give the research team information on the numbers of housed households in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.

## Estimating Households

### *Living Arrangements*

- 2.36. Household relationships and living arrangements among Gypsies/Travellers households can be quite complex and are not always fully disclosed. A particular feature of Gypsies/Travellers society is the tendency to live as part of family units that are multi generational and/or extended across a number of related families and this was confirmed by the findings of this research.
- 2.37. A breakdown of the overall household size is shown below. The smallest Gypsies/Travellers households in the sample were found on encampments, with an average of 2.9 people per household. Council site households were somewhat larger, with 3.6 people per household. The largest households were found in houses (4.4) or on private sites (4.5) – however, in both cases, the base number of households interviewed was low and may not be typical.

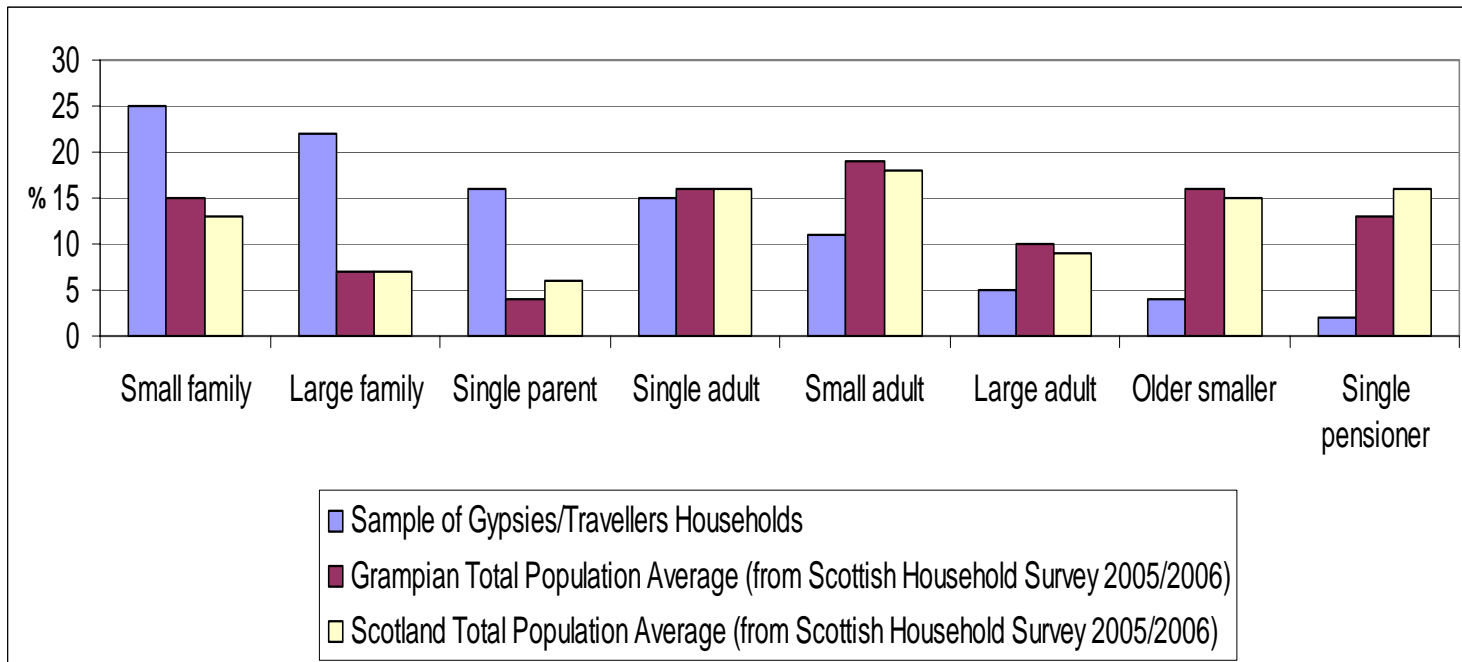
**Figure 2.6 Average Household Size by Type of Provision**

Source: Craigforth Household Survey 2008

- 2.38. On the two council sites visited for this research one large extended family tended to 'dominate' with siblings, nieces, nephews and cousins living beside each other. In Greenbanks it was clear that an entire extended family had moved into all of the available pitches. Evidence from other Gypsies/Travellers and the 'repeat pattern' of migration to Greenbanks for at least 20 years, suggests that the site is seen as 'theirs' by other Gypsies/Travellers and retains a certain exclusivity<sup>20</sup>. While Clinterty operated on a needs based system of allocations it was also evident that a single family occupied the majority of the pitches which were let at the time of the research.
- 2.39. While little evidence was available on households in the private sites in Aberdeen and Moray, evidence from the three interviews undertaken on these locations indicated that the site in Aberdeen was exclusively occupied by members of the same extended family, while interview evidence indicated the owner of the site in Moray knew of and had relationships with the tenant families occupying the site in Moray. A broadly similar pattern emerged on encampments, where the proximity of family was one of the most common reasons given for choosing to stop at a particular location.
- 2.40. Based on the population estimate made, the sample represents around 36% of all Gypsies/Travellers households in Grampian. A cautious interpretation of the data would indicate that Gypsies/Travellers households differ significantly from both the Grampian and the Scottish average, with a tendency towards younger, larger family groups (see Figure 2.7 below).

<sup>20</sup> Although Greenbanks and the privately owned site in Aberdeen were the only clear cut examples of family dominance of sites, it was mentioned by many respondents in the household survey and came through strongly in the West Central Scotland Accommodation Needs Assessment (Craigforth 2007).

**Figure 2.7 Household Type – Sample, Grampian and Scotland Population (see Table 2.3 below for an explanation of household types)**



Source: Craigforth Household Survey 2008, Scottish Household Survey 2005/2006

**Table 2.3 Definitions of Household Type from the 2005/2006 Scottish Household Survey<sup>21</sup>**

Single Adult	One adult of non-pensionable age (below 60 from women and 65 for men) and no children (under 16)
Single Parent	One adult of any age and one or more children
Single Pensioner	One adult of pensionable age and no children
Small Family	Two adults of any age and one or two children
Older smaller	One adult of non-pensionable age and one of pensionable age and no children, or two adults of pensionable age and no children
Large Adult	Three or more adults and no children
Small Adult	Two adults of non-pensionable age and no children
Large family	Two adults of any age and three or more children or three or more adults of any age and one or more children

<sup>21</sup> See Scottish Household Survey 2005/2006, p. 235. The Scottish Household Survey alternates between publishing data at local authority level and at Scotland-wide level. The most recent report to publish data at local authority level was the 2005/6 report. 2007 SHS Scotland-wide web tables disaggregate to Grampian level, but Moray is not included in this – it falls under Highlands and Islands.

- 2.41. Around 1 in 4 (24%) of Grampian Gypsies/Traveller households fell into the category of 'small family', compared with just 13% of Scottish households. Almost a quarter (24%) of Grampian Gypsies/Travellers households could be classed as a 'large family', compared to just 7% of Scottish households. Of the Grampian Gypsies/Travellers households, 16% were single parent households, compared to only 6% of Scottish households.
- 2.42. In contrast, the proportion of Grampian Gypsies/Travellers households comprising one or two older persons was consistently lower than the Scottish proportion. Single pensioner households account for 16% of the total number of Scottish households, but only 2% of the Gypsies/Travellers households. Similarly, 15% of Scottish households fall into the 'older smaller' category whereas just 4% of Gypsies/Travellers households were of this type.
- 2.43. These differences in household composition suggest that Gypsies/Travellers are likely to require a different balance and focus of service provision and support. It would also have to take account of the relationship of identifiable Gypsies/Traveller households to others. For example, an 'older smaller' household may well be attached to other households that, together, make up an extended family group which travels or lives together. This older smaller household will be likely to receive day to day support, and in many cases even financial assistance, from their children, nieces and nephews or cousins.

### ***Emerging Households***

- 2.44. In trying to identify future accommodation requirements it is important to consider likely future demand. This typically involves looking at overall population growth as well as 'indigenous population growth' caused by older children living in the family home (concealed or emerging households) seeking their own accommodation. Additionally, there will be household change caused by household dissolution and reformation. It is never straightforward to quantify this kind of population growth since future household formation rates are dependent on many different factors, not least the age at which members of population feel ready to leave the parental home, the formation of new relationships and the availability of accommodation.
- 2.45. The Scottish Government's *Twice Yearly Count* suggests that the number of Gypsies/Travellers households present in the Grampian region during the winter has undergone an average 5% increase since 2001, although it should be noted that the rate of change is highly variable. The winter rather than the summer figures are used as a base from which to calculate population growth since they are more likely to exclude the transit population which only spends the summer in the region; thus winter figures provide a more reliable dataset from which to calculate the minimum necessary year round provision.
- 2.46. There are difficulties in quantifying population growth among the Gypsies/Travellers communities. Some new households may migrate into the area, although it is not easy to determine whether this would be on a permanent or seasonal basis. Individuals currently domiciled in housing – and perhaps not even mentioned in 'official' statistics for Gypsies/Travellers – may at some point choose to return to a travelling lifestyle. For example, there was evidence of emerging households among populations living in bricks and mortar housing in Moray. As has been noted in other studies, the

fact that an emerging household has been accustomed to living in housing does not mean that that household is not likely to travel or seek site accommodation. Travelling was clearly an aspiration among many younger Gypsies/Travellers males in particular. As one housed respondent confirmed,

*The eldest is 15 and needs to move out. He'll get a caravan and as soon as he's passed his test, he'll go off travelling. He'll work and move from site to site.*

- 2.47. The research team set out to identify households with a son or daughter who was 16 or over, or would be in the next 5 years. They identified 28 young people in the 11-16+ age range who had not yet left home or sought to secure their own accommodation, whether it be a pitch on a site or bricks and mortar housing. This is equivalent to around 6 new households a year over a period of 5 years. A growth of six households represents an 11% increase on the current sample size. If the estimated number of households in Grampian were to grow at a similar rate, this suggests a potential for around 100 new households over the next five years.
- 2.48. However, it is unlikely that all potential emerging households will form, since some young people may choose to remain with their parents, others may form relationships with each other and still more may choose to leave the area. Of those households that do emerge, not all of them will need a residential pitch. Given these factors, it would seem reasonable to estimate that at most, only around half of potential emerging households will form.
- 2.49. A growth of up to 50 households over the next 5 years would represent a total increase of just fewer than 33% on the estimated number of Gypsies/Travellers households in Grampian; this would represent an annual household growth of slightly less than 7%, which is just slightly larger than the rate of growth recorded by the *Twice Yearly Count*. Table 2.4 shows the effects on the population of a **maximum** increase in Emerging households.

**Table 2.4 Estimated Emerging Households, 2008-2013**

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Number of Households	153	163	174	185	197	210
% Increase	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.6	-
Increase	10	11	11	12	13	-

Source: Craigforth Household Survey 2008

- 2.50. It would therefore seem appropriate to plan for a maximum increase of between 30 and 50 households in the Grampian area over the next five years.
- 2.51. As can be seen in Table 2.5, males accounted for double the number of emerging households and travelling was clearly an aspiration among many younger Gypsies/Travellers males in particular. As many respondents confirmed, choice of accommodation was often determined by who young Gypsies/Travellers married, with young wives often following the travel patterns of their husband's family, which suggests there is a higher likelihood that many of these newly forming households will either stay in Grampian, or continue to travel there.

**Table 2.5 Number of Young People in the Sample who may wish to form their own households within the next five years**

	Council	Encampments	Housed	Private	Total
Male	2	6	7	3	18
Female	4	3	0	2	9
Not known	1	0	0	0	1
	7	9	7	5	28

Source: Craigforth Household Survey 2008

- 2.52. It should be noted however, that many of these residents live in other parts of Scotland during the winter, and so would at most, be seeking seasonal accommodation. Identifying trends and patterns among such a small number of households, subject to very particular local conditions, is thus of limited value.
- 2.53. There are therefore, two broad types of accommodation need classed as transit or permanent, in the Grampian area. *Transit need* refers to households who will require seasonal or transit accommodation for part of the year, as part of a regular pattern of visits to the Grampian area, while *permanent accommodation need* relates to those requiring year round pitch provision (public or private), or bricks and mortar housing. The scale of such need in the Grampian area is discussed in Chapter 5.

## Other Characteristics

### Age and Gender

- 2.54. The sample was 63% female and 37% male. This is likely to be a significant over-representation of women<sup>22</sup> and is likely to be due to a number of factors, including the matriarchal nature of Gypsies/Travellers communities, the tendency for female Gypsies/Travellers to take the lead in dealings with people from outside of the community and the fact that visits to sites and encampments were made during hours in which the men went out to work. While the researchers did vary the times at which visits were made, this was insufficient to rectify the gender imbalance. However, this study compares favourably to other studies on Gypsies/Travellers in Scotland (see 1.58 and 1.59, above).
- 2.55. The majority of interviewees (62%) were under the age of 40. Just under a third (29%) were aged between 40 and 59 and 8% were between 60 and 89.
- 2.56. As well as providing information on the interviewees, the survey enabled the research team to build a picture of respondents' wider family groups. Through this information, 210 people were identified. The age breakdown of this wider sample, compared to the population of Grampian as a whole is shown in Figure 2.8
- 2.57. The Gypsies/Travellers population identified through this wider sample is much younger than the overall population of Grampian. For example, 81% of the Gypsies/Travellers population reached through the survey was under 40, compared to just 49% of both the total Grampian and total Scottish

<sup>22</sup> The Scottish Government's *Twice Yearly Count No. 14*, July 2008, indicated a gender split of 48% male and 52 % female on Local authority and RSL sites

population. 44% of the population reached through the survey was under 15, compared to 18% in the Grampian and Scottish population. Only 19% of the Gypsies/Travellers survey population was 40 or over, compared to 51% of the Grampian population and 50% of the Scottish population.

- 2.58. The data gathered for the Scottish Government's *Twice Yearly Count* is broadly similar to the information gathered through the survey, suggesting that the sample is robust<sup>23</sup>. The University of Sheffield's health report<sup>24</sup> concluded that Gypsies/Travellers in England have significantly lower life expectancies than the settled population due to a number of factors, including greater prevalence of smoking, poor access to healthcare, low literacy levels, exposure to the outdoors and poorer quality housing. Further details on the general health of the sample population are provided in Chapter 3 below.

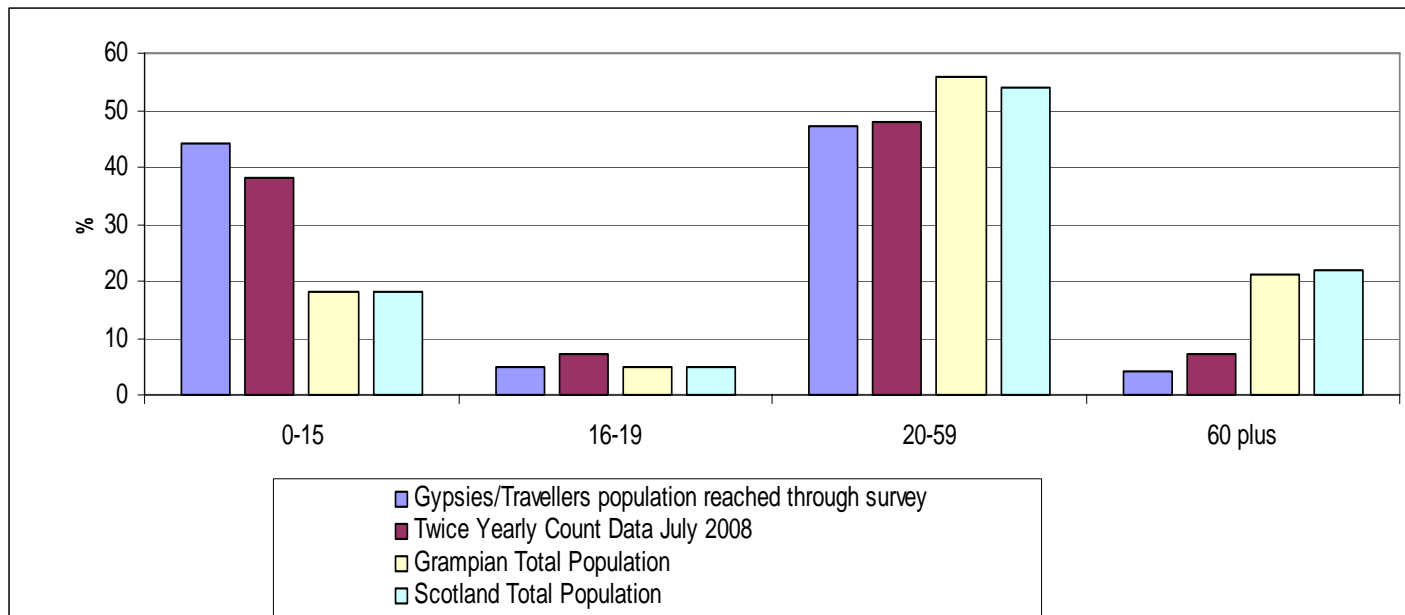
**Table 2.6 Population of Gypsies/Travellers Reached through the Survey by Age**

	Population Reached Through Survey		<i>Twice Yearly Count</i> Data (July 2008)*		Grampian Total Population **		Scotland Total Population ***	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
0-15	92	44%	372	38%	94,931	18%	916,951	18%
16-19	10	5%	69	7%	27,117	5%	263,956	5%
20-29	36	17%	472	48%	67,234	13%	670,802	13%
30-39	31	15%			72,342	14%	680,584	13%
40-49	17	8%			83,560	16%	790,920	15%
50-59	14	7%			73,839	14%	674,381	13%
60-69	7	3%	68	7%	55,604	10%	545,258	11%
70-79	0	-			38,589	7%	384,491	7%
80+	3	1%			22,074	4%	216,857	4%
Total	210		981		535,290		5,144,200	

Source: Craigforth Household Survey 2008 \***Scottish Government *Twice Yearly Count, 2008*** \*\* **GROS Mid Year Population Estimates 2007**, \*\*\***GROS Mid Year Population Estimates 2007**

<sup>23</sup> It should be noted that the *Twice Yearly Count* only records data on age for residents of Local authority/RSL sites.

<sup>24</sup> University of Sheffield, 2004, *The Health Status of Gypsies & Travellers in England*

**Figure 2.8 Population by Age**

Source: Craigforth Household Survey 2008, Scottish Government *Twice Yearly Count*, July 2008 (NB ages included are only of residents of Council/RSL sites and thus not directly comparable to the population reached through survey), GROS Mid Year Population Estimates 2007

### **Travelling Behaviour**

- 2.59. The survey asked all respondents about their travel patterns including questions on how long they usually spent on the road, why they chose to travel and which were their usual or preferred destinations. The range of travelling patterns was quite wide, ranging from those people who only spent a few weeks of the year on the road for a holiday, to those who moved from place to place permanently in search of work.
- 2.60. Gypsies/Travellers living on Council or private sites and in houses were asked if they still went travelling (given the transient nature of encampments, it was assumed that all Gypsies/Travellers on encampments still travelled). Over two thirds (68%) responded that they did.

**Table 2.7 Households Still Choosing to Travel**

	Council	Housed	Private	Total	%
Yes, my household still travels	13	3	3	19	68
No, my household no longer travels	5	3	1	9	32
	18	6	4	28	

Source: Craigforth Household Survey, 2008

- 2.61. The most commonly mentioned reason why households no longer travelled was ill-health or an inability to cope with some of the physical tasks related to travelling such as hooking up the caravan. Some older people had chosen to stop travelling after their spouse had died because the enjoyment of travelling had disappeared. One mother chose not to travel to avoid disrupting her children's schooling.

- 2.62. Respondents were asked about the places that they used to stop. Just under half of respondents mentioned using land which they believed to belong to the local authority as a stopping place. This was particularly common among encampment-based Gypsies/Travellers, partly due to the fact that this type of stopping place is free and that Local authority encampment policies are clearly outlined and normally permit a stay of at least two weeks.
- 2.63. Lay-bys were also mentioned as popular stopping places while travelling – since many lay-bys are owned by Local authorities, there is obviously some overlap between these two categories. It is perhaps somewhat surprising that many Gypsies/Travellers view lay-bys as a viable stopping place, since interviews indicated that staying on lay-bys had fairly negative connotations in terms of road safety for children, security fears connected to who else may be staying there and harassment issues. However, other interviewees were positive about the freedom from rules and regulations which lay-bys offered.
- 2.64. Where traditional stopping places are less available, Gypsies/Travellers are presented with three basic choices; to use authorised campsites either on a private or public basis, to camp on Local authority-owned or private property without authorisation or not to travel at all.

**Table 2.8 Stopping Places while Travelling (Households)**

	<b>Council</b>	<b>Encampments</b>	<b>Housed</b>	<b>Private</b>	<b>Total Households</b>
Any Local authority Land	6	15	0	0	21
Lay By	4	11	3	2	20
Car Park/Park and Ride	4	8	0	0	12
Other	4	5	0	0	9
Holiday/Commercial Sites	5	1	0	2	8
Private Sites	7	1	0	0	8
Farmland	2	3	1	0	6
<b>BASE</b>	<b>45</b>				

Source: Craigforth Household Survey 2008

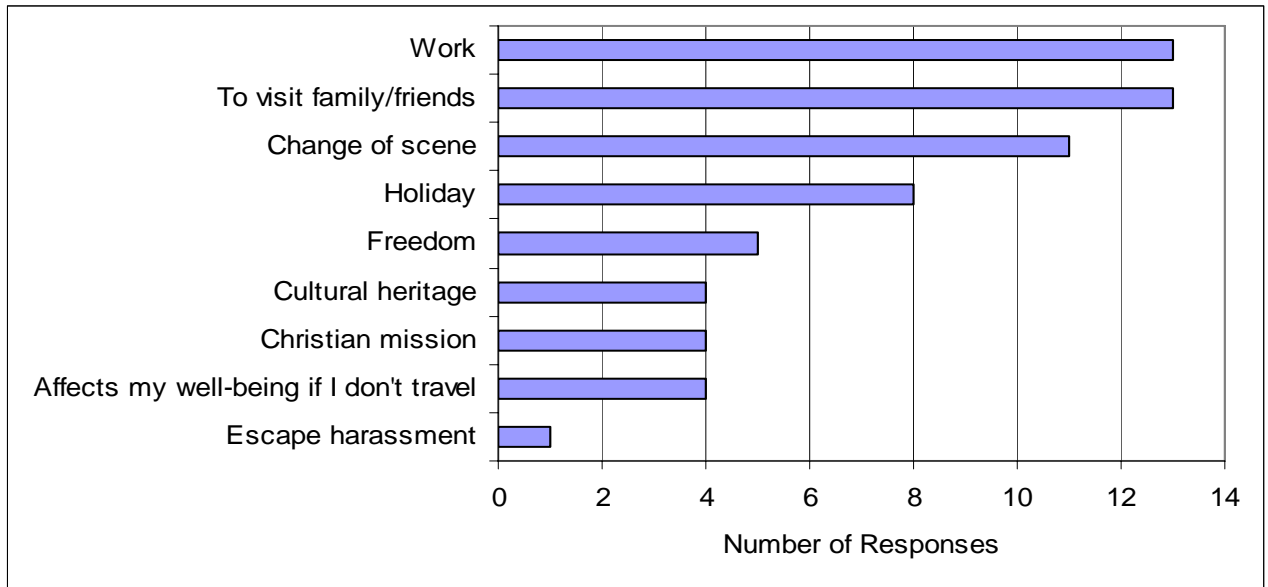
- 2.65. Reasons for travel were varied. Visiting family and friends and work purposes were the most commonly mentioned motivations for travelling around, followed by the desire for a change of scene and a holiday. A few households moved around to participate in Christian missions and conventions – Born Again Christianity often being an important feature in the lives of a sub- group of Gypsies/Travellers.

### ***Travel Patterns***

- 2.66. What emerged most strongly was that travel patterns – and reasons behind travel – have changed or are changing. Increasing levels of long-term, site-based tenancies among the resident population in Grampian have reduced the capacity for visitors to stay for long periods. Greenbanks is a seasonal site at full capacity (though once arrived, the families stay on the site for six months, so could be regarded as long stay), Moray has no official site and the Clinterty site is underused.

- 2.67. Among those who still travel (both for short and longer periods) some leave the region during the travelling season, visiting England, Wales and the far north of Scotland. Popular destinations include Inverness-shire, Highland and Fife, as can be seen from Figure 2.9.

**Figure 2.9 Reasons for Travel**



Source: Craigforth Household Survey 2008

- 2.68. Respondents were asked about the places that they usually went during the year, and their responses are shown in Table 2.9. It was difficult to establish with clarity the travel patterns of each and every family, since often respondents could not remember where they had visited and when.
- 2.69. However, what is evident is that there is an 'East Coast route', whereby respondents begin their journeys in the North East of England (Newcastle) or the South East of Scotland (Edinburgh), come up through Fife and Angus, via Grampian through to the Highlands. This route should be understood in terms of a broad eastern 'zone' of travel, with families taking very individual paths and trails across it; the vagueness of the available information makes it very difficult to piece this together.
- 2.70. While there was some evidence of respondents coming from the West of Scotland, it seems that even these Gypsies/Travellers chose to avoid moving up directly through Argyll to the Highlands and instead moved east before working their way up. This may be connected to the economic opportunities which present themselves through the local housed populations, such as landscaping and tarmacking, as well as the opportunities for agricultural work.

- 2.71. 'Classic' travel seasons for Gypsies/Travellers, as far as can be ascertained from the survey, were:
- March/April – Leave winter quarters to begin travelling season
  - May – June – Early travelling season
  - July – October – 'Peak' season for Gypsies/Travellers
  - November – February – Traditionally the period when Gypsies/Travellers would be in winter quarters.
- 2.72. However, evidence suggests that this 'model' for travelling was neither axiomatic among all Gypsies/Travellers in the first place, or necessarily the case among those surveyed. There was evidence that 'new' pressures had changed the travelling behaviour of some of those families surveyed. One family interviewed in Moray followed a travelling pattern that seemed to be defined more by lack of permanent accommodation than summer travelling. In this case 'hidden homelessness' seemed to combine with their background as Gypsies/Travellers; travelling from site to site all year round was taken as a preferable solution to entering temporary accommodation. Their route circled the Moray area, and their concerns over missing out on accommodation that might become available meant they did not leave the local authority area. A very similar pattern was detected in the West Central Scotland Accommodation Needs Assessment among families in West Dunbartonshire<sup>25</sup>.
- 2.73. Some detail emerged at an individual family level. There were three generations of a family that plied much the same route every year, setting out from their winter quarters in Aberdeen/Aberdeenshire in March. They moved to the Elgin area for a few weeks, before moving northwards, to the Nairn area, before moving up through Inverness-shire and into the north portion of Highland. While not specific about what they were doing, it was implied that casual labour and seasonal work defined a route largely repeated every year. They preferred to avoid lay-bys but would use them when and where necessary.
- 2.74. Greenbanks was occupied by a very large extended family that had for twenty years based their travelling on large-scale seasonal migration to the site. Although they gave few specifics, a number related that this site was then used as a base from which to travel elsewhere in the Grampian/Inverness-shire region, usually for work.

<sup>25</sup> Craigforth, *An Accommodation Needs Assessment of Gypsies/Travellers in the West of Scotland*, 2007

- 2.75. The location suited them as many had clients in the area, which was the main reason for them coming into the Aberdeenshire area. It appeared that when travelling out from this site it was often on very short runs, or involved just the male members of the family who were doing the work. These were the families most likely to use commercial/holiday sites, mentioning that they used sites where they were known to the owner and had an understanding with them. It was not clear if these were like that in Moray, which was a commercial site that also took in Gypsies/Travellers, or 'mainstream; commercial sites.
- 2.76. The Highlands and Fife were the most commonly mentioned destination for Grampian Gypsies/Travellers. This is likely to be due to their proximity but also to anecdotal evidence from Gypsies/Travellers indicating that the Highlands is an area which is more tolerant of Gypsies/Travellers culture and society. Almost a quarter of respondents mentioned travelling to England and in the Moray area. Table 2.9 shows the percentage of respondents who mentioned travelling to the destinations listed.

**Table 2.9 Popular Destinations while Travelling**

<b>Destination</b>	<b>%*</b>
Highland	41
Fife	35
England	24
Moray	22
West of Scotland	18
Aberdeen	16
Edinburgh	14
Aberdeenshire	10
Perthshire	8
Angus	8
Argyll	4
Clackmannanshire	2
Falkirk	2
Stirling	2

\*The percentages given here are of the respondents who gave information on where they travelled to. Respondents could give more than one answer so these figures do not total 100%.

Source: Craigforth Household Survey 2008

### ***Employment and Income***

- 2.77. There was some scepticism among agency representatives involved in the early stages of the research about whether any useful information on the subjects of employment and income could be gathered through the survey. Indeed it was felt by some that including questions on these topics would lead to mistrust and affect survey participation rates. On balance, and to be consistent with other accommodation needs assessments, it was decided that such questions should be included.

- 2.78. While the information below in Table 2.10 cannot be considered wholly reliable, it does provide some insight into the likely employment and income profile of at least some of this population. As with a previous study of Gypsies/Travellers in West Central Scotland, a large proportion of respondents (1 in 3) were female, and there was a corresponding reluctance to disclose information about their spouse's activities.

**Table 2.10 Employment Status**

	Council Sites		Encampments	Private Sites	Housed	Total	
	Clinterty	Green banks				No.	%
Looking after home/family	4	2	9	2	1	18	26%
Self-employed	1	1	13	2	-	17	25%
Unemployed	6	-	6	-	3	15	22%
Retired	1	4	3	-	1	9	13%
Sick/Disabled	2	-	2	-	2	6	9%
Employed full-time	-	-	-	-	1	1	1%
Employed part-time	-	-	1	-	-	1	1%
In training	-	-	1	-	-	1	1%
<b>Total</b>	14	7	35	4	8	68*	

\* Not all respondents answered the question Source: Craigforth Household Survey 2008

- 2.79. As a result of the greater proportion of women in the sample and the fact that the traditional female role in Gypsies/Travellers society consists in looking after the home and family, more than a quarter (26%) of respondents were engaged in this type of activity. Second to this, 25% of respondents said that they were self-employed. 22% of respondents said that they were unemployed. Almost 10% of the sample was sick or disabled and unable to work.
- 2.80. When the socio-economic circumstances of Gypsies/Travellers are compared to the economic profile of the Grampian area as a whole, significant differences emerge. For example, a significantly higher proportion of the Gypsies/Travellers population was unemployed. While almost a quarter (22%) of survey respondents said that they were unemployed, only 1.3% of the Grampian population as a whole was classified as unemployed. Additionally, the level of self-employment among respondents was 20%, almost double the Grampian average of 10.8%.

**Table 2.11 Employment in Grampian**

	Aberdeen City	Aberdeenshire	Moray	Grampian Average	Sample
A. Employed - ALL	79.1%	82.7%	80.5%	80.8%	27%
B. Employed full-time	74.7%	72.9%	75.8%	74.5%	95%
C. Employed part-time	25.3%	27.1%	24.2%	25.5%	5%
D. Self-employed	6.4%	13.5%	12.4%	10.8%	90%
E. Unemployed	1.2%	0.9%	1.9%	1.3%	22%
F. Retired	18%	19%	21%	19.3%	13%
Earnings					
Average Weekly Earnings	£457.30	£473.10	£377.30	£435.90	£145

Source Craigforth Household Survey 2008 and *Scottish Government Local Authority Economic Briefings*, September 2008

- 2.81. None of the residents of Greenbanks were willing to answer questions related to income directly. However, a number did discuss their occupation indirectly through answers to other questions.
- 2.82. The Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire areas were regarded as lucrative sources of income by families who chose to be located in the area, or visited it from further south. Whereas in other parts of Scotland there is some evidence to suggest Gypsies/Travellers no longer form as important a part of the seasonal economy; there was evidence that they continued to do so in this region<sup>26</sup>.
- 2.83. There was evidence that the site at Greenbanks was used primarily as a base for the resident families to work in the region. Interviewees from the site confirmed that they had regular clients in the area who they contacted on arrival in Aberdeenshire, and that they then carried out landscaping, property maintenance or buying and selling around the area.
- 2.84. It was also reported that increased competition from other populations, such as Eastern Europeans, had made the market in seasonal work much more competitive. The extended family at Greenbanks were reported to have left the area relatively early in 2008, reportedly due to a lack of available work. Many of these families reported having winter quarters around the Fife area.
- 2.85. The survey responses showed that some Gypsies/Travellers were still involved in traditional pursuits such as race meets, fairs and hawking: One family had been traditionally involved in pearl fishing along the river systems, but claimed that local authority regulations and restricted access made this lifestyle no longer possible<sup>27</sup>.

### Provision used by Gypsies/Travellers

- 2.86. When not in an unauthorised encampment Gypsies/Travellers access a range of 'official' provision, some of it specifically set aside for their use, while other facilities – such as housing or commercial caravan sites – is used as either a preferred or available option.

<sup>26</sup> This was one of the findings in the West Central Scotland Accommodation Needs Assessment for Gypsies/Travellers, 2007

<sup>27</sup> The freshwater pearl is an endangered species and protected under law, see SNH

- 2.87. Official sites for Gypsies/Travellers are those that have approved planning status and are either owned by local authorities or housing associations, or by private individuals. None of the official sites in Grampian are owned by a housing association. Some of the official sites are privately owned and specifically for Gypsies/Travellers, while others are commercial sites that allow Gypsies/Travellers to pull on to their facility.
- 2.88. More details on the provision found within each local authority can be found in the Local Area Profiles in the Appendices.

### **Local authority Owned Official Sites**

- 2.89. Local authority owned and run provision dates back to the 1970s when each local authority was provided with a pitch target by The Scottish Office and often quite large sites were built for Gypsies/Travellers to use. This infrastructure is now beginning to age and as a result many local authorities in Scotland are thinking about what kind of provision they should be making for the future.
- 2.90. Sites can be 'year round', such as Clinterty or 'seasonal', normally only opening in the summer months, such as Greenbanks in Aberdeenshire. Sites are divided up into pitches, which normally consist of a concrete slab on which to park the caravan and an attached chalet which often contains shower/bath facilities, a toilet and a kitchen area where white goods can be plumbed/plugged in.
- 2.91. Rent is normally charged by pitch on a weekly basis and is normally slightly less than an 'equivalent' social rented property. Some sites, including Greenbanks, charge for the number of caravans on a pitch rather than just the pitch itself. The number of caravans per pitch can vary considerably according to the size of the family and the age of the children; often families with teenage children house girls and boys separately.

### **Official Sites in Grampian**

- 2.92. At present, both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire have Local authority owned and operated sites. Moray used to have a site at Channonry but this was closed down due to flooding in summer 2004. The site was subsequently taken over and used as a base for illegal activities, for which some former occupants have now been imprisoned.
- 2.93. During the fieldwork stage of this research, access was achieved to both the then-occupied Council sites, and to two Gypsies/Travellers operated private sites, one in Aberdeen City and one in Moray.

### **Clinterty, Aberdeen City Council**

- 2.94. The Clinterty site at the border of Aberdeen City is a year round site and currently has 21 available pitches. Up until early 2008, the site had 30 pitches, but nine of these were demolished after a spate of vandalism of the chalets. The site records for the 2007-2008 financial year show that the highest number of pitches were let during the December-March period, indicating that Clinterty is being used by some families as a base on which to spend the winter (approx 14 pitches per month were let and occupied on

average over this period). Once April comes, families begin to move off the site to travel and thus fewer pitches were let during the summer months.

- 2.95. The rent for Clinterty during the 2007/2008 financial year was £57 per week or £228 per month, this compares with an average rent of £52 per week or £208 per month for a 2 apt property in Aberdeen City. Rents are currently under review by Aberdeen City Council. There is a site manager who doubles up as a Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer.
- 2.96. Fourteen residents of Clinterty were interviewed about the site. Half of the respondents had been staying on the site for six months or less. An equal number had been living at Clinterty for a year or more, including 5 residents who had been there for more than five years.
- 2.97. While the majority of households (5) on Clinterty lived in trailers/caravans, at the time of interview there were four households who lived in 'statics'. As their name suggests, these are not mobile, but normally require a lorry to carry them around. Households living in statics expressed a preference that these are plumbed in to the central electricity and water supplies. There are now only two statics on site and Aberdeen City Council has decided that no more statics will be allowed onto the site in future.
- 2.98. The average age of the caravans and statics on Clinterty was around nine years. This compares poorly with the average age of the caravans on Greenbanks, which was just two years.
- 2.99. Electricity is obtained through pre-paid cards from the site manager or the housing office in Aberdeen. The cost of electricity was found to be prohibitive for the residents of Clinterty; all but one household had found it difficult to pay for electricity. While there is very little firm data available on the amount each households currently spends on electricity relative to income, it is reasonable to assume – since cards cost £10 each and last less than a week, and some households confirmed a weekly income of £100 or less- that some of the households are currently spending more than 10% of their weekly income (including housing benefit) on fuel, thus falling into the current definition of fuel poverty.

*They charge too much rent a week and it's unfair, it's not value for money.*

- 2.100. The survey asked residents about the best and worst aspects of the Clinterty site. The positive aspects of the site which were mentioned were the facilities available in the chalets, the quiet and peaceful location and the size of the pitches. However, while residents valued the peace and quiet associated with the location, many felt that it was too far away from shops and services and noted that there was little public transport available for those who did not drive. The poor condition of the site and of the chalets, poor lighting and the lack of a play area for the children were noted by several respondents as negative aspects. Mess, vandalism and a lack of privacy due to the close proximity of the pitches to one another were also mentioned.

- 2.101. Since the visit made to Clinterty, there has been considerable investment made to the site, with plans for future investment. Changes made include a site clean-up, changes to lighting, plans to develop a play area, the installation of CCTV and a barrier, renovations to the community building and new kitchens in the chalets.
- 2.102. Residents were asked what they would most like to change about the site. Issues of safety and security were at the forefront of the requests, with residents indicating that they would feel safer with proper entrance gates and surrounding fences. Fences around pitches were also mentioned in connection with child safety and privacy. New lighting and CCTV cameras were felt to be necessary, although it was acknowledged by some residents that these might be destroyed, as had previously occurred. A play area for children and activities for young people were also mentioned as valuable improvements to the site. Many residents mentioned that significant improvements to the condition of the site were in the process of being made.
- 2.103. The site has had a poor reputation among members of the Gypsies/Travellers community due to previous poor management, vandalism, perception of cleanliness and the 'type of people' who use the site.
- 2.104. This was a fairly typical point of view. Given that occupancy levels at Clinterty are often low and yet there are quite large encampments nearby in the city itself (for example at Altens), the research team tried to gauge the perception of residents of encampments of the Clinterty site. Gypsies/Travellers living on encampments were asked whether they had ever lived on Clinterty and what their experiences there had been. There was some evidence, though not entirely conclusive, that perceived dominance of the site by one family played a role, and was mentioned by some of the eight individuals mentioned that they had lived there. Their opinions of the site were also overwhelmingly negative, citing bad facilities, expensive rent and power, lack of cleanliness, overcrowding and anti-social behaviour (linked, possibly to family disputes) as reasons why they had chosen not to return.
- Yes, I have stayed at Clinterty before, but it's too dirty and the facilities are bad. Also there are too many arguments...*
- 2.105. Furthermore, it was clear that even those respondents who had not stayed there had poor opinions of the site, with one individual describing it as 'like the Third World.'
- 2.106. Opinions gathered during the research from Gypsies/Travellers, GTEIP liaisons and local authority officers suggest that the Clinterty site is currently not fulfilling its purpose. Aberdeen City Council has applied for funding under the Scottish Government's Site Development Fund to make improvements to the site. While these improvements are no doubt welcome and necessary, it remains to be seen whether they will persuade members of the encampment based community to move there due to the long years of poor reputation that the site has held.
- 2.107. One of the key problems with the site may be its large size, which makes many Gypsies/Travellers uncomfortable since they do not know the other occupants well.

Greenbanks, Aberdeenshire

- 2.108. Greenbanks is the only Local authority owned and managed site in Aberdeenshire. It is a seasonal site and is open between April and October. As the site is right next to the sea wall, it is closed in winter due to its vulnerability to bad weather. The site has 20 pitches and is almost always fully occupied in the summer by a large extended family, who re-applies for the tenancy at the end of every summer.
- 2.109. The current rent at Greenbanks is £44 a week, plus half the weekly rent for an additional caravan, which means that a family on a Greenbanks pitch with two caravans could potentially pay as much as £25.92 more than a family in a 3 room apt (2 bedroom, 1 living room, averaging at £40.08 per week or £160.32 per month). There is a site warden who works for two days each week.
- 2.110. The socio-economic profile of the tenants of Greenbanks differs significantly from the tenants at Clinterty. None of the residents were willing to speak about their earnings. However, the average age of the caravans on Greenbanks was just 2 years, compared to an average of 9 years on the Clinterty site.
- 2.111. Tenants were generally very satisfied with the site and the location. They felt that the site more or less ran itself, although two residents mentioned that having a full-time warden would be helpful. The main complaints centred on the rent surcharge for additional caravans and the conditions of the toilet facilities. Some residents mentioned that a fence needed to be built to prevent small children from getting on to the sea wall, which could prove dangerous.
- 2.112. While current residents have a very high opinion of the Greenbanks site, because the same family use it year on year the site, the pattern of repeat tenancies and evidence from the research suggests that it may be limiting provision in Aberdeenshire. Although Aberdeenshire typically has lower encampment numbers than the other two authorities, there are on average approximately nine or ten households living on encampments all year round, and a waiting list (7 households reported by site manager in 2008) suggesting that there may be room for additional provision in the area.

Privately owned and Commercial Sites

- 2.113. From the Twice Yearly Count and local knowledge, the research team were able to identify a privately owned site for exclusive use by Gypsies/Travellers and five commercial caravan sites used by Gypsies/Travellers. The research team gained access to a privately owned site owned by Gypsies/Travellers and for the exclusive use of Gypsies/Travellers, and a commercial site, also owned by a family of Gypsies/Travellers which operated as a mixed holiday/Gypsies/Travellers site.

- 2.114. The Gypsies/Travellers resident on the site exclusively for Gypsies/ Travellers tended to live in large purpose built chalets rather than in trailers or caravans. Plots were bought by a resident family from the site's owner and then developed almost as a 'mini-site' within the larger development. Although these families appeared to be wealthier than Gypsies/Travellers encountered in other contexts, there were differing socio-economic profiles among the residents. There was evidence that wealthier members of the extended family sub-let a part of the plot they owned to the less wealthy members, or even shared their chalet with other members of the family while they were away travelling.
- 2.115. Evidence from the sample suggests that discrimination by commercial site owners may be a common occurrence and is often open, for example, there were reports of signs outside commercial sites specifically prohibiting Gypsies/Travellers from entering.
- 2.116. This is not to be confused with legal prohibitions on commercial vehicles entering commercial holiday sites. However, evidence from the sample suggests that the practice of banning commercial vehicles from privately owned commercial sites effectively act as identifiers of Gypsies/Travellers families. In these cases accusations of prejudice are a matter of perception, may be mistaken and are therefore difficult to prove. What is important is that the perception that commercial sites discriminate is widespread and is an added deterrent to accessing this form of provision, even where it might be open to Gypsies/Travellers.
- 2.117. Of the five commercial sites identified as catering for Gypsies/Travellers in Grampian, there was evidence that two currently had Gypsy/Traveller residents. One site in Stonehaven was being used by a small number of Gypsies/Travellers at the time of the study. A visit was made to a privately owned site that served a dual function as a Gypsy/Traveller site and commercial holiday site, with the two client groups being kept on separate parts of the site. The owners of the site used the facility to accommodate themselves and their own family, and seem to have opted to develop the facility as a combined source of income and solution to their accommodation needs.

### ***Housed Gypsies/Travellers***

- 2.118. The majority of housed Gypsies/Travellers in Grampian are thought to be living in local authority housing with concentrations in Keith, Elgin and Aberdeen, with Aberdeenshire families fairly well spread across the local authority area (interviews were achieved in Fettercairn, Stonehaven and Elrick and evidence shows that there are other housed households at these locations as well as in Oldmeldrum, near Inverurie). There are Gypsies/Travellers who are known to be in owner-occupied housing, mostly in Aberdeen. While those living in housing are reluctant to self identify as Gypsies/Travellers this is even more likely to be the case in the owner occupied sector. The local authorities within the study area have intermittently tried to record allocations to Gypsies/Travellers; however, there is anecdotal evidence that many Gypsies/Travellers had declined to self-identify. Additional information from GTEIP has clarified the situation in some

parts of the study area. In short the scale of the population living in owner occupied housing is unknown and could be much larger.

- 2.119. Through local authority records, information from RSLs and information from GTEIP, around 35 Gypsies/Travellers households were identified as living in houses across the region. However all of those who worked with Gypsies/Travellers consider this to underestimate significantly, the number of Gypsies/Travellers who are housed or who have access to a house. The research team made contact with eight housed households, 7 of which were in social rented housing and one of whom was an owner/occupier.
- 2.120. Use of bricks and mortar housing varied, from being an only home to a short term solution for accommodation during the 'off season' in the winter. There was evidence of short term private lets being used as a temporary solution for Gypsies/Travellers in need of winter accommodation. As one respondent whose family had taken a private let in Forfar explained, they 'just all decided to leave' once it had served its purpose.
- 2.121. Housing does not preclude or rule out a travelling lifestyle, or the use of unauthorised encampments. It should be noted that among the survey respondents there were ten households across council sites, encampments and private sites that had access to a house, which was often used as a base during the winter months. Half of these houses were in the Grampian area, though it is not certain whether these were additional to the 35 households identified in the region as a whole, or overlapping<sup>28</sup>. The other half were found elsewhere in Scotland, especially in Dundee, Angus and Fife.
- 2.122. Table 2.12 shows these households by the tenure they hold and the context in which they were originally interviewed. Of those interviewed on unauthorised encampments 8 had access to a house, mostly social rented (6) although there were two cases of a private let and living rent free in a housed owned by a family member. The majority of households (7) were in social rented housing and there was one that was in owner-occupied accommodation.

**Table 2.12 Households who have Access to a House**

<b>Tenure</b>	<b>Council</b>	<b>Encampments</b>	<b>Private</b>	<b>Total</b>
Social Rented	1	6	-	7
Privately Rented	-	1		1
Owner Occupied	-	-	1	1
Rent Free	-	1	-	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>

Source: Craigforth Household Survey 2008

<sup>28</sup> Evidence from field contacts and site visits suggest that at least some of these Gypsies/Travellers were included in the estimated figures on Gypsies/Travellers in bricks and mortar housing.

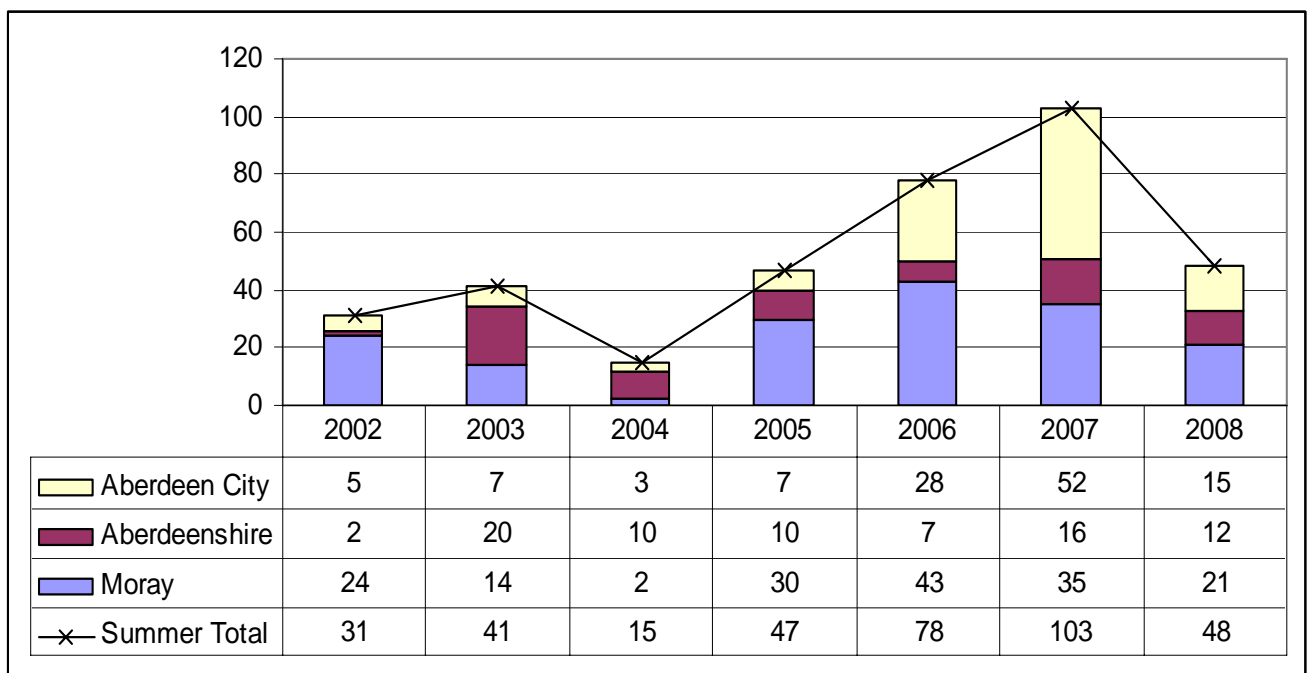
2.123. In terms of household characteristics, housed Gypsies/Travellers differed somewhat from those living on official sites or encampments. The average household size is larger than those on council sites (4.4 compared to 4.6), about the same as those on private sites (4.5) and much higher than encampments (2.9). The small sample of 8 households was single person households (half the sample) and large families (2 households). Of the additional 10 households who had bricks and mortar housing but were living on an encampment, it was not possible to construct an accurate picture of how these households are spread across provision once they return to their winter homes<sup>29</sup>.

### Encampments

2.124. Encampments occur when Gypsies/Travellers families stop on land with or without the permission of the owner. They are sometimes called illegal encampments although the preferred term is now 'unauthorised'. Encampments can vary dramatically in size, with the smallest consisting of one or two caravans, right up to more than 40.

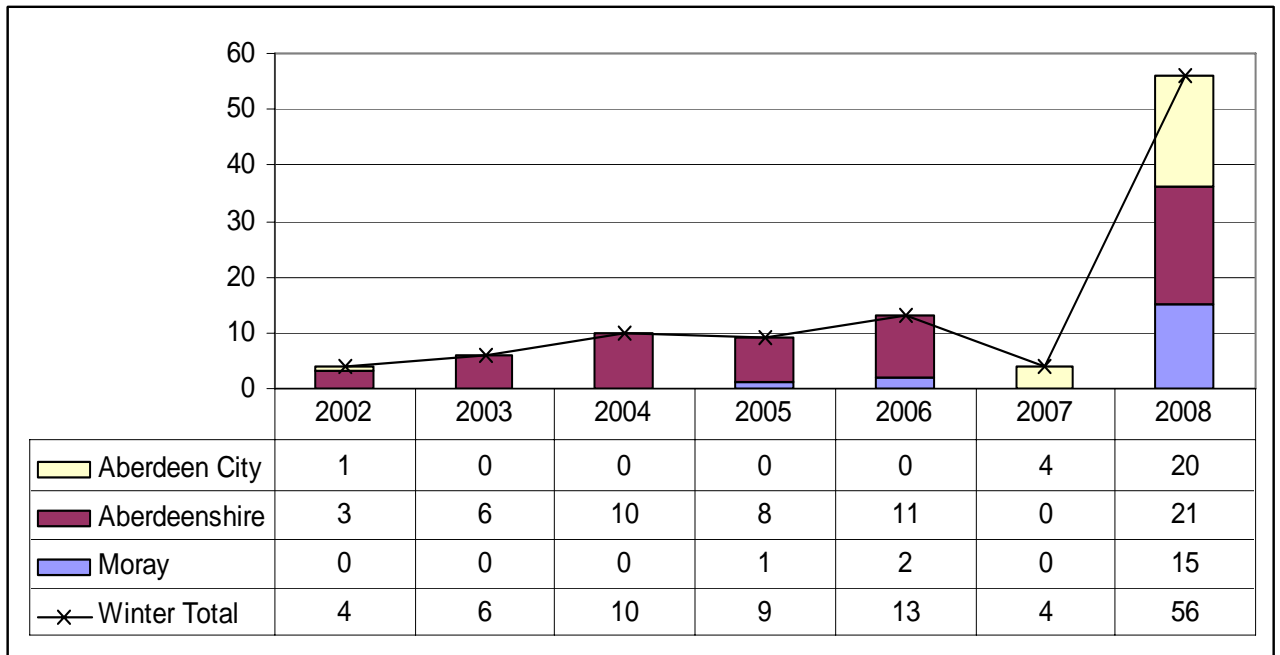
2.125. Figures 2.10 and 2.11 below show the number of households recorded on encampments in the Grampian area during the summer and the winter. Data is taken from the Twice Yearly Count.

**Figure 2.10 Households on Encampments in Grampian – Summer Data**



Source: Scottish Government, *Twice Yearly Counts*, July 2002 onwards

<sup>29</sup> The study in West Central Scotland, which reached 15 households, found that the average household size was much the same as for those on local authority/RSL sites – c3.1-3.3)

**Figure 2.11 Households in Encampments in Grampian – Winter Data**

Source: Scottish Government *Twice Yearly Counts*, January 2002 onwards

- 2.126. As can be seen from the graph above, the number of encampments present during the summer is generally higher than in the winter, reflecting the increased number of transit households who enter the area during the summer for work, holiday, family visits or other purposes. The significant spike in the number of households present on encampments in summer 2007 is in part due to a large number of Irish Traveller households (36) arriving in Aberdeen city. Those who work with Gypsies/Travellers on a regular basis have reported that it is more common for Irish Gypsies/Travellers to live on very large encampments as they tend to travel in larger groups. This may also explain the much higher number of encampment households present in the winter of 2008 – anecdotal evidence suggests that a large group of Irish Travellers may have dispersed throughout the region.
- 2.127. Encampments can occur on any type of land, but because local authorities normally have a specific encampment policy, local authority owned land is often used most frequently. While the provisions that the local authority makes to encampments often depends on the specific situation, generally encampments are provided with facilities for rubbish disposal and porta-loos. GTEIP also visits each encampment in the Grampian area to check upon the welfare of the inhabitants and provide any assistance that may be required.
- 2.128. The reasons why Gypsies/Travellers choose to stay on unauthorised encampments can vary according to many factors, including the household and its socio-economic status, the time of year and the availability of other provision. Half of encampment households (12) mentioned peace and quiet as key reasons for choosing a particular location, followed by close proximity to friends and family (5). A further four households indicated that they did not have anywhere else to go. Two households mentioned that they had decided to stay on an encampment in a particular area for work reasons.

- 2.129. Length of stay on encampments varied from a few days only to, in one extreme case, a few years. Generally stays lasted around two or three weeks. Aberdeen City Council has a clearly articulated and published policy setting out the Good Neighbour Code, which tries to reach a balance between the settled community and Gypsy/traveller encampments. Expectations are explained and there is a clearly defined procedure which makes it easier for co-existence. Aberdeenshire currently allows Gypsies/Travellers to stay on Local authority owned or controlled land for up to six weeks, with no return for four subsequent weeks. They also have a Good Neighbour Code, distributed at the time of the initial Local authority visit, which sets out various standards for good relations. At the time of writing Moray Council was not taking action against any encampments over how long they have stayed
- 2.130. The age and condition of caravans and trailers on encampments differed from those on sites. The average age of caravans on encampments was 13 years, compared to just 5/6 years on Council sites. One household was living in a trailer that was over 30 years old.

**Table 2.13 Trailer Age and Size**

	Council Sites	Encampments
Average Trailer Age (years)	5/6	13
Average Trailer Size (feet)	20	18

Source: Craigforth Household Survey

- 2.131. The most popular areas for encampments were the Altens and Bridge of Don areas in Aberdeen City, Stonehaven, Catterline and Garlogie in Aberdeenshire, and the areas surrounding Keith and Elgin in the Moray Local authority area. While Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire seemed to share many common features and were identified by Gypsies/Travellers themselves as a single area for travelling, there was evidence that Moray was seen as a quite separate area from the rest of Grampian. There seemed to have been little 'knock on' effect on the other two local authorities from the closure of the illegally occupied site at Channonry, or the loss of a large part of Lossie Green, recreational land located in the centre of Elgin.
- 2.132. There were some Gypsies/Travellers who perceive the way that Local authorities deal with encampments and regulate land use as a deliberate effort to prevent the continuation of their way of life: Two encampments, one in Moray and another in Aberdeenshire had been set up, according to the residents, in order to prove a point and raise the issue of additional provision for Gypsies/Travellers in Grampian.
- 2.133. One of these encampments had been set up by a group of Gypsies/Travellers from the Highland region who had attempted to move into the area. In the case of the other, the families travelled very closely to their 'home area'. The family had chosen to occupy an unauthorised location quite near their winter housing on a semi-permanent basis, part of a deliberate strategy to encourage the local authority to sell them the land or allow them to rent it, perhaps as part of a semi-official site development.

- 2.134. While anecdotal evidence suggests that some encampments are created by English and Irish Gypsies/ Travellers visiting the area for work, the numbers of such visitors seem to be fewer than in previous years and no opportunities to speak to members of these groups arose during the research. Those Gypsies/Travellers who were contacted were from Scotland, either visiting from another part of the country, or 'local' Gypsies/Travellers following a traditional route, or unable/unwilling to take a pitch on another site. This 'overspill' situation was particularly prevalent in Moray.
- 2.135. Evidence from those working with local Gypsies/Travellers e.g. Site managers, GTEIP liaison officers and the Police, as well as Gypsies/Travellers themselves suggest that work continues to be an important reason behind many of the 'summer influx' encampments recorded in Grampian each year. There are nevertheless, indications of a general decline in the traditional occupations followed by Gypsies/Travellers, such as agricultural labour, hawking goods and berry picking, and many interviewees reported that work is less of a motivation behind travel than was the case previously. Many do however continue to seek out work opportunities through travel as an integral part of their way of life.

## **Summary of Key Points**

### ***Defining Gypsies/Travellers***

- While they have yet to be legally recognized as a separate racial group, the Scottish Government formulates policy around the idea that Gypsies/Travellers are a racial/ethnic group in their own right. The term 'Gypsies/Travellers' includes Scottish Travellers, Irish Travellers, Roma/Romany, English or Welsh Travellers and those who identify as Gypsy Travellers/Scottish Gypsy Travellers. It excludes Occupational Travellers (Travelling Show People/Show Travellers or Circus People) and New/New Age Travellers.
- Of the Gypsies/Travellers interviewed, over 1 in 3 of respondents defined themselves simply as 'Travellers', over 1 in 4 (28%) as Scottish Travellers, and 1 in 5 (18%) as Gypsy Travellers. Around 1 in 10 defined themselves as 'other'.

### ***Estimating Gypsies/Travellers***

- The Twice Yearly Count of Gypsies/Travellers in Scotland takes place in January and July each year, and only counts Gypsies/Travellers in Council site, encampments and known privately owned sites.
- Detailed knowledge on private sites and the true extent of unauthorised encampment activity is lacking, which can lead to underestimation of the true numbers of Gypsies/Travellers in Scotland.
- The Twice Yearly Count has produced variable estimates of average household size since the count began from 3.0 persons per household to 3.5 persons. This can mean a relatively large change in estimated population levels.

### ***Population Levels***

- Information on population levels in Grampian are derived from a number of sources, including the household survey conducted as part of this research, the Twice Yearly Count, site records, and information from those who work with Gypsies/Travellers on a regular basis.
- According to the Twice Yearly Count, the summer population in Grampian has averaged between 300-450 people over the last 5 years. In the winter months it has averaged between 80-200 people, and has undergone an average 5% increase since 2001.
- Combining this data with that identified during the research, it is estimated that there are 500-650 Gypsies/Travellers living in Grampian. This is likely to be a conservative estimate.
- The Gypsy/Traveller population is fairly evenly spread across all three authorities, ranging between 56 households in Aberdeen City, 50 in Aberdeenshire and 47 in Moray.
- The average household size was 3.5. The largest average household sizes were found on privately owned sites (4.5) and in housing. The smallest were found in encampments (2.9).
- Compared with data from the Scottish Household survey, data from the household survey indicates that Gypsies/Travellers households tend towards younger, larger family groups
- Based on current trends identified in the household survey, a potential growth of up to 50 households is possible in the resident Grampian Gypsy/Traveller population over the next 5 years. This represents a total increase of just under 33% on the estimated number of Gypsies/Travellers households in Grampian;

### ***Other Characteristics***

- The survey sample was 63% female and 37% male, which reflects the reluctance of male Gypsies/Travellers to engage in research, and the availability of these individuals during the day. Nevertheless, it compares well with other similar studies.
- The majority of interviewees (62%) were under the age of 40. Just under a third (29%) were aged between 40 and 59 and 8% were between 60 and 89.
- The Gypsy/Traveller population is much younger than the overall population of Grampian; 81% of the Gypsies/Travellers sample population reached was under 40, compared to just 49% of both the total Grampian and total Scottish population.
- The survey data is in agreement with the University of Sheffield's research report into health among Gypsies/Travellers that found a much lower life expectancy among Gypsies/Travellers than the rest of the population.

### ***Travelling Behaviour***

- Over two thirds of Gypsies/Travellers from the sample population who were living on sites and in housing said they still travelled for at least part of the year.
- The most commonly mentioned reason for not travelling was ill-health, age, bereavement and wishing to avoid disrupting their child's schooling.
- Just under half of respondents used local authority land as a stopping place.
- Visiting family and friends and work purposes were the most commonly mentioned motivations for travelling, followed by the desire for a change of scene and a holiday. A few households moved around to participate in Christian missions and conventions.
- Some Gypsies/Travellers leave the region during the travelling season, visiting England, Wales and the far north of Scotland. The most popular destinations were Highland (Inverness-shire in particular) and Fife.

### ***Employment and Income***

- Around 1 in 4 of the sample population was looking after the home or family and 1 in 4 were self-employed. Just over 1 in 5 was unemployed. 1 in 10 was sick or disabled and unable to work.
- A larger proportion of Gypsies/Travellers sampled were unemployed than in the rest of Grampian as a whole – 22% compared to only 1.3%. Similarly, the level of self-employment among Gypsies/Travellers was 90%, compared to 10.8% for the whole of Grampian.

### ***Provision used by Gypsies/Travellers***

- Provision is defined as Council/RSL site provision, privately owned sites, commercial caravan sites or bricks and mortar housing
- At present, both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire have Local authority owned and operated sites.
- Between October and March on average 12 pitches were let at Clinterty, while over the summer months an average of 9 were let. Occupancy of Clinterty is generally higher in the winter months, suggesting that the site is viewed as a winter base.
- The rent for Clinterty during the 2007/2008 financial year was £57 per week or £228 per month, this compares with an average rent of £52 per week or £208 per month for a two apt property in Aberdeen City. Rents are currently under review by Aberdeen City Council.
- The Clinterty site has a poor reputation among Gypsies/Travellers but is currently undergoing a significant upgrade.

- The Greenbanks site is only open during the summer months and is almost always fully occupied.
- Current rent at Greenbanks is £44 per week compared to an average rent of £40.08 per week for a two apt property elsewhere in the local authority area.
- Evidence suggests that Gypsies/Travellers are using both commercial caravan sites and privately owned sites in the Grampian region. Some commercial sites refuse to allow Gypsies/Travellers on the site.
- Wealthier members of the family who own their own pitch on a private site may rent to less wealthy family members.
- Housed Gypsies/Travellers may use their bricks and mortar property as a winter base. Housing does not rule out a traditional, nomadic lifestyle.

### ***Encampments***

- The number of households on encampments in the Grampian area during the summer is generally higher than the number present in the winter; Irish travellers visiting the area may travel in large groups, pushing the figures to higher than average levels.
- Key drivers for households to living on encampments are the availability or lack of other provisions, socio-economic status (including employment and income) and the time of year (encampment living is significantly easier in the summer). Other important factors are peace and quiet and the presence of family and friends.
- Length of stay is typically around two or three weeks.
- In general, residents of encampments had older, smaller caravans than residents of council sites, possibly indicating that encampment based households were less wealthy and more restricted as to accommodation choice.

### 3. QUALITY OF LIFE

- 3.1. Quality of life emerged as an important theme in the research, especially among those Gypsies/Travellers who already had accommodation. Even those content with the accommodation on local authority or private sites, or even encampments, felt there were surrounding issues that diminished the experience for them and made their situation more difficult.
- 3.2. These centred on perceived harassment from locals, other Gypsies/Travellers or 'officialdom', discrimination against Gypsies/Travellers by settled communities and often quite severe health issues. There was also some evidence that Gypsies/Travellers have support needs, especially among the housed population, that if not addressed, could cause problems with sustaining their tenancy and general wellbeing.

#### Harassment

- 3.3. Instances or fear of harassment are a crucial influencing factor in the accommodation experience of Gypsies/Travellers. Perceptions of harassment, or likely harassment affected the quality of life of Gypsies/Travellers and influenced their decision to select and stay on a site or encampment location.
- 3.4. The evidence gathered during the research interviews asked Gypsies/Travellers for their *perceptions* of harassment. The instances and incidents mentioned in this section are as the respondent perceived and remembered them and have not been verified. Those comments quoted in this chapter should be read in that context.
- 3.5. There was evidence that harassment from other Gypsies/Travellers had been decisive in driving one family of Gypsies/Travellers onto the road in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire, and most respondents had past experience of harassment. Harassment could come from the settled community and its representatives, or other Gypsies/Travellers.
- 3.6. For the purposes of this research harassment is defined as behaviour intended to disturb, threaten or upset. It is not to be confused with the enforcement of legal eviction procedures (moving an encampment on) or enforcement of site regulations. In responding to questions over recent incidents of harassment, evictions from unauthorised campsites or blocking off traditional stopping places were taken by some respondents as a form of institutionalised harassment, while another respondent whose family had been traditionally involved in the now illegal activity of pearl fishing, seemed to feel this was part of a wider strategy to criminalise Gypsy/Traveller culture and make it impossible for them to continue their traditions.
- 3.7. Accusations of fly tipping and incidents where other parties had fly-tipped on or near encampments were also perceived by some Gypsies/Travellers as harassment, in that it led to them being falsely accused of causing a mess and being targeted by the authorities. Participants also mentioned being blamed for blocking thoroughfares or infringing the rights of other people to pass by their encampments.

- 3.8. A number of allegations of harassment and ongoing discrimination on the part of local authorities and Grampian Police were levelled by some respondents. Some families in Moray believed they were being singled out unfairly, while other families resident in this local authority felt less strongly, but still believed the local authority was 'anti-Gypsy/Traveller', a perception that seemed fairly widespread.

*My son has had charges against him when anything happens round here, even if they don't have any evidence. My brother put his name down for housing and was told "no gypsies are allowed in the new village". You go anywhere else and the needs of travellers are met. We need a permanent site.*

- 3.9. These concerns were passed onto the relevant authority during the research. In many cases the local authorities were able to put these allegations into clearer perspective – for example, current legal proceedings that were taking place against relatives of some respondents, or a wider context of ongoing disputes between the informant and the local authority. Because few of these cases were reported, it is difficult to draw definite conclusions on their validity. In cases where local schools were involved in an alleged incident it proved impossible, due to issues of confidentiality, to pass on full details of the allegations for investigation so that these could be verified.
- 3.10. Such accounts are in part a comment on the relationship between Gypsies/Travellers and the rest of society. In some of these cases local authority officials and police were clearly carrying out normal procedures that were perceived as harassment due to misunderstanding or a desire to present these officers in a particular light. There were other allegations of harassment that seemed more serious. If these are well-founded then it would suggest some officials have displayed discriminatory behaviours and attitudes towards Gypsies/Travellers.
- 3.11. Harassment can in a broader sense, be symptomatic of discriminatory attitudes against Gypsies/Travellers held by those in the wider community. But it can also be much more general; housed Gypsies/Travellers for example, may be harassed while living in a housing scheme not because they are of a particular background, but because such harassment occurs against residents, whatever their background.
- 3.12. The following sections attempt to isolate incidents where there is sufficient evidence that either a Gypsy/Traveller background is the reason behind the harassment, but even where it is not, such harassment is likely to cause Gypsies/Travellers households to give up their tenancy and perhaps even return to the road.

### **Past Incidents of Harassment**

- 3.13. Half of those Gypsies/Travellers interviewed on sites, encampments or in housing reported that they had experienced some form of harassment in the past. One in 4 respondents had at some point been assaulted in Grampian or elsewhere, 1 in 3 had had stones thrown at them or suffered damage to their trailers. Almost half the respondents had been subjected to name calling. In some case histories such as the one below, there were examples of harassment in every type of accommodation situation.

*We stayed on Clinterty but it's full of drinkers and drugs. We had a 2 bed council house for 2 years. We had hassle there and people scratched the vans and called us names. The Elgin site was nice but [a family on the site] wrecked it.*

- 3.14. Stone throwing and name-calling seemed fairly common, but there were reports from one Clinterty tenant of 'air guns and petrol bombs' in another part of Scotland, and from another, an incident in Edinburgh where children had been spat on. Both of these cases had caused the families involved to move home and into the Grampian area.

*I moved houses in Forfar a couple of times due to difficulties with the neighbours...my son hit every other bairn in the street - but he was also blamed for things that were not his fault.*

- 3.15. There were indications that these incidents in the neighbouring Angus local authority area had influenced the families affected to seek out accommodation in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire.

#### **Harassment while living on Council and Private sites**

- 3.16. Incidents of harassment from individuals outside the Gypsy/Traveller community tended to relate to intrusions on privacy and threats to the security of the site. Residents of Clinterty and Greenbanks seemed to experience very little 'institutional' harassment, though one young Gypsy/Traveller felt that the police harassed her brothers.
- 3.17. There was more evidence of varying levels of harassment from members of the local community. One respondent expressed the belief there were occasional 'prowlers' who came near the Clinterty site but did not seem to have made any report or complaint about this incident. Another respondent said that locals sometimes came to the site to beep their horns and throw stones at the caravans. Another tenant reported that they knew some of the other people they knew on the site had been harassed when visiting the nearest town, though did not specify what kind of harassment this was.
- 3.18. An incident where locals called the police because a family lit a fire on site was also interpreted as harassment, or at least an intrusion into their affairs. A tenant with children of school age reported that her children were regularly bullied at school because of their Gypsy/Traveller origin. There was no evidence that action had been taken or sought over this particular incident.
- 3.19. Harassment at Clinterty did not come solely from outside the site, but from other Gypsies/Travellers. One tenant said that her children had been bullied by other Gypsy/Traveller children on the site and that it had been very difficult to resolve the situation – she had expressed interest in moving into a house, though had not taken any steps to secure this form of accommodation. Another tenant agreed that sometimes harassment came from those on the site, though they felt this was not especially bad;

*Not really. There are fights when people have a bit to drink...*

- 3.20. At Greenbanks there were reports of regular intrusions onto the site because it lies open to a nearby path and car park. However, these cases were largely understood to be accidental. More serious were incidents where visitors to the local fair had targeted the site. This could range from noise and disturbance to racial abuse.

*When the show travellers come, people are drawn down near the site and the kids get drunk and run wild on the camp. They call us "pikies, pikies". Once the shows go away it's all fine generally. Compared to some places, it's not a problem.*

- 3.21. But some incidents did occur when the fair was not present:

*There is a dyke at the top of the site and the local kids and our kids can jump over it. The local kids sometimes throw things over the top of it, last year they threw a wing mirror and that caused some damage. That kind of damage can be very expensive.*

- 3.22. These do not seem to have been reported to the police and were for the most part, accepted as 'part of the territory', as were many low-level cases of harassment. Overall the Greenbanks tenants gave the impression that they felt comfortable on the site and reported a good relationship with the local community, with some isolated incidents of name-calling. Schools were described as 'clannish', the implication being that at the very least, it could be difficult for children from the Greenbanks site to integrate, but that there might also be some bullying taking place.
- 3.23. The research reached very few private site tenants. Those that did take part did not report any instances of harassment, though they could point to similar instances in the past, such as stone throwing and name-calling.

### ***Harassment of housed Gypsies/Travellers***

*Last summer, I tried to stay in a house and I lasted for a week.*

- 3.24. The feelings of isolation and disconnection reported by many Gypsies/Travellers who lived in housing were often exacerbated or amplified by harassment from the settled community. Gypsies/Travellers seemed to feel more exposed in housing, disconnected from the support and collective security provided by friends and family.

*The neighbours were a problem; there was no peace, they always watched us.*

- 3.25. As one respondent mentioned, the local authority had explicitly told them they could not have too many visitors – which they took as a form of harassment or discrimination, as receiving long term visits from relatives is generally seen as an aspect of their culture, and a common reason for travelling (see previous sections on reasons for travel).
- 3.26. Many families who were in, or had lived in, bricks and mortar housing felt they had been singled out for abuse because they had been identified as Gypsies/Travellers. This contributed to a general reluctance on the part of housed Gypsies/Travellers to identify themselves.

- 3.27. There was evidence of a general anxiety about what could happen if they were moved into housing, particularly in a housing scheme.

*When we were in [Aberdeenshire], our stuff was wrecked. They didn't want us.*

*...my neighbour was a prostitute which caused problems. People tried to break in.*

- 3.28. Fear of drugs and vandalism were also mentioned frequently. The effect on children was a particular area of concern. The respondent who had lived next door to a prostitute was at the time, experiencing post-natal health issues when living in a property in Aberdeen. Another respondent had spent 8 years in housing in Angus and still remembered the harassment they had received from other young people.

*Rough area, lot of bad things happening. The kids couldn't get out to play*

*It was very claustrophobic; I was always fighting the local kids. I wouldn't live in a house again.*

- 3.29. In another two cases related by Gypsies/Travellers currently living on a council site, there was the feeling that living in housing made them an identifiable target not for locals, but other Gypsies/Travellers who might harass them.

### **Harassment of Gypsies/Travellers on encampments**

- 3.30. Judging by the interview evidence, Gypsies/Travellers on encampments were frequently exposed to harassment from nearby communities. Many of them accepted it as part of the lifestyle (often only recalling such incidents on reflection) and did not find incidents such as name calling or stone throwing to be remarkable.

*Travellers get that all the time. We've had to move a few times. My kid has had stones thrown at her.*

- 3.31. Others had suffered much more serious abuse and intimidation. There was evidence of sustained harassment experienced by an extended family throughout their summer in Aberdeenshire. The following quotes give a flavour of the abuse claimed to have been suffered by the group.

*I was shot at by people with paint guns loaded with pellets. I was there at the door holding my boy, who could easily have been injured. Even an ambulance came by and did it [tooted their horns]. People come and shout "bloody tinks" at us. The boy takes nightmares about being shot at and shouted at.*

*Four nights ago a big saloon pulled up outside - there were 4 or 5 guys who had been drinking and a big guy got out and started shouting abuse "fucking mongos." My husband nipped it in the bud.*

*After the reports [in the local paper] people come and try to ram our trailers - all flashy cars - they were well off. One couple was dogging on the site right in front of us.*

- 3.32. At the time of the first visit the families had decided to 'ride out' the attacks as there was no other provision in the area for them to use. Their intention had been to force the issue of finding a suitable location for them. By the time of the second visit the families indicated they were now going to leave Aberdeenshire at some point during the winter months, and seek accommodation elsewhere.

### **Discrimination**

*I have had some bother in Inverness. There can be bother when people find out - I had trouble with a handyman who was using racist language. I never got an apology. Some people are just prejudiced in general. But it's worse here than up in the Highlands.*

- 3.33. The Gypsy/Traveller quoted above was a young female who was staying on an encampment but otherwise lived in housing in Inverness and kept a full time job. This comparison between relative levels of tolerance and discrimination between Grampian and the Highland area echoed a number of comments gathered during the research which suggested the neighbouring region was generally more accepting and inclusive of Gypsies/Travellers. Interviewees reported fairly widespread discrimination in Grampian, which could be experienced – or identified as discrimination – in a number of different settings. The Equalities section of this report deals with cases of what could be termed 'passive' discrimination (for example, through providing information in written form where many Gypsies/Travellers might not have sufficient literacy skills).
- 3.34. Gypsies/Travellers involved in the development of private sites considered that the planning process could be somewhat discriminatory, as lack of education and problems with literacy amongst Gypsies/Travellers could make it difficult to deal with the process. A recent applicant found the local authority lacked awareness of how these problems could make it difficult for Gypsies/Travellers to negotiate the planning process.

*I don't know if that was because I'm a traveller or if they're the same for everyone, but definitely travelling people need more help because of our lack of education.*

- 3.35. More 'active' discrimination, where the individual's Gypsy/Traveller identity appears to have been used a reason to exclude or abuse them, is dealt with in this section. As with harassment this varied by degree, with some incidents, such as taxis refusing to pick up at a council site, featuring at the lower end of the 'scale' while incidents reported of bullying or abuse in institutions such as schools emerged as much more serious. Whatever the perceived magnitude, the end result was often that Gypsies/Travellers were disadvantaged through not accessing a service or facility.

### **Local authority Officials**

- 3.36. In general, most respondents reported no instances of discrimination from local authority officials. Twelve did however; claim that they had experienced recent or past discrimination from local authority employees. Additionally, some Gypsies/Travellers interpreted general local authority rules and processes as discriminatory. There was little difference in the frequency of these claims between council site, housed or encampment based Gypsies/Travellers.
- 3.37. As could be expected, the claims of discrimination varied in nature, from the perception of a lack of willingness on the part of Local authorities to assist Gypsies/Travellers through to the use of offensive language related to race and or ethnicity. It should be noted that none of these incidents was reported to any of the Local authorities by the Gypsies/Travellers concerned; none of the Local authorities have had the opportunity to investigate the alleged incidents, but all have indicated that they would strongly condemn racism and discrimination.
- 3.38. The lack of reporting of potentially serious instances of discrimination may be due in part to the fact that harassment, racially abusive language and discrimination are part of the daily lived experience of Gypsies/Travellers wherever they are in the UK, thus they become normalized for Gypsies/Travellers. While discriminatory attitudes may be confined to a small minority in an organisation, victims of such discrimination may view these individuals as representative of the organisation as a whole, thus disincentivising an official complaint. This is clearly problematic for local authorities since they are unaware of actions and attitudes which otherwise could be investigated. There may be some work to be done with Gypsies/Travellers to encourage them to report incidents at the time they occur.
- 3.39. There were some very serious accusations of ingrained animosities against Gypsies/Travellers on the part of the authorities. Few however, were as extreme in their views as this respondent;

*The council is prejudiced - they don't want travellers [here]. The council and the Police here are working together to discriminate against us.*

- 3.40. One Gypsy/Traveller living on an encampment claimed a housing officer had called them a 'pikie' and had been 'aggressive and unpleasant', but had not reported the incident. In another authority, this Gypsy/Traveller claimed that prejudice had prevented her from taking up her tenancy.

*The housing lady at the council didn't want to give me the keys to my new place when she knew I was a Gypsy/Traveller.*

- 3.41. There seemed to be a common fear that housing officers were not sensitive to the requirements of the Gypsy/Traveller lifestyle, and there was a perception that tenancies were at risk and locks would be changed without warning if a family was on the road for a period. This may be due to an incomplete understanding of their tenancy period. Another respondent felt that local

authority or RSL regulations made it difficult for them and may even have been discriminatory.

*I have bother with the HA, I've had racism...and I was charged two rents for having my van on the drive.*

### **Police**

*Overall the police...are OK, but sometimes they call me tinker or tink.*

- 3.42. Around 1 in 3 respondents (26) said that they had felt they had been discriminated against by police officers, although many of these incidents had been in the past and some had taken place in local authorities outside the Grampian area.
- 3.43. Examples included 'heavy-handedness', a claim that police had shown a lack of interest in a reported burglary that stemmed from their Gypsy/Traveller background, and inaction over incidents of harassment and racist taunting, although in the case mentioned convictions were later brought against the perpetrators.

*The police are ok but I think they are a bit lazy. It's easier to push us on than try to find out who attacks us.*

- 3.44. Some claimed a sustained campaign of harassment over incidents the interviewees claimed were not connected to them. In some of these cases normal police procedure may have been identified as discrimination.
- 3.45. A group of families had reported a recent encounter where officers acted according to a stereotype of Gypsies/Travellers and even resorted to abusive language, calling them 'tinkers'. The incident was reported and the officers were reprimanded. Overall, the respondent generally felt 'the odd PC' was prejudiced against Gypsies/Travellers.
- 3.46. This general view seemed to be that attitudes among the police had generally improved, but there was still the occasional officer with racist attitudes.

### **Health services**

- 3.47. Gypsies/Travellers were asked if they had experienced any discrimination from NHS staff. The majority of households (89%) indicated that they had never had any problems; however, 11% of households indicated that they had experienced some discrimination from NHS staff; with it proving difficult to be seen or being unable to register due to the lack of a permanent address.
- 3.48. One respondent reported that she had been turned away at her GP surgery and had had to go to a clinic for people experiencing homelessness, where she was also turned away. Problems generally seem to occur with administrative rather than clinical staff - this may be because administrative staffs are unsure of the procedures to adopt, implying a need for culturally competent training at both the administrative and clinical levels.

*You get different stories from different receptionists but the doctor herself was fine.*

- 3.49. There is anecdotal evidence that the lack of a permanent General Practitioner (often due to the nomadic nature of the population) means that Gypsies/Travellers do not get initial information and guidance that would prove useful in accessing health services.
- 3.50. It is possible that in some cases these incidents arose because the Gypsies/Travellers were new patients and medical records had not been transferred. Another Gypsy/Traveller, from a council site, felt she had been treated badly by hospital staff but suspected it might be a more general problem rather than discrimination against Gypsies/Travellers.

### **Schools and Education**

- 3.51. It is important when considering the impact of discrimination on a young Gypsy/Traveller's education to distinguish between cases where difficulties in accessing education stem from the unique features of the Gypsy/Traveller lifestyle have made it difficult for them to attend school, and where incident(s) of discrimination may have acted as a deterrent to Gypsies/Travellers' parents who might otherwise have sent them to school. Aspects of the Gypsy/Traveller lifestyle apt to cause difficulties in accessing education services include the general demands of a nomadic lifestyle (and subsequent problems in maintaining regular attendance) and cultural resistance among some groups of Gypsies/Travellers, who object to sending children into secondary schools where different sexes mingle without supervision.
- 3.52. The instances mentioned below are where discrimination has perceived to have taken place in schools in the Grampian area. In these cases the educational experience of the child was adversely affected, but it seemed that the parents we had spoken to continued to send their children to school.
- 3.53. These interviewees referred to continuing discrimination within the education system in certain parts of the Grampian area. There was some evidence that Gypsies/Travellers children were experiencing harassment at school. The following recent incident at a Grampian school was reported by a Gypsy/Traveller parent on an encampment.

*The head teacher tells children they don't belong and she doesn't believe a word they say. She told them that gypsy traveller children are evil. She called my son a 'pikey' at a football match and he called her an "English bitch". He should have been disciplined but no-one did anything about her language - she said that she doesn't know what 'pikey' meant.<sup>30</sup>*

- 3.54. This was not the only account of such incidents in the Grampian area. In total 8 other interviewees reported that they or their children had been discriminated against while at school. There were some accounts that suggested very serious consequences from school-based bullying, as the following, from a mother on a council site, related;

*The school used to say that she was unhygienic. She took an overdose.*

<sup>30</sup> Craigforth were not able to verify the incident, but the report is sufficiently serious to suggest that there may be issues in this area.

- 3.55. It was not entirely clear whether 'the school' refers to; teaching staff or other pupils, or both, The implication was that this had come from members of staff and that such comments had been persistent. The mother clearly felt this had contributed to her child's overdose, but did not say whether they had pursued an official complaint or any other proceedings against the school. However, families on Clinterty felt as a whole, that the local school did a good job and that their children were well treated there.
- 3.56. Other complaints of potential discrimination at schools included a respondent who described the local schools as 'clannish', but did not elaborate on how this impacted on their children's educational experience.

### **Commercial Caravan sites**

- 3.57. There was a working assumption among many of the Gypsies/Travellers interviewed that it was impossible or at least very difficult to access a commercial caravan site. These were based on strong perceptions of prejudice from site owners. Nevertheless, many of these refusals identifying racial discrimination may be based on other factors, such as commercial vehicles being disallowed on a site, as many Gypsy/Traveller families use vans or small lorries to pull their trailers.

*We were not allowed onto a holiday site in [Aberdeenshire] because we had a van with us.*

- 3.58. In such cases, it was not clear whether the van was the principle factor, or that it provided a convenient excuse for not allowing a Gypsy/Traveller family to pull on the site. Incidents of such behaviour on the part of commercial site owners were cited by Gypsies/travellers across and in all three areas of Grampian, and seemed to be a common experience.
- 3.59. There were a few families however, mostly on the Greenbanks site, who preferred to make exclusive use of commercial sites (usually outside of the Grampian area). These cases indicated a long term relationship between the Gypsy/Traveller and the managers, and there may also be a link between the better socio-economic circumstances of these individuals as compared to other Gypsies/Travellers surveyed.

### **Transport and Mobility**

- 3.60. A number of respondents from Clinterty were unable to drive, which meant that taxi and bus and train services were important. Where there was evidence of discrimination on the part of taxi drivers, who might refuse to visit a site, this over-dependence could become a problem and restricted these tenants' ability to access services.

### **The Role of the Media**

- 3.61. A number of interviewees felt the local press in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire had contributed a general atmosphere of prejudice and discrimination against Gypsies/Travellers/ These opinions were supported by local authority officers and GTEIP workers who felt that press reporting was overwhelmingly negative and likely to incite bad feeling between Gypsies/Travellers and settled communities.

- 3.62. The Gypsy/Traveller families involved in the attacks mentioned above did not hesitate to lay some of the blame with media coverage, and clearly regarded it as a form of harassment.

*I find [name of local authority] very prejudiced. It's the Evening Express that's part of the problem. They always call us "Rogues" and stir up trouble. One reporter...is horrible and very prejudiced. We've been advised not to talk to them.*

- 3.63. These feelings about the press were also echoed by Gypsies/Travellers involved in trying to set up private developments in Grampian. The role of local press in marshalling opposition to planning applications was seen as a barrier by many Gypsies/Travellers who had undergone the process, though clearly these could be overcome.

*The local papers ran a poll entitled "Should travellers get permission to live at [location]?" Folk were objecting but everyone sees that we're OK and then it's fine. Initially people just don't realise that we're just trying to make a home for ourselves.*

- 3.64. Another respondent felt the level of prejudice in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire was much higher than elsewhere in Scotland and linked this to the local press.

*The press came and there was loads of them taking pictures. They come with their flash bulbs about 10 at a time. I've never been to a place where there was so much prejudice and discrimination*

- 3.65. The respondent, who had also experienced discrimination in using health services, was convinced that the media had played an important role in contributing to the harassment and creating a bad atmosphere between Gypsies/Travellers and the settled community.
- 3.66. There is emerging evidence at the close of the research, that the role of the press was identified as a key factor in making accommodation choice, and may be contributing elsewhere, to problems for Gypsies/Travellers in keeping up their tenancies or making free accommodation choices. This view of the media as a barrier to better relations was shared by local councillors, equalities and other local authority officers and those who work with Gypsies/Travellers on a regular basis. One local councillor opined that 'Media reporting is unbalanced and is unfairly weighted towards negative press coverage.'
- 3.67. Aberdeen City Council recently held a meeting between local authority officers, the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer and the Aberdeen Evening Express to try to clarify the Local authority's policy on encampments and the Good Neighbour Code.

### **Illness and Disability**

- 3.68. All respondents were asked about their current health status (and were given the option not to respond if they preferred not to) and whether they or anyone in their household experienced a long term illness or disability which affected what they could do in their day to day life. Over 60% of respondents

indicated that they or someone in their household had a problem of some kind suggesting relatively high levels of chronic illness and a high burden of caring.

**Table 3.1 Do you or anyone else on your household have an illness or disability which affects what they can do from day to day?**

	Council	Encampments	Housed	Private	Total	%
Yes	16	17	5	1	39	62
No	8	11	2	3	24	38
	24	28	7	4	63	

Source: Craigforth Household Survey, 2008

- 3.69. The most common illness or impairments described related to difficulties with mobility. This category included arthritis, difficulties with walking, standing and climbing stairs, as well as people who found it difficult to get in and out of the bath or shower. Second to mobility issues came asthma, followed by depression and heart disease. Diabetes and eczema were also common. Issues which were categorised as 'other' were not always specified by respondents (some of whom were happy to indicate that they had health problems but did not wish to discuss them in detail). However, other types of health complaints mentioned included muscular dystrophy, 'stomach problems' and alcoholism.

**Table 3.2 Types of Illnesses and Impairment Experiences**

	Council	Encampments	Housed	Private	Total
Mobility	8	7	2	-	17
Asthma	4	6	2	-	12
Depression	5	2	4	-	11
Heart disease	3	4	1	1	9
Other	2	3	3	-	8
Diabetes	3	3	-	-	6
Eczema	2	3	-	-	5
Kidney	-	2	-	-	2
Hypo/Hyperthyroidism	-	2	-	-	2
Other mental health	-	-	1	-	1
Cancer	-	1	-	-	1

Source: Craigforth Household Survey 2008

- 3.70. The profile of health issues largely fits with work undertaken by the University of Sheffield in 2004. This study was designed to assess the health needs of Gypsies/Travellers across four locations in England. The study made use of comparators within the non Gypsies/Travellers community to establish how Gypsies/Travellers' health needs differed from those of the non Gypsies/Travellers population. The most commonly reported health needs from the Sheffield study are shown below.

**Table 3.3 Types of Illness Found in the Gypsies/Travellers Population according to the University of Sheffield Study**

	Gypsies/Travellers (Sample of 260 people)	Comparators (Sample of 260 people)
Nerves	73	10
Arthritis	57	25
Asthma	56	14
Eye/vision problems	28	9
Bronchitis/emphysema	27	5
Heart Disease	20	9
Hearing Problems	16	8
Rheumatics	15	3
Diabetes	11	9
Stroke	3	2
Cancer	2	6

Source: University of Sheffield, 2004, *The Health Status of Gypsies and Travellers in England*

- 3.71. While the focus of the Sheffield University and this study are entirely different and the categorisations vary, the similarity between the type and incidence of illness is striking. As can be seen in the table above, the Sheffield study found that proportionately far more Gypsies/Travellers suffered from any of the health problems mentioned than their comparators in the settled population (who were selected from different ethnic, socio-economic and urban/rural groups).
- 3.72. While the numbers in the Craigforth study are very small, it may be significant that there are higher rates of depression in Gypsies/Travellers living on council sites (5) and in houses than for those living on encampments (2); this chimes with the University of Sheffield's main report, which found that Gypsies/Travellers living in housing were "more likely to be anxious than those living in trailers, irrespective of sex, age, education or smoking status".<sup>31</sup> This may be related to a sense of confinement which seems to be experienced by Gypsies/Travellers in housing – one respondent described house as "like prison"- or as the Sheffield report hypothesises, it may be due to "isolation from cultural networks and fears or experiences of neighbourhood hostility".<sup>32</sup>
- 3.73. Gypsies/Travellers have often had difficulty in the past in accessing health services – this is due to many factors, including the nomadic lifestyle, the lack of a permanent address, and in some cases discrimination from health service staff. In recognition of this, the former Scottish Executive and the National Research Centre for Ethnic Minority Health launched the Personal Record of Personal Health, which Gypsies/Travellers keep with them, thus enabling them to supply relevant medical information to health professionals, wherever they happen to be travelling. Hand held records such as these have been delivered to surgeries in Moray but no evidence emerged during the survey that these were being promoted or used.

<sup>31</sup> University of Sheffield, 2004, p.39 *The Health Status of Gypsies and Travellers in England*

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*, p.70

- 3.74. Evidence from the survey interviews suggests that Gypsy/Traveller families tend to identify a particular health practitioner who has provided a good service in a given area and subsequently visit that same individual, often travelling significant distances for appointments if outside the area. It is not clear whether this preference is due to receiving a good service, maintaining continuity of care, concerns around trying to register with a new and unknown GP or fear of discrimination. However, the pattern of behaviour can disadvantage Gypsies/Travellers in acute need. For example, one interviewee had decided to travel between Ireland and North and South Scotland to access the various specialists with whom he had formed relationships.
- 3.75. The issues around accessing health services from council sites varied according to the local authority area. In Aberdeen City, problems related to the distance of the council site from the nearest GP surgery and the lack of transport available to non-drivers to reach this. There did seem to be a known and trusted GP figure in Aberdeen City. In Aberdeenshire, all but one resident of the Greenbanks site reported that the local community health services were of a high quality. One person in Aberdeenshire believed that she was unable to get appointments because she perceived the administrative staff to be discriminatory.
- 3.76. Residents of encampments had greater difficulties in accessing health services, partly because of a lack of a permanent address.
- 3.77. The survey moved on to ask respondents about whether any adaptations had already been made to their home or pitch, whether more were needed and whether they required help on a daily basis. Two households had already had some adaptations made and nine were in need of further adaptations; these included stair rails, bathroom rails and adaptations and easy open windows. Ten households indicated that they were in need of day to day help, including assistance with the cleaning, personal care and company for households with depression. In six cases of the ten, the family was the main caregiver.

**Table 3.4 Adaptations and Daily Help**

	Council	Encampments	Housed	Private	Total
Households with adaptations made to home or pitch	1	1	0	0	2
Households needing further adaptations	3	3	3	0	9
Households requiring help on a daily basis.	2	6	2	0	10

Source: Craigforth Household Survey 2008

3.78. Although there is a complex set of factors which affect the health of Gypsies/Travellers in the Grampian region, the following trends are evident:

- particular difficulties with mobility and mental health problems;
- Difficulty accessing NHS services, with many members of the community choosing to visit one particular doctor known to be sympathetic. Patients seem to be negotiating their way around the system rather than finding it to be responsive to their needs.
- discrimination from NHS staff experienced by Gypsies/Travellers
- Care for people with long-term illnesses or impairments tends to be provided by family members rather than through the NHS and social services.

## Summary of Key Points

### *Harassment*

- Perceived harassment, or a perceived likelihood of harassment affected the quality of life of Gypsies/ Travellers and influenced their decision to select and stay on a site or encampment location.
- There was evidence that harassment from other Gypsies/Travellers can be decisive in driving families onto the road. More than half the respondents had past experience of harassment from either the settled community and its representatives, or other Gypsies/Travellers.
- One in 4 respondents had at some point been assaulted in Grampian or elsewhere, 1 in 3 had had stones thrown at them or suffered damage to their trailers. Almost half the respondents had been subjected to name calling.
- Respondents on council sites reported low level harassment from local communities and occasional 'proglers'. The more extreme cases of harassment were reported by families on encampments or in housing.
- There were reports of harassment of individuals by other Gypsies/Travellers families on the site at Clinterty.
- Greenbanks suffered occasional intrusions by local people, especially at the time of the fair. There were attributed to the open design of the site.
- Gypsies/Travellers seemed to feel more exposed in housing, disconnected from the support and collective security provided by friends and family. They felt more exposed and singled out as a result.
- The low levels of harassment reported on privately owned sites could suggest this strategy has proved an effective means of avoiding harassment and securing peace and quiet.

## ***Discrimination***

- Discrimination could be active or 'passive' (i.e. physical or verbal abuse or violation of civil rights as opposed to not taking account of literacy or access issues).
- Allegations of discrimination ranged from taxis refusing to pick up at a council site to more serious reports of bullying or abuse in institutions such as schools.
- Most respondents reported no instances of discrimination from local authority officials. Twelve did however, claim that they had experienced recent or past discrimination from local authority employees.
- It should be noted that none of these incidents was reported to any of the Local authorities by the Gypsies/Travellers concerned and have not had the opportunity to investigate the alleged incidents.
- A common fear seemed to be that housing officers were not sensitive to the requirements of the Gypsy/Traveller lifestyle, and there was a perception that tenancies were at risk and locks would be changed without warning if a family was on the road for a period.
- Around 1 in 3 respondents (26) said that they had felt they had been discriminated against by police officers, although many of these incidents had been in the past and some had taken place in local authorities outside the Grampian area. There were however, some serious allegations made.
- The majority of households (89%) indicated that they had never had any problems with NHS staff; however, 11% of households indicated that they had experienced some discrimination in hospitals and doctors surgeries.
- 9 interviewees reported that they or their children had experienced serious levels of discrimination at school. Some of the details of these incidents are unclear and many were not reported.
- There was a working assumption among many of the Gypsies/Travellers interviewed that it was impossible or at least very difficult to access a commercial caravan site.
- A number of interviewees felt the local press in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire had contributed to bad feeling between settled communities and Gypsies/Travellers.

## ***Illness and Disability***

- The most common illness or impairments described related to difficulties with mobility such as arthritis, difficulties with walking, standing and climbing stairs, as well as people who found it difficult to get in and out of the bath or shower.

- Second to mobility issues came asthma, followed by a high rate of depression and heart disease. Diabetes and eczema were also common. Other types of health complaints mentioned included muscular dystrophy, 'stomach problems' and alcoholism.
- The profile of health issues largely fits with work undertaken by the University of Sheffield in 2004.
- Gypsies/Travellers have often had difficulty in the past in accessing health services – this is due to many factors, including the nomadic lifestyle, the lack of a permanent address, and in some cases discrimination from health service staff.
- Two households had already had some adaptations made and nine were in need of further adaptations; these included stair rails, bathroom rails and adaptations and easy open windows.
- Ten households indicated that they were in need of day to day help, including assistance with the cleaning, personal care and company for households with depression. In six cases of the ten, the family was the main caregiver.

#### 4. ISSUES THAT INFLUENCE ACCOMMODATION CHOICE

- 4.1. This chapter looks in detail at specific issues that affect Gypsies/Travellers' decisions over accommodation. These can – especially in the case of bricks and mortar housing - exert a 'push' or 'pull' on Gypsies/Travellers accommodation decisions, and can contribute to drivers of satisfaction or dissatisfaction that form attitudes towards types of provision.
- 4.2. These range from the physical, such as illness and disability, to fears over harassment and discrimination. They can also be closely linked, for example, where Gypsies/Traveller express a desire to be near others in their extended family group, and the perceived threat to security posed by new or unknown families pulling onto a site or encampment next to them. Harassment, whether from locals or other Gypsies/Travellers, is a persistent concern among Gypsies/Travellers and can have an immediate impact on their accommodation choice, leading some families to vacate very quickly.
- 4.3. In the case of halting sites and other transit provision, this sense that anti-social elements could very quickly, make a site inhospitable was raised by some of those respondents sceptical over this form of provision.
- 4.4. Conversations with Gypsies/Travellers uncovered many common indicators of what satisfied them about their accommodation, and what the major areas of dissatisfaction were likely to be. These drivers of satisfaction or dissatisfaction establish a rough set of criteria for assessing the quality of current – and future – provision.
- 4.5. In all cases, the key drivers of satisfaction were:
- Peace and quiet;
  - Family/neighbours; and
  - Location and access to services.
- 4.6. Whereas the common key drivers of dissatisfaction proved to be:
- Lack of security; and
  - Influx of disruptive behaviour.
- 4.7. These drivers were common throughout the 73 respondents consulted during the research.

#### Family and Location

- 4.8. Family is at the centre of Gypsy/Traveller culture. Gypsies/Travellers will go to some length to be beside their kin. It defines their worldview, their sense of identity and will in a very practical sense affect where and how they live. Feuds are not uncommon in Gypsy/Traveller society, and there were many past incidents reported where one family was forced to vacate a location because they had suffered at the hands of another. The following was an extreme case in which a female Gypsy/Traveller respondent had moved away from her husband's family;

*My partner was violent towards me and his family intimidated me.*

- 4.9. This had caused the individual involved to move from a site in West Central Scotland where she had moved after marriage, back to stay with her family in Grampian. Although this resembles other cases of domestic violence and decisions to change accommodation, the fear of family feuding was an added concern.
- 4.10. The proximity of family members to each other emerged as a particularly important issue that, for good or bad, affected Gypsies/Travellers accommodation choices in a number of other situations. At the Greenbanks site an entire pattern of travel and occupation was based around moving the entire extended family onto the site and being timely in applying for seasonal tenancies. The family took up all of the tenancies on the site and had been using it this way for many years.
- 4.11. It is generally understood that Gypsies/Travellers live in extended family groups that prefer to be alongside each other. Although individual households might number only one or two, neighbouring trailers will contain parents, grandparents or other relatives and many groups clearly preferred accommodation where being together as a single family was possible.
- 4.12. One family household in Moray had several generations living in the same small unit due to a desire not to be split up. The desire to be next to family is also a motivating factor behind the decision to purchase land and develop a site, with there being some evidence that this creates and amplifies demand in areas with a relatively high concentration of Gypsies/Travellers. Interviewees on the private site at Pitmedden Road indicate that wealthier members of the family were sub-letting part of their plot to those relatives with less financial independence.

### **Drivers of Satisfaction**

- 4.13. The most detailed information on drivers of satisfaction was gathered from the residents of council sites. For tenants currently using these facilities, the key drivers of satisfaction were selective allocations, good site management and the quality of amenities.
- 4.14. More detail on the factors contributing to drivers of satisfaction and dissatisfaction are given below.

### ***Peace and quiet***

- 4.15. Privacy and security were important to respondents across all the surveyed locations. One of the main factors contributing to a sense of security was the location of the site or encampment. Some respondents felt that sites or encampment locations should not be too close to towns and that staying away from local populations was a priority. However, a number, especially at Greenbanks, reported friendly relations with townspeople as being an important factor in their feelings about the site.
- 4.16. Peace and quiet emerged as an important factor in various situations. For those on private sites this sense of seclusion was seen as very appealing, especially on the Pitmedden Road private site.

- 4.17. Security seemed to be an important issue at locations where there had been trouble previously. On the Clinterty council site, a number of respondents were keen to see further measures taken to improve the security and privacy of the site, such as new fences around the site and individual pitches, and the introduction of CCTV.

### ***Family/neighbours***

- 4.18. The desire to live next to family, in the shape of parents, grandparents, children, siblings or cousins, reflects the importance placed on extended family and kinship to Gypsy/Traveller culture. Being near family, especially elderly relatives was clearly important for a number of respondents. This could be linked to issues of care and support through extended family.
- 4.19. Family was also important to the atmosphere of a site, in socialising and in childcare – one mentioned that having family together as neighbours provided a good environment for children and young people. Family and neighbours also seemed to contribute to a sense of harmony on a site or encampment and created a stronger sense of security.

### ***Location and access to services***

- 4.20. Gypsies/Travellers seemed to prefer sites and encampments that strike a balance between access to local urban centres and some degree of seclusion. The locations of the private sites at both Pitmedden and Findhorn were outside of town or in small hamlets that kept these populations away from settled communities. Gypsies/Travellers who lived in housing were also best satisfied when in a rural location or small town.
- 4.21. There is, however, a balance to be struck. Tenants at Clinterty generally felt their site was too far out of the way. Amenities were sparse, and the shops in the nearest town were perceived to be overly expensive. The site felt isolated or cut off to those unable to drive or without their own transport. There was very little public transport available in the area, which seemed to add to a sense of isolation. In short, a semi-rural setting is only satisfying when public transport infrastructures are in place and local facilities accessible.
- 4.22. Conversely, residents at Greenbanks and encampments such as Lossie Green seemed to appreciate their proximity to the centre of town, though both sites were afforded some degree of 'protection'. Greenbanks is offset from the rest of the town due to its location next to the shore and the bridge between Banff and Macduff, while Lossie Green is located near the bridge into Elgin. Residents at these locations were near to local amenities and services such as schools that could be easily reached by foot or car.
- 4.23. Access to shops and medical facilities were high priorities – though there was evidence that many Gypsies/Travellers are willing to travel some distance to visit GPs they particularly liked or trusted. There was also evidence that families at Clinterty and on encampments were doing so out of necessity rather than choice.

### **Selective Allocations**

*“...a site works if there is just one family. If travellers are thrown together it doesn't work as we don't like to be bossed about. That's the main reasons that sites don't work”*

- 4.24. The above quote was supplied by a Gypsy/Traveller female living on an encampment in Moray, and is a good indication of the scepticism felt by many Gypsies/Travellers over council sites. Evidence suggested Gypsies/Travellers on official sites (private or council) were most likely to be satisfied where allocations were given on a selective basis. The prime concern for many seemed to be that a family or individual would be allowed to move onto a site that could be disruptive or potentially dangerous.
- 4.25. There was a clear desire among Gypsies/Travellers to restrict access and vet potential site residents before they were allowed onto sites. A number of respondents felt that site occupancy should favour a single extended family, to ensure maximum site harmony and minimal chance of disruptive behaviour. Neither of the two sites operated such a selective allocations policy, though there was evidence of a *de facto* system operating at both locations.
- 4.26. Evidence from Greenbanks, gathered from both the site manager and the Gypsies/Travellers themselves suggested that the same families knew and understood the system for applying for their pitches at this location. Applications were made for the same individual pitches by the same families every year, effectively closing off the site. This sense of security came from foreknowledge of who would be occupying the site with them each year and appeared crucial to general feelings of satisfaction with the site.
- 4.27. Clinterty operated a needs based allocations system, though the low uptake of existing pitches on the site, along with evidence gathered from interviews suggests the facility is identified primarily with the extended family that occupies the majority of the pitches. Where a family is seen as 'dominant' potential tenants may be put off from applying in any case. While this did not come out from the site residents themselves, a number of respondents off-site noted that the current balance of tenants on Clinterty was a factor in choosing not to apply there.
- 4.28. The notion of Selective Allocations was equally attractive to residents of the private sites. The owner of the site in Moray was forthright about his selective policy, being careful to know the background of Gypsies/Travellers who wished to become residents. This was clearly quite straightforward in most cases where the site was opened up to family members, extended family or friends only. In the case of Pitmedden Road, families bought their own plot on the site from relatives who owned the overall property.
- 4.29. There was some evidence, largely from respondents on Greenbanks, that the selectivity of commercial holiday sites was an attractive option when travelling.

**Quality of amenities**

- 4.30. Gypsies/Travellers were looking for sites that had hard standing, up to date amenities and space to accommodate visiting relatives. Tenants on Clinterty preferred the older chalet blocks because they were more spacious than the new units built when the site was first upgraded. This led to the general impression of a 'good' and 'bad' end of the site.
- 4.31. Generally, Gypsies/Travellers have minimal requirements; washing facilities, storage space, space to put up to two trailers, power and gas are the main accommodation requirements. It was also mentioned that some would like to be able to keep horses on a site and noted that the absence of such a facility would deter them from using official provision. There was however, no evidence of a widespread demand for such amenities on local authority provision.

**Drivers of Dissatisfaction**

- 4.32. Information on drivers of dissatisfaction was fairly constant across the board, and easier to get from Gypsies/Travellers in all types of accommodation than drivers of satisfaction. Lack of privacy and fear of disruptive behaviour or harassment was common to all, but these could manifest in different ways according to the type of accommodation. There were also specific drivers of dissatisfaction gleaned from those living on official sites that provide useful indicators as to what designs for future accommodation should avoid. These were:
- Quality of site facilities – amenity blocks (heating);
  - Site management; and
  - Site layout and design – including safety issues.

**Lack of security/influx of disruptive behaviour**

- 4.33. A perceived lack of security, or excessive exposure to the outside world led to dissatisfaction in a number of cases. The encampment in Aberdeenshire endured many disruptions from hostile locals and in some cases overtly racist attacks (reported to Grampian police and pursued in the courts) that affected their sense of security and general quality of life.
- 4.34. In official sites such as Clinterty, fears for security seemed much milder, but still present. The fear of 'proglers' created a sense that the site was vulnerable and insufficiently protected. This had proved a major factor in the overall demand for CCTV and fences. At Greenbanks the proximity of the seasonal fair, and the risk that locals or visitors to the town might mistake the site for a throughway as opposed to private property clearly caused some anxiety. But lack of security was perhaps most keenly felt in housing, where Gypsies/Travellers reported sustained harassment from locals, or a perception that they could be at risk of harassment or interference at any time.
- 4.35. This perception was in many cases more a fear than an immediate reality, where residents were generally content with facilities but concerned over past bad experiences being repeated or duplicated from previous sites, where a family had moved on and caused trouble. The possibility of families moving

on who might cause trouble or subject them to harassment concerned many families, and had in one case led a group to leave their pitches on a site in Highland and camp on unofficial locations.

### **Quality of the Site**

- 4.36. The quality of site facilities emerged most strongly as a driver of dissatisfaction among tenants of Clinterty, who pointed to cramped chalets, difficulties accessing power cards and drainage as particularly likely to lead to a feeling of dissatisfaction with the site. A feeling widely hinted at among respondents was that life on Clinterty was a choice between two less than ideal sets of facilities, as this encampment based Gypsy/Traveller mentioned;

*The new chalets are too small, whereas the older part is bigger but more run down.*

- 4.37. On the Greenbanks site the facilities were considered good, though there was considerable dissatisfaction over the toilets provided in the amenity blocks.
- 4.38. Both sets of tenants were dissatisfied over a lack of facilities for younger Gypsies/Travellers. Children on both sites lacked safe play areas and had to play on the site, where vehicles were often coming and going;

*There's nothing for the children to do. We need a play park.*

*It's boring, there's nothing for young people, no other girls to speak with. A pool table would be good.*

- 4.39. Issues with site facilities tend to arise where these are vandalised or poorly maintained. Where repairs take some time to be carried out or improvements are long awaited there can be feelings of being neglected or ignored - even if in reality the repairs might take no longer than would be the case for mainstream local authority accommodation.

*Nothing is repaired*

*It's a mess...it's worn down here.*

- 4.40. There was also evidence that word on poor site facilities spreads fairly quickly, especially in relation to Clinterty, where there seemed to be a widespread perception that the chalets were in poor condition and often vandalised. Interviewees also stated that the poor reputation of the site made it difficult to get services to go there, most notably taxis or minibuses. One of the tenants summed up the many issues that contributed to this poor reputation.

*We need barriers... The location has some nice scenery, but it's too far out. There aren't any buses and taxis don't come because of the reputation of the place. The electrical wiring in my chalet is dangerous.*

- 4.41. Issues with site management did not seem to be current, but were acknowledged as a problem in the past. Evidence from key interviews and Moray Council documentation suggested that management issues contributed to the demise of the Channonry site. Problems identified included inability to control disruptive elements, effectively enforce site rules and to secure the site.
- 4.42. At Clinterty itself there was general satisfaction among tenants with the site management, but it was obvious that tenants placed great importance on the quality of site management and successful resolution of tenancy issues. There was one case of where a tenant felt that incidents of bullying was not dealt with effectively, and that the site manager preferred to maintain site harmony rather than deal with the problem. It was unclear whether the site manager referred to here was the individual who was then incumbent, or whether this issue was still unresolved.
- 4.43. There was a sense, both here and at the Greenbanks site, that the site manager was not on location often enough, which made the site feel less secure, or made it difficult to access information or services, such as power cards. A Greenbanks tenant summed up how this perception of the site manager (or warden's) role not only fed into drivers of satisfaction around site management, but also those related to feelings of security and peace and quiet.
- We need a warden on site in the am and pm to keep an eye on the boys. [Current incumbent] is only here two days a week and that's not enough.*
- 4.44. There was evidence of a general reliance on the site manager as a central resource for information, advice and support (especially where literacy might be an issue, for example, filling out forms). As a result, more regular contact could increase levels of satisfaction.
- 4.45. Site location, layout and design caused some anxiety to tenants of both sites. At Greenbanks it was felt that the site was too open to the public, which caused problems when the fair was set up next to the site for two weeks in the summer. The site was also very near a sea wall which raised concerns among many for the safety of young children.

### **Summary of Key Points**

- Issues ranged from the physical, such as illness and disability, to fears over harassment and discrimination. To a linked desire to be near others in their extended family group against the perceived threat to security posed by new or unknown families pulling onto a site or encampment next to them.
- Conversations with Gypsies/Travellers uncovered many common indicators of what satisfied them about their accommodation, and what the major areas of dissatisfaction were likely to be. These give a rough indicator of the factors taken into account by Gypsies/Travellers when making choices about accommodation.

***Family and location***

- The proximity of family members to each other emerged as a particularly important issue that, for good or bad, affected Gypsies/Travellers accommodation choices in a number of other situations.
- The importance of family was evident at Greenbanks, where an entire family would occupy the site every year.
- Family is also an important motivation in the decision to develop privately owned provision, which is usually occupied by members of the same extended family.

***Drivers of Satisfaction***

- Peace and quiet;
- Family/neighbours
- Location and access to services
- Selective Allocations
- Quality of amenities

***Drivers of Dissatisfaction***

- Lack of security
- Influx of disruptive behaviour.
- Quality of the site

## 5. ACCOMMODATION NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS

- 5.1. Gypsies/Travellers held a wide range of views on available accommodation. Accommodation needs are split between a need for temporary 'transit' accommodation, and more permanent arrangements. For example, opinions on council sites as facilities were influenced by a number of factors, such as the relationship with the site manager or local authority, perceived condition or upkeep of the site, concerns about its future or viability and 'single issues' such as gates/fencing or toilets.
- 5.2. In the case of transit accommodation, need ranges from stopping over for a single night to several weeks, with some Gypsies/Travellers looking to use a site for an entire season. This suggests a variety of provision, from low-level, simple halting sites through to managed seasonal facilities, as at Newtonmore, near Inverness. Experience elsewhere, such as the site at Middlezoy in Somerset, suggest that the background of each client group, whether Irish or Scottish Traveller, or Roma/Romany can affect the type of site desired.
- 5.3. In the case of permanent accommodation, there was a desire among many Gypsies/Travellers to acquire a permanent base, from which they could perhaps travel as part of their annual season, or where they could live for most of the year. For some respondents, this meant bricks and mortar housing, while for others the desire to live on a site was very strong, conferring many other social and communal benefits.
- 5.4. In establishing accommodation need and aspiration, efforts were first made to determine what drove satisfaction or dissatisfaction with accommodation, and then to quantify how demand for particular types of accommodation might translate into provision. The researchers then looked at the way in which such accommodation could be organised and provided, both publicly and through the private sector.

### Demand for Site-Based Provision

- 5.5. Based on qualitative evidence alone, there is a clear desire among Gypsies/Travellers to retain the practice of living with their extended family and friends, in trailers or mobile homes, with the option of pulling on or off if they so chose. It was made clear by respondents that this is more than just a whim, but a part of their culture and almost, if not more, important than the right to travel.
- 5.6. The *Moving On- Again* report determined that there has been a reduction of 53% in pitch provision across Grampian since the establishment of Scottish Office pitch targets in 1998. Although there had been no reduction in Aberdeenshire, in Aberdeen 60% of known pitch provision had been lost by the end of 2007 and 100% in Moray.

### **Quantifying Demand**

- 5.7. During discussions with local authority officers, planners and people who work with Gypsies/Travellers, it was felt that it would be useful to quantify demand so as to assist them in making the case for further provision and building it into Local Housing and Local Planning Strategies. With site waiting lists offering little in the way of useful evidence, due to the unique situation of both council sites (Clinterty having little or no demand, Greenbanks being seen as 'closed' to other Gypsies/Travellers), other methodologies have to be used to quantify the number of pitches required.
- 5.8. The table below offers a calculation of pitch provision based on the model supplied by the former Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) *Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments: Draft Practice Guidance*. However, some assumptions of this template have been modified or excluded and changes have been made which better reflect the current situation in each of the local authorities. For example, the OPDM calculation assumes that all households on encampments wish to have a pitch on a site, whereas the evidence from the household survey in Grampian does not support this.
- 5.9. It is of vital importance to note that these calculations are made on the basis of the available information, including an estimated population number. It is fully acknowledged that the data from all of these sources is patchy and we would therefore recommend that these figures are taken **as guidance only and not as an exact calculation of need**.
- 5.10. In addition, the researchers strongly recommend that local authorities do not interpret the figures provided as guidance for the size of a single site. Rather, local authorities should use these figures as a total to be provided through a mixture of types of provision (permanent, seasonal or transit) at different locations. Small sites in several different locations and with different purposes are much more likely to constitute a wise investment choice.
- 5.11. The provision required has been calculated by subtracting current and potential future need (expressed as a number of pitches) from the projected supply of pitches. For the purposes of calculation, one pitch is equivalent to one household, although the research team acknowledges that this is not always the case.
- 5.12. Below is an explanation of the figures provided on each row of the table:
- a) Figures are derived from waiting list information from council sites;
  - b) Number of households on unauthorised encampments to the nearest five (included as guidance);
  - c) Number of households on encampments who would prefer a pitch on a council or private site, taking into account that some of these will have already been included on the site waiting list;
  - d) Number of households experiencing overcrowding – where there is no more space on a pitch for additional caravans;

e) Concealed households seeking their own accommodation, calculated at 7% of the current number of households (see 2.40)

f) Households in bricks and mortar housing who require a pitch on a council or private site;

g) Currently unused pitches;

h) Currently occupied pitches likely to become vacant;

i) Current site residents preferring bricks and mortar housing; and

j) New pitches planned.

**Table 5.1 Estimate of Need for Pitches (permanent, seasonal or transit) across Grampian 2009 – 2014**

	TOTAL	Aberdeen	Aberdeenshire	Moray
<b>1. Existing Need</b>				
a. Waiting lists for permanent sites	12	5	7	0
b. Families on unauthorised encampments	50	15	10	25
c. Families on unauthorised developments who would prefer a local authority/private pitch (minus estimated number already counted on the waiting list)	11	3 (5-2)	0 (3-3)	8
d. Current site residents experiencing overcrowding (where no space for further van or pitch)	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>2. Likely future need</b>				
e. Current concealed households seeking their own accommodation	10	4	3	3
f. Families in bricks and mortar housing who require a site pitch	18	4	2	12
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>1+2 = TOTAL NEED</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>3. Projected Supply</b>				
g. Currently unused pitches	8	8	0	0
h. Currently occupied pitches likely to become vacant	5	5	0	0
i. Current site residents preferring bricks and mortar provision	3	3	0	0
j. New pitches planned	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>(1+2) – 3 = OVERALL SURPLUS/SHORTFALL</b>	<b>-35</b>	<b>0*</b>	<b>-12</b>	<b>-23</b>

\*For further information on the return of zero for Aberdeen City, please see para 5.14 below.

Sources: Official council site waiting lists, Scottish Government *Twice Yearly Count*, Jan/June 2008, Craigforth Household Survey 2008, GTEIP estimates

- 5.13. The approximate shortfall in pitches in the Grampian area stands at around 35. The largest shortfall is in the Moray area, where c25 pitches are required, followed by Aberdeenshire which requires c15 additional pitches. As indicated above, it is not recommended that the total number of pitches is provided on one single large site or on one type of site, but rather is divided up and adapted to meet each local authority's particular needs. For more information, please see the Action Plan at the end of this report, specifically Outcome 2, Service Delivery Outcome 1.
- 5.14. Aberdeen City's return currently stands at zero. However, this does not imply that the current situation should remain unchanged. Rather, as has been indicated throughout the report, the current pitch provision needs to be rethought, as described in more detail in the Action Plan (Outcome 2, Service Delivery Outcome 1).

### ***Privately Developed Provision***

- 5.15. The development of some private land as a Gypsy/Traveller run site was a fairly common aspiration, seen to a varying degree, as a realistic option.

*I would do it straightaway if I had the money*

*If they would lift the red tape then people would get on with buying.*

- 5.16. For some the difficulty was not money, but the degree of 'red tape' that had to be negotiated in order to successfully develop a site. Much of this centred on planning law, and may be due to a perception that this was much more complex than it actually was, or that help was not available. Those who had been involved in successful processes had either used a planning agent, or bought a site that already had planning permission, and worked within those regulations, as was the case with the private site in Moray. For other families, there was still a long wait to see their site completed.

*Yes, my sister bought land two years ago but she still has not been granted planning permission to develop the site.*

*Yes, it helps with peace of mind, but there's so much red tape that you have to go through, the lawyers' fees are prohibitive.*

- 5.17. There were also families who while not seeking to buy land, were looking for a more flexible approach to renting or leasing land from local authorities to use as a stopping place or more permanent site development. The table below shows the number of households expressing a preference towards buying their own land.

**Table 5.2 Number of Households Expressing a Preference for Building their own Site**

	Aberdeen City	A'shire	Moray	TOTAL
Council site based households	5	2	-	7
Encampment based households	4	1	5	10
Housed Households	-	1	1	2
Total	9	4	6	19

Source: Craigforth Household Survey, 2008

- 5.18. As can be seen, more than a third of interviewees would like to develop their own site, but in fact only one household had made an attempt to do so, which they have had decided to postpone because of the length of time that the planning application was taking:

*Yes, we got some land between Keith and Huntly, but it all took so long that we lost patience. I'd contemplate it again.*

- 5.19. It is worth noting that some of the families who were considering buying land or had bought some land did not necessarily plan to remain in the local authority area where they were based at the time of their interview. For example one individual based in Aberdeen had bought in Moray.
- 5.20. In general, perceptions of the obstacles seem to be so strong that many Gypsies/Travellers are deterred from even attempting it.

## **Equalities and Accommodation Needs and Aspirations**

### ***The Equalities Impact on Site Provision***

- 5.21. The key equalities issues in terms of the accommodation needs of Gypsies/Travellers in Scotland relate to their status as a Minority Ethnic group, the related nomadic lifestyle, the youthfulness of the population (and as a corollary of this, the fewer older people), poor health and the related issues of caring, low literacy, low employment etc. These issues need to be borne in mind when planning accommodation provision for Gypsies/Travellers across the three regions.
- 5.22. While there has as yet been no legal test case to establish that Gypsies/Travellers are a racial group with concomitant rights to protection under the Race Relations Act, as has been noted above, the Equal Opportunities Committee of the Scottish Parliament and the Scottish Government have recommended that Local authorities treat them as such. Gypsies/Travellers have a clearly defined culture and lifestyle, elements of which can be considered when planning accommodation provision. These include:
- A preference towards living in multi-generational households. The close proximity of extended family can mean that quite large groups of caravans travel together;

- A youthful population. More than 80% of the population identified through the sample were under 40 and a significant chunk (44%) were under 15;
- Low levels of education, literacy and numeracy. The University of Sheffield study<sup>33</sup> indicated that the average school leaving age of Gypsies/Travellers in England was 12.6, compared to 16.4 in comparators of all socio-demographic groups and ethnic minority groups in the settled population. This impacts significantly on ability in all other areas of life, for example the ability to successfully access and negotiate through services, such as health, finance, welfare and housing; and
- Poor health. There is a high prevalence of chronic conditions such as mobility impairments, mental health problems such as depression and anxiety, as well as diabetes, heart disease, asthma and eczema. As a corollary of this, and of the tendency to live in multi-generational households, many Gypsies/Travellers act as carers for family members.

### **Local Authority Provision**

- 5.23. Taking into account the abovementioned points, one of the key features for local authorities to consider when providing sites is size. There is a strong preference towards smaller sites which can accommodate an extended family. More than a third of the Gypsies/Travellers who took part in the survey excluded Clinterty as a place that they would live because it was so large, thus opening up possibilities for inter-family conflict. When asked to specify a preferred size, many respondents indicated that the maximum size appropriate would be ten to twelve pitches. It is important to stress that using resources to provide one large, single site is counter-productive, since it will most likely end up effectively embargoed from use with large numbers of pitches lying vacant, like the site at Maryhill in Glasgow, or Clinterty in Aberdeen.

*What we need are wee-er sites, family sites. Sites like Clinterty cause bad blood between site folks and settled folks.*

- 5.24. In addition, large Gypsies/Travellers sites present the dangers of 'ghettoizing' the community and isolating the nearby settled community. Provision of small, multiple sites throughout authorities might allow for a better co-existence between the settled community and the Gypsies/Travellers community.
- 5.25. It is clear that there are equalities and fairness issues around letting pitches/sites to members of one single family. Given that there are clear preferences for allocations policies that take into account the desire to live together as a family, as well as looking at how well two groups may potentially interact, it is worth remembering that peace and security are one of the key drivers of satisfaction. If Gypsies/Travellers experience anti-social behaviour or violence from other tenants, they will be unlikely to return to a site, even if the aggressor also leaves.

<sup>33</sup>University of Sheffield, 2004, p.25 *The Health Status of Gypsies and Travellers in England*

**Private provision**

- 5.26. Literacy has an effect upon ability to understand the processes around planning applications. Enabling the Gypsies/Travellers community by allowing them to look after their own housing needs is, from an Equalities perspective, a move forward.

**Impact of Equalities on Accommodation Provision**

- 5.27. Factors which local authorities will need to consider in relation to the provision of accommodation for Gypsies/Travellers are:
- **Information provision** - low literacy rates mean that it may be more difficult for some Gypsies/Travellers to understand their rights and responsibilities as a tenant, especially if they are only provided in written form. Ideally (and there is evidence that this happens regularly through the work done by GTEIP and some local authority officers), all tenancy agreements and rights and responsibilities should be explained orally;
  - **Tenancy agreements** –there may be grounds to review these to see if they could better reflect Gypsies/Travellers lifestyle and culture, especially the desire to travel during the summer months; tenants may not have a clear understanding of their rights and responsibilities and local authorities should be aware of this, especially before pursuing punitive action;
  - **Proximity of education and health services/impact upon local services** – enabling Gypsies/Travellers through education and better health care will have a significant impact upon their quality of life, life expectancy etc, but it will be important to ensure that local services have the capacity to cope with the additional numbers and also that staff have received full cultural competency training. Equal access to these services is critical given the youthful population – the survey demonstrated that the current school age generation is still finding it difficult to capitalize on educational opportunities;
  - **Building relationships with settled communities.** Unfortunately, prejudice and misconceptions about Gypsies/Travellers persist in settled communities and it is unlikely that any community will be completely open to the idea of a Gypsies/Travellers site, however small, within their midst. Local authorities will have to work hard with the local community prior to sites being introduced to debunk myths and strong prejudices which will be held. Communities will also need assurances that any anti-social behaviour emanating from sites will be dealt with appropriately; likewise any anti-social behaviour towards Gypsies/Travellers from the settled community should be dealt with appropriately. The Good Neighbour Codes used by the Local authorities may go some way to trying to reach a balance between the settled community and Gypsy/Traveller encampments, but it is unclear from the research how effective these are.

- **Adaptations** – significant numbers of Gypsies/Travellers have mobility problems and other impairments which impact upon their ability to complete daily tasks. Adaptations to pitch slabs (ramps, ensuring levels surfaces etc) chalets (such as handrails and supports, level access showers etc) can significantly improve quality of life for all people but especially for those Gypsies/Travellers with impairments.

### Living in Bricks and Mortar Housing: Push or Pull?

- 5.28. One of the interests in this study was to establish whether there was any appreciable difference between Gypsies/Travellers households living on sites and those living in bricks and mortar housing – and what bearing this had on the decision by some Gypsies/Travellers to live in housing. In considering the following discussions, the small size of the sample achieved needs to be borne in mind, as well as the relative complexity of many of the accommodation arrangements uncovered during the survey.
- 5.29. There was evidence that many of the features distinctive to Gypsy/Traveller culture, such as multi-generational families, transfer from sites into housing. There was also clear evidence of arrangements between families living on overcrowded sites and those living in housing, where relatives in housing would take nieces or nephews to live with them for extended periods.
- 5.30. Among those with children, the perception that most 'schemes' of social rented housing suffer endemic drug misuse and that their children would be under threat from such a move was widespread and very powerful. It seems to deter some tenants on official sites from ever considering a move to social rented housing.
- 5.31. Among those accessed through this research, there was no obvious generational split between those wanting to live in housing and those who did not - some younger people were amenable to the idea, others were firmly against it, and vice versa. Among this population, no rigid assumptions can be made of a 'generational shift' towards a more 'assimilated' way of life by living in ordinary housing.
- 5.32. Evidence supplied by a Registered Social Landlord suggests that housing may be a popular choice for single females or households headed by a single female (although sample sizes are too small to make any further generalisations). Of the 14 identified Gypsies/Travellers applicants recorded since December 2007, 12 were headed by a single female. The majority of these were already living in the Grampian area (almost all in Aberdeen, with one living in Aberdeenshire), usually on encampments or with 'no fixed abode', although 4 of the cases identified had made applications from, Glasgow, Montrose and Perth. Further details on these applicants can be found in the Local Area Profiles in the Appendix.
- 5.33. Approaches were made to all the housing associations known to operate in the Grampian area. Of these, only one recorded this information and could make it available.
- 5.34. Gypsies/Travellers who move into housing do so for a number of reasons, but whatever these may be, they do not necessarily mean that they are leaving the travelling lifestyle entirely behind. For some, a house is simply a base for

the winter period, from which they go travelling during the spring and summer months. For others, a shift to housing represented a desire to settle or obtain privacy from relatives and other Gypsies/Travellers.

- 5.35. These at times conflicting needs and aspirations exerted both 'push' and 'pull' on decisions to opt for bricks and mortar accommodation.

#### **'Push'?**

- 5.36. The majority of families who discussed their reasons for opting for housing felt they were being pushed into this particular accommodation choice. Two households chose housing because a site had closed down or those sites they had applied to were full. Another young family in Moray, who were living on encampments, felt that as there was no other choice; they were forced to opt for housing and had been on the housing list for 2 years. A cousin who travelled with them had been on the housing list for 6 months. At the time of interview they claimed to have been on the road, non-stop, for 18 months, staying mostly in the Elgin area.
- 5.37. However, in some cases there was a hankering to eventually return to site living. One respondent mentioned that her 19 year old son wanted to move from his council tenancy in Grampian onto a site but that the unavailability of provision had made that impossible. Another respondent, who had been a socially rented tenant for some years, felt very strongly that he had been forced into housing and was prepared to make a stand for site accommodation.

*I won't stay in my house, I hate it. I'll pull on to every bit of council land I can to prove a point.*

#### **'Pull'?**

- 5.38. In other cases, evidence suggested that Gypsies/Travellers had opted for housing because it was a preferred choice. Two households in the Moray area had opted for housing in order to access, respectively, health and education services. For the latter, the issue was one of regular access to doctor's services and being able to give an address, and it was implied that if a site could offer a stable address, that option might be preferable. The other family felt that living in a house made it easier for their children to attend school and also made their children less of a target for harassment at school, as it made them less visible than living in a trailer.
- 5.39. For households such as the one quoted below, there was the attraction of having a secure, permanent base from which they could then travel that a long term tenancy in socially rented housing offered.

*I wanted to have a house that I could leave to travel. It's important that this has a good location because I have a fear of being closed in.*

#### **Availability of information and support**

- 5.40. Aberdeen City and Moray Councils maintain links with Gypsy/Traveller populations through a Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer and relevant officers within appropriate local authority departments. Aberdeenshire Council does

not currently have a Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer, but maintains links through the work done by GTEIP and officers from relevant local authority departments. Tenants groups, such as TIGHRA also provide a mechanism for consulting with Gypsies/Travellers and to some degree, offering information and support.

### ***Accessing information and support***

- 5.41. Gypsies/Travellers consulted in the research did not show great awareness of their general rights, or of information services that might help them to gain a better understanding of their entitlements. Only ten of them had approached an organisation for information and advice, 7 of these on council sites, and 3 on private sites. Time constraints on interviews with housed and encampment-based Gypsies/Travellers meant that no information was directly gathered on accessing information and assistance. However, it was clear that many of these households preferred to use GTEIP as a resource for accessing information, assistance with making applications for services and advice.
- 5.42. The majority of those who had approached an organisation for information and advice had approached the Citizen's Advice Bureau (7). One respondent had also used a solicitor; the enquiries related to benefits (3), planning (3), housing (1) and legal rights (1).
- 5.43. The role of site managers was however, key. In the Aberdeen City area the role of the Site Manager/GTLO was combined into a single job. The site manager was clearly a key contact for tenants, often the first person they went to. Seven respondents on council sites said this was how they preferred to be given information. The help given could range from providing bin bags and filling in forms, to floating support for tenant families. On account of the dual role, the Aberdeen Site Manager/GTLO was also providing support to Gypsies/Travellers on encampments.
- 5.44. There was also some evidence that the owner of the private site in Findhorn was assisting his tenants with explanations and advice. In these settings the wider family were often part of an informal network of advice and support.
- 5.45. Generally speaking, the type of support site managers/owners could give centred around a single pressing issue, and was delivered on a personal, face to face basis. This was the type of contact Gypsies/Travellers expressed a preference for. For general information from the local authority to all residents, respondents indicated that a letter would be their preference.
- 5.46. With the exception of GTEIP (see below) there were perceived to be no outlets for specialist advice or support aimed at Gypsies/Travellers, beyond local authority officials. A few respondents (3) felt that a helpline or other easily accessible resource that dealt specifically with Gypsy/Traveller related problems would be useful, especially concerning legal issues. Five respondents felt that a leaflet clearly laying out available information would be preferable.
- 5.47. There were three instances where Gypsies/Travellers had contacted a planning agent to help them in the building and design of a site, and in negotiating difficulties such as securing planning permission. The planner

had a track record of assisting Gypsies/Travellers to build sites (in places such as Fife and Perth and Kinross), so may have come to the attention of these families by word of mouth. Of the three cases two had been successful, one because a licence was already in place and only required slight adjustments. In the other two instances this agent had successfully assisted Gypsies/Travellers in obtaining planning permission, in another the applicant decided to withdraw the application because he perceived the local opposition to be significant.

- 5.48. Another respondent felt it was vital that Gypsies/Travellers organised themselves to put joint pressure on local authorities and central government, and felt particularly strongly, that meaningful change would not happen until Gypsies/Travellers became directly involved in local and national politics. The individual had a past history as a spokesperson on Gypsy/Traveller issues at national and regional level. They also retained a degree of scepticism about this approach, given the difficulties in making these arrangements among Gypsies/Travellers.
- 5.49. Aside from a few individuals, the majority of Gypsies/Travellers interviewed had little to say on how they would wish to be involved in decision making. A few mentioned GTEIP as an intermediary, but the most widely supported option was for a Residents/Tenants Association (20), although this may have been influenced by the recent creation of such a group on Clinterty, and efforts by Greenbanks tenants to attend meetings to have the toilets upgraded at their site. Aberdeenshire's Tenant Participation Promotion Team have been working in conjunction with TIGHRA (see 1.4) to produce an information leaflet for tenants at Clinterty and Greenbanks as well as investigating the possibility of a Gypsy/Traveller advocate specifically for housing.

### **GTEIP**

- 5.50. GTEIP currently plays an important role as a service provider in the areas of education and housing for Gypsies/Travellers in Grampian. The organisation is based in Aberdeen and covers all three local authorities, with a single worker for Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire, and another for Moray. Through service level agreements with the three local authorities the organisation delivers independent advice, advocacy and support for Gypsies/Travellers families in the region. Key workers make site visits (often in conjunction with local authority officers and people who work with Gypsies/Travellers), and there was evidence of a strong rapport and close working relationship between GTEIP staff and certain local authority officers.
- 5.51. Although this report does not set out to evaluate the work of GTEIP, the central role played by this organisation in providing advice and support to Gypsies/Travellers make it an important factor in future decision making.
- 5.52. The individual Service Level Agreements (SLAs) allow GTEIP to deliver services related to education and housing support. The nature of this support can range from organising classes at a Gypsies/Travellers site, to assistance in filling in forms and submitting housing/homeless applications.
- 5.53. Education is central to the GTEIP remit. The organisation works with primary age children who have not attended school, and young people 12-17 years old who do not attend school due either to interruptions in their learning or

their parent's desire to withhold them from mainstream school provision. There are plans to offer additional learning provision in the form of a layered adult education programme developed in collaboration with Moray College and Youth services, for interrupted learners who wish to attend college. The organisation was piloting adult learning provision by the close of the project.

- 5.54. GTEIP appeared to be a well established fixture in services for Gypsies/Travellers and was often the first contact between Gypsies/Travellers entering the area and 'officialdom'. The organisation will work with any Gypsies/Travellers who are willing, and there was clear evidence that strong networks of trust and familiarity had developed between GTEIP workers and Gypsies/Travellers resident in the area, or who regularly used unofficial encampment locations.
- 5.55. Others were more critical of its role, and felt the organisation was somewhat 'toothless', though this may be because the Gypsies/Travellers were looking for something more than an advocacy role. There was also evidence from some respondents that GTEIP representatives were mistaken for local authority officials (or vice versa).
- 5.56. Such criticisms were acknowledged by GTEIP workers themselves, who recognised that there were limitations on what they could achieve. One of them described their position as:

*Currently working to capacity – there is myself and a part time worker, when there should really be two full time workers for the...area. We have a community development worker for 10 hours and now I'm at 32 hours. There is never proper cover for the service and there should always be 1 male, 1 female available. Aberdeenshire should [have an even larger team] as it is larger and more geographically diverse.*

- 5.57. Awareness of GTEIP varied among respondents. Tenants on the Clinterty site knew a great deal about the organisation and used it regularly, as did those on encampments in Moray and Aberdeen. Knowledge of GTEIP was limited among tenants on Greenbanks and the Pitmedden Road private site, and limited among those on the private site in Moray.

## Summary of Key Points

### ***Demand for Site-Based Provision***

- There is a clear desire among Gypsies/Travellers to retain the practice of living with their extended family and friends, in trailers or mobile homes, with the option of pulling on or off if they so choose.
- There is an estimated demand for up to 35 pitches across the Grampian area. At local authority level this breaks down to 0 in Aberdeen city, 12 in Aberdeenshire and 23 in Moray.
- The development of privately owned sites was a common aspiration among Gypsies/Travellers in Grampian. Many felt money and planning restrictions made this difficult to achieve.

### ***Equalities and Accommodation Needs and Aspirations***

- There is a strong preference towards smaller sites which can accommodate an extended family. This is felt to ensure greater harmony between Gypsies/Travellers and with the settled community.
- There is a desire to live among family and other kin, as well as the potential to travel which is highly regarded by Gypsies/Travellers and is seen as an integral part of their culture.
- Equalities issues impacts on the provision of information, tenancy agreements, local services, adaptations and wider relationships with the settled community.

### ***Living in Bricks and Mortar Housing: Push or Pull?***

- There was evidence that many of the features distinctive to Gypsy/Traveller culture, such as multi-generational families, transfer from sites into housing. This included taking nieces or nephews to live with them for extended periods.
- There was a strong perception that most 'schemes' of social rented housing suffer endemic drug misuse and that Gypsy/Traveller children would be under threat from such a move.
- Evidence supplied by a Registered Social Landlord suggests that housing may be a popular choice for single females or households headed by a single female (although sample sizes are too small to make any further generalisations). Of the 14 identified Gypsies/Travellers applicants recorded since December 2007, 12 were headed by a single female.
- Gypsies/Travellers who move into housing are usually seeking a base for the winter period or have a desire to settle or obtain privacy from relatives and other Gypsies/Travellers. Others had moved into housing due to site closure.
- There were some families who felt they were being pushed into housing as there were no sites and it was not possible to camp or develop their own provision. Many young males said they intended to travel again upon leaving their parent's home.
- Other households had opted for housing in order to gain easier access health and education services. Some also appreciated having a secure base from which to travel.

### ***Availability of information and support***

- Aberdeen City and Moray Councils maintain links with Gypsy/Traveller populations through a Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer and relevant officers within appropriate local authority departments. Aberdeenshire Local authority does not currently have a Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer.
- All three local authorities maintain links with Gypsies/Travellers through GTEIP. Tenants groups, such as TIGHRA also provide a mechanism for

consulting with Gypsies/Travellers and to some degree, offering information and support.

- Gypsies/Travellers consulted in the research did not show great awareness of their general rights, or of information services that might help them to gain a better understanding of their entitlements. Of those who had accessed such services, most had used the Citizen's Advice Bureaux or GTEIP.
- There is some support for a specialist advice service and the use of Resident's Associations, though many remain sceptical about the possibility of collective action.
- Site managers were the key contact for their tenants and in many cases their preferred source of information and advice. This role also seemed to be played, to a limited degree, on a privately owned site.
- Some Gypsies/Travellers had used planning agents for applications to build their own site accommodation.

## 6. OVERARCHING PRIORITIES AND ACTION PLAN

- 6.1. This section considers some of the overarching priorities arising from the research findings, and puts forward an Action Plan designed to meet four outcomes for improving provision for Gypsies/Travellers in Grampian.
- 6.2. The priorities and actions identified here do not seek to repeat recommendations from other reports or studies, but refers to them where they are relevant or corroborative. Nor do they seek to address all of the overarching issues identified, only those most key to improving accommodation and accommodation choice for Gypsies/Travellers in the region. What has become clear from the research findings and options appraisal work with local authority officers, those who work with Gypsies/Travellers and Gypsies/Travellers themselves, is that there is a need for a holistic approach which addresses a number of issues, from new provision to housing support.
- 6.3. The demand from all quarters was for a strategic approach that covered housing, planning, environmental health, health and education, with a number of different outcomes tailored to actual conditions and the features of each locality. This could create a 'mixed economy' that included public and private provision, combined with support services that meet the specific needs of Gypsies/Travellers.
- 6.4. Due to insights gained from the key interview stage and long term working with officers and those who work with Gypsies/Travellers in the area, it is recommended that local authorities adopt a joint working approach unless otherwise specified, and that individual local authorities take 'corporate ownership' of strategies to meet the accommodation needs of Gypsies/Travellers in their area. While specific departments, such as housing or environmental health might naturally take the lead in achieving these, resolving the issues raised by this research will involve many other local authority services, such as education, equality, planning, social work and other organisations. Delivering the outcomes detailed below can only be achieved if there is clear and strong commitment and leadership within the local authority, which is then communicated to all levels of local authority activity.
- 6.5. Taking these priorities into account we recommend local authorities take steps to achieve the following four outcomes:

**Outcome 1: Better planning by local authorities and partner organisations to anticipate, and plan to meet, the future needs and aspirations of Gypsies/Travellers in Grampian.**

**Outcome 2: Gypsies/Travellers normally resident in Grampian and Gypsies/Travellers visiting the area have accommodation that meets their needs, culture and lifestyle;**

**Outcome 3: Individual support and community development needs are identified and met;**

**Outcome 4: Better and more constructive relationships are developed between Gypsies/Travellers and settled communities.**

- 6.6. More detail on the thinking behind these four outcomes is given below, with an Action Plan which details service delivery outcomes and related actions recommended to achieve them provided at the end of the chapter for the consideration of the three local authorities.

**Outcome 1: Better planning by local authorities and partner organisations to anticipate, and plan to meet, the future needs and aspirations of Gypsies/Travellers in Grampian.**

- 6.7. Information on Gypsies/Travellers can be patchy and, at times, of low quality. Ensuring better and more consistent information emerged as a clear priority from the inception of the project and throughout.
- 6.8. Managing unauthorised encampments has emerged as a major issue and will continue to be important as part of a coherent strategy for developing new provision and ensuring it functions properly. An encampment management strategy should be common to all three local authorities and will also feed into other outcomes, such as developing new provision (**Outcome 2**) and improving relations between Gypsies/Travellers and settled communities (**Outcome 4**).
- 6.9. In addition to a coherent strategy for **managing unauthorised encampments** that links into new provision, other priorities that feed into this particular outcome include updating and improving the evidence base on **accommodation needs and preferences**, and drawing **useful lessons for future research**.

**Levels and Patterns of Unauthorised Encampments**

- 6.10. With the exception of information gathered from encampment reports, the data on unauthorised encampments presented in this report is collected from the *Twice Yearly Count*. The Scottish Government should consider making the full range of data collected (for example, on neighbouring local authorities) through the Count available to local authorities to assist them in the identification of emerging trends and needs in relation to different types of accommodation.
- 6.11. Based solely on the limited parameters of the *Twice Yearly Count of Gypsies/Travellers in Scotland*, the population of Gypsies/Travellers in Grampian rises by more than 100% every summer. This suggests a need for provision to help address the number of encampments in the region at this time of year. The Policy and Strategy Committee at Aberdeen City Council decided to end the search for halting sites and has been looking into adapting the Clinterty site for this purpose instead. The other two local authorities are still considering ways and means to set up these facilities in their areas. Evidence suggests that the three local authorities could benefit from taking a joint approach, so as to create a network of such provision to allow for cooperation in dealing with particularly large influxes of Gypsies/Travellers.
- 6.12. Allied to this, local authorities should continue to ensure that those wanting to apply for a pitch on a site or apply for a move to a social rented house do make an application. Otherwise need goes unrecorded, as highlighted in the findings of this study.

- 6.13. Local authorities should continue to ensure that their regular visits to each Gypsies/Travellers household living on unauthorised encampments include procedures that can establish and monitor individual household needs, and also clarify whether any action requires to be taken e.g. need for equipment and adaptations, need to apply for housing, overcrowding etc. These should be reviewed regularly.

### **Updating Evidence on Accommodation Needs and Preferences**

- 6.14. A particular requirement of this research was to make recommendations on how information on accommodation needs and preferences of Gypsies/Travellers could be updated on an ongoing basis without the need for conducting large scale research such as this study.
- 6.15. It is recommended that local authorities (with GTEIP) should continue to work jointly, on a regional basis, to identify and address the accommodation needs and preferences of Gypsies/Travellers households. This is not only more cost effective but developing commonly agreed regional responses are likely to be the most appropriate approach. Focussed research will still be required and we would suggest carrying this out every five years.
- 6.16. These updates should look at overall regional and national trends in the Gypsies/Travellers population and existing levels and usage of official site provision, with a view to assessing the future of Clinterty and Greenbanks. This should be based on evidence of changing patterns and levels of demand for council sites e.g. waiting lists, turn aways etc, where this is available.

### **Lessons for Future Research**

- 6.17. There are a number of valuable lessons that can be learned from the experience and findings of this research, in particular: as it takes some time to progress through the household survey questionnaire (up to an hour where the case is particularly complex), it would be advantageous to future research if it could be more tightly focused in its remit and not seek to address such a wide range of issues.
- 6.18. Assessing housing need also unpacks a range of other contributory factors where Gypsies/Travellers are concerned, and now that this research has established the broad themes, further research should look closely at particular issues.
- 6.19. Building up a good relationship with key Local authority staff, Registered Social Landlords (who may have valuable information on Gypsies/Travellers making applications) intermediaries etc. as well as leaders among the Gypsies/Travellers community has also been shown to be critical to the success of any research.
- 6.20. The research has confirmed that where co-operation and access can successfully be negotiated, there is no need to involve Gypsies/Travellers in the research team itself. It is in any case often not desirable, for reasons around confidentiality and tensions between different families/households. This is contrary to some research opinion.

## Summary of Key Points

### *Levels and Patterns of Unauthorised Encampments*

- The Scottish Government should consider making the full range of data collected through the Count available to local authorities to assist them in the identification of emerging trends and needs in relation to different types of accommodation.
- To ensure need is recorded, local authorities and RSLs should take regular steps to ensure that those wanting to apply for a pitch on a site or apply for a move to a social rented house do make an application.
- Local authorities and RSLs may also wish to include procedures to establish and monitor any particular needs in their regular visits to unauthorised encampments.

### *Updating Evidence on Accommodation Needs and Preferences*

- Local authorities should continue to work jointly on a regional basis to identify and address the accommodation needs and preferences of Gypsies/Travellers households. Studies such as this should be updated at least every 5 years.
- Further updates should look at overall regional and national trends in the Gypsies/Travellers Population and existing levels and usage of official site provision.

### *Lessons for Future Research*

- Future research should be more tightly focussed in its remit and not seek to address such a wide range of issues.
- Future research projects in this area should look at particular areas in detail – for example, housed Gypsies/Travellers.
- It is not recommended that Gypsies/Travellers themselves be used to help undertake this type of household survey related research due to issues around confidentiality and tensions between different families/households.

### **Service Delivery Outcomes**

6.21. To meet these priorities local authorities should look to achieve the following Service Delivery Outcomes (see Action Plan)

- 1. An Encampment Management Strategy is established for the whole Grampian area.**
- 2. Updated information on accommodation and support needs for Gypsies/Travellers in Grampian is provided.**
- 3. Gypsies/Travellers' accommodation and support needs are integrated into Local Housing Strategies and other appropriate local authority strategies.**

- 6.22. A detailed list of actions is given in the Action Plan at the end of this chapter.

**Outcome 2: Gypsies/Travellers normally resident in Grampian and Gypsies/Travellers visiting the area have accommodation that meets their needs, culture and lifestyle.**

- 6.23. This outcome was derived from priorities that centred around whether accommodation needs were being met, and if so, met in a way that was sustainable and appropriate to Gypsies/Travellers' needs, culture and lifestyle. Its premise is that the failure to take these into account has contributed to the ineffectiveness of current provision and to a growing interest in privately developed sites. The themes that emerged most strongly in developing this outcome were **site investment, managing encampments, allocations and planning.**

**Overall Priorities for Investment in New Sites**

- 6.24. In relation to site based accommodation for Gypsies/Travellers, evidence from the findings and consultation with officers, those who work with Gypsies/Travellers on a regular basis and key workers suggests there is no single priority, though some may need to be given greater initial prominence. These include weighing up the need for further investment in existing provision on an ongoing and regular basis against the development of additional permanent sites, and the possibility of developing halting sites to serve the region and alleviate the difficulties caused by unauthorised encampments.
- 6.25. Two of the key factors in considering investment in new sites are the availability of central government funding on the one hand, and political will on the other, especially in driving through potentially controversial developments such as halting sites.
- 6.26. It is evident, through the difficulties experienced with both of the council sites (where one has become the province of a single family and the poor reputation and location of the other seems to put many potential tenants off) that there is a degree of financial risk in developing new provision. In one instance this has meant a significant portion of revenue is lost to vandalism and subsequent renovation. In another, as at Greenbanks, a publicly owned site has become exclusive and raises questions as to whether it continues to contribute to provision.

**Investing in New Sites or Reorganising Provision**

- 6.27. The study identified a need for up to 35 pitches including transit provision. We would consider this to be the higher end of need across the three local authorities. The new provision should be based on small sites developed to meet local need; that would include short-term halting sites, permanent council sites and, potentially, sites that are privately owned and developed, perhaps in partnership with local authorities.
- 6.28. Based on the research evidence, Moray would be a priority for a new permanent site to be developed. Data gathered at interview and from the Scottish Government's *Twice Yearly Count* suggests that the number of encampments – and the resultant tensions between Gypsies/Travellers and

the settled community – has increased since the site at Channonry ceased to exist. Between 1999 and 2003, the average number of encampments recorded at the July count was 15. Since the site closure in 2004, the July average has increased to 26. Furthermore, interview evidence suggests that in addition to the needs of encampment based Gypsies/Travellers, at least part of the housed Gypsies/Travellers community in the area would prefer to be living on a site. Future demand from emerging households, who may at present be living on encampments, in housing or on council sites in the other local authorities, will also need to be taken into account.

- 6.29. At present, much of the support for Gypsies/Travellers with issues that contribute to the general quality of their lives, such as accommodation, adaptations, literacy, health and legal matters is tied to site provision (i.e. the site manager), although it is recognised that the local authorities and GTEIP do make efforts to reach out to Gypsies/Travellers in other forms of accommodation. The three local authorities should look at how floating support could best cover Gypsies/Travellers in encampments, houses and official sites.
- 6.30. The lack of a site at present makes it much harder for the Moray Council to move on those Gypsies/Travellers living on encampments, as they do not have other accommodation options. Moreover, some members of the community are choosing to camp on Moray Council owned land in order to make a protest about the lack of provision in the area.
- 6.31. There is also a question as to whether the site at Greenbanks should continue to operate as it currently does, and it may be worth exploring the possibility of selling the site to the Gypsies/Travellers who use it, and re-provisioning elsewhere. However, evidence suggests that choice of location, as well as the nature and makeup of any such new sites will be of crucial importance. Care needs to be taken to maximise the chances of success.
- 6.32. All three local authorities have an encampment problem, though there is some reason to believe the nature of this differs at a local level, with Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire mostly attracting Gypsies/Travellers for work (though there is some evidence that at least some Aberdeenshire households were searching, in vain, for accommodation in the area) and Moray attracting some work-related visitors, but also retaining a number of households seeking site-based accommodation.
- 6.33. Meeting this requirement for additional pitches may include looking at alternative arrangements, especially in assisting those Gypsies/Travellers who can, to identify and develop their own provision. This may be private sites, or a more flexible approach to using land, perhaps through semi-official encampments or Gypsy/Traveller developed stopping places. A mechanism to allow this may be to build in pitch targets or assessed need into local development plans to assist officers in negotiating the various barriers to developing such proposals.
- 6.34. Additional funding, perhaps from the Scottish Government would be needed to assist these developments. Local authorities may want to consider joint applications with each other, or even RSLs to help share costs. The three authorities benefit from having joint working operations already in place.

### **Investing in Council Sites**

- 6.35. At present, Aberdeen City is the only one of the three local authorities to have made an application to the current round of the Scottish Government's Site Development Fund, for a comprehensive refit of the Clinterty site near Blackburn.
- 6.36. Neither the Moray Council nor Aberdeenshire Council has applied for any of the Scottish Government Site Development Fund. In Moray's case, this was because site searches invariably centred on the same communities, who might feel singled out, and the conditions attached to the Scottish Government grant were onerous in that planning permission was required before an application could be made. In Aberdeenshire's case, the local authority has not yet been able to identify suitable land.
- 6.37. Meanwhile, all three local authorities face media opposition to the development of provision for Gypsies/Travellers and difficulties in generating political support to ensure reforms are carried out.
- 6.38. As a matter of priority and in line with previous guidance from the Scottish Government, local authorities should put sound plans in place for the planned, cyclical maintenance and ongoing upgrading of the sites they own. Both the landlords in question have done so and should continue to review these procedures on an ongoing basis.
- 6.39. There is also strong evidence that the current model on which sites are planned and laid out does not reflect Gypsy/Traveller culture and is somewhat flawed. In such an instance, one of two things will happen; Gypsies/Travellers will avoid such sites, as appears to be happening with Clinterty, or they will take them over, as at Greenbanks. The balance of evidence suggests a preference for small, family oriented sites that offer a permanent place in the winter or which, during the summer, will be of sufficiently small size so as to ensure large groups of Gypsies/Travellers do not mingle with each other. This would at least pose a solution for Scottish Gypsies/Travellers or English Romanies. There is evidence from GTLOs and GTEIP workers that Irish Travellers tend to form much larger groupings, and so might need larger facilities. The system of transit sites in Middlezoy, near Somerset, may be worthy of further analysis for possible useful lessons.

### **Allocations Policy on Council Sites**

- 6.40. Another factor in provision is the way in which allocations are made. Evidence from this research suggests that a strictly needs based approach along the lines of that used to allocate social rented housing (as recommended in former Communities Scotland guidance) is not without considerable risk. Such an approach can run the risk of particular sites becoming disused or failing, which might explain why Clinterty seems generally under-used. Issues around this site are complex, for although there is no waiting list for Clinterty, there is evidence from encampments and housed Gypsies/Travellers that they feel they need a site in the Aberdeen area, but do not feel they can use Clinterty. There might also be lessons to be learned from Channonry's failure in Elgin, given that accounts from the household survey describe feuds and intimidation of one family by another. This can threaten previous investment and mean that provision is unable to cater for its target. Lacking a specific legislative framework that deals with

equalities impact on Gypsy/Traveller accommodation, and having to balance the pragmatic need to accommodate Gypsies/Travellers households, it is not certain that a strictly needs-based approach is practicable.

- 6.41. This policy area is highly complex with many tensions, including those of meeting need, equalities legislation, the maintenance of site harmony and convincing Gypsies/Travellers that if they use provision it will be safe and secure. These are widely recognised, not only by many of the people consulted in this research, but also across the UK. Another accommodation assessment carried out in West Central Scotland argued for a national review to be undertaken by the Scottish Government/Communities Scotland on this subject, to try to develop a consistent and practical approach with a wide base of support. This recommendation still stands, and as local authorities attempt to deal with the ongoing issue of Gypsy/Traveller accommodation, the need for a national review remains.

### **Planning and Private Sites**

- 6.42. There is a need to consider how planning processes can be improved, or better explained, to Gypsies/Travellers in Grampian.
- 6.43. There is some evidence that lack of education and issues with literacy make it especially difficult for Gypsies/Travellers to negotiate the planning process. Although literacy problems are also experienced by others, Gypsies/Travellers however, also experience other problems which create additional difficulties, in particular, a greater likelihood that their planning applications will be opposed because of hostility from the local community. It is this particular combination of obstacles that makes it difficult for them to successfully negotiate the planning process.
- 6.44. With the goal of supporting a more fair and equitable approach to Gypsy/Traveller led developments, local authorities may be able to form useful partnerships with appropriate bodies to offer specialist planning advice to families looking to develop their sites and offer support Gypsies/Travellers through the process. They should also work strategically to ensure Gypsies/Travellers applications are not prevented by 'NIMBYism'. This may require enforcement of equalities and race good practice and legislation more effectively to exclude objections that are clearly based solely on racial prejudice as opposed to expressing legitimate concerns. Effective media management will also be crucial in ensuring applications receive a fair hearing.
- 6.45. Some assurance might be given to elected members and the wider community if a closer relationship could be built between private sites and local authorities, to ensure a high standard of accommodation and amenities (although the private sites in the study area all seemed to be offering a high standard of provision). This might include the introduction of regular inspections and/or the development of an accreditation system.

### **Summary of Key Points**

#### ***Overall Priorities for Site Investment***

- Key issues for Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire are the future of the sites at Clinterty and Greenbanks. In both cases, re-provisioning to new

facilities should be considered in light of their actual contribution to provision in the area.

- The Moray Council should consider the current absence of permanent site provision, its ongoing impact on Gypsies/Travellers in their area and subsequent impact on the settled community.
- All three local authorities need to consider the possibility of developing Halting Sites.
- There is a need to consider the potential of central government funding to assist with the improvement and possible reorganization of site provision, perhaps through a joint approach.

### ***Investing in New Sites or Reorganising Provision***

- The study identified a need for up to 35 pitches including transit provision. Moray would be a priority for the development of a new permanent site.
- New provision should be based on small sites (6-10 pitches) developed to meet local need and fit more closely with Gypsy/Traveller culture, that would include short-term halting sites, permanent council sites and potentially, privately owned sites developed by Gypsies/Travellers, possibly in partnership with local authorities.
- Aberdeenshire may wish to consider selling Greenbanks to the Gypsies/Travellers who use the site.
- Evidence suggests that the three local authorities might want to take a joint approach, to create a network of transit provision that allows for cooperation in dealing with particularly large influxes of Gypsies/Travellers.
- Halting sites may need to offer a mixture of small, family-oriented sites and larger sites to accommodate those Gypsies/Travellers who travel in very large groups.
- Local authorities should look at how floating support around 'quality of life' issues could be targeted to help Gypsies/Travellers with their accommodation needs.

### ***Investing in Council Sites***

- Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Local authorities should continue to regularly update their plans for the planned, cyclical maintenance and ongoing upgrading of the sites they own.

### ***Allocations Policy on Council Sites***

- A strictly-needs based approach along the lines of that used to allocate social rented housing (as recommended in former

Communities Scotland guidance) runs the risk of making sites difficult to manage and even ineffective.

- There is a need for a national review on allocations policies for Gypsies/Travellers sites and the fit with the Equalities and Housing agenda.

### ***Planning and Private Sites***

- Gypsies/Traveller face particular disadvantages with the planning process. Specialist advice and support may be helpful in encouraging more Gypsies/Travellers to develop their own sites.
- Local authorities should look at how equalities and race discrimination policies could be used where racist or discriminatory attitudes have motivated opposition to planned developments.
- Local authorities should look at the role of good media management in handling applications.
- Local authorities may want to consider regular inspections of privately owned sites and potentially an accreditation scheme.

### **Service Delivery Outcomes**

6.46. To meet these priorities local authorities should look to achieve the following Service Delivery Outcomes (see Action Plan)

- 1. Accommodation is reorganised to meet the needs of current users and an additional 35 pitches are provided.**
- 2. Provision is of high quality and well-maintained, meeting the highest standards in line with current Scottish Government Guidance.**
- 3. Provisions for privately developed Gypsies/Travellers sites are incorporated into local development plans.**

6.47. A detailed list of actions is given in the Action Plan at the end of this chapter.

### **Outcome 3: Individual support and community development needs are identified and met.**

6.48. It became apparent that in addition to 'physical' accommodation needs there were also a range of individual and floating support requirements that were crucial in determining accommodation choice, and whether Gypsies/Travellers provision would prove effective and sustainable. Issues around literacy, health, mental health, harassment and perceived discrimination led to a very particular set of support needs, some of which have further implications for overall community development. Housed Gypsies/Travellers, who can be cut off from old and established support networks that exist on sites and encampments, appeared to be particularly vulnerable.

6.49. Ultimately, until such needs are met at an individual/family level, it is difficult to envisage significant community development taking hold, or better relationships with the settled community becoming possible.

6.50. Priorities emerged under the themes of **those who work with Gypsies/Travellers on a regular basis**, and **particular support needs**.

**Those who work with Gypsies/Travellers on a regular basis**

6.51. Evidence suggests that regular, positive engagement with Gypsies/Travellers is crucial to improving conditions for the community. Local authorities should look carefully at how their GTLOs or equivalents work in practice. There is a clear case for separating out such functions from site manager roles, as this can not only be potentially contradictory, but also leave the individual officers over-stretched and unable to deliver a full service.

6.52. Management of Gypsies/Travellers facilities can also appear highly reliant on single individuals (who can be placed under a great deal of pressure), which makes it difficult for those individuals to seek out development and training opportunities, and does not always share expertise in the best way.

6.53. Of the three authorities, Aberdeen seems to have the widest spread of expertise across the GTLO/Site Manager, Equalities Unit and Tenants Participation Team. Aberdeenshire does not have a GTLO but has Gypsies/Travellers included in the activities of its Equalities and Tenants Participation teams.

6.54. GTEIP has played a crucial role in service delivery in the Grampian area. It has become an important link between Gypsies/Travellers, local authorities and agencies and should continue to play this role. This research did not set out to evaluate GTEIP or its role, and does not seek to make any firm or detailed recommendations in relation to this organisation.

6.55. However, through working closely with GTEIP during the course of the research some observations and tentative conclusions over its continued role in service provision have been reached. There may, for example, be grounds to develop and revise its remit. Evidence suggests that GTEIP workers are overstretched and do not always have the specialist knowledge required. Nor do they have the capacity, at present, to undertake casework for those who most need it.

6.56. The research findings indicate that most Gypsies/Travellers seek help on single issues when and where needed, and most need intermediaries who can explain issues in a clear and concise way. However, for a few members of the community, sustained and regular support may be needed. GTEIP might want to consider how to shift its current role to one based more on 'brokerage' and signposting, helping to identify a service needed by Gypsies/Travellers, and encouraging health and education professionals to make home visits to sites and encampments. This would in turn free up GTEIP workers to spend more time with those Gypsies/Travellers who need it, and develop a casework-centred approach.

6.57. As clients and investors in GTEIP, the local authorities might want to consider how funding arrangements and service level agreements could facilitate this shift as part of a joint approach. This could involve strategic support from the

Inter-Agency Group and TIGHRA who have previously worked with Gypsies/Travellers in the Grampian area.

### **Particular Support Needs**

- 6.58. In relation to illness, disability and adaptations, local authorities should also consider the following:
- consideration of the impact of frequent evictions from encampments upon the mental health of the Gypsies/Travellers communities, perhaps as part of the equalities and human rights assessments that are already carried out before the eviction process begins;
  - consideration of the appropriateness of housing (in particular locations) for Gypsies/Travellers;
  - continued awareness that Gypsies/Travellers' physical and mental health may be adversely affected if they are not allowed leave periods from social housing to travel;
  - partnership working/co-ordination between the local authorities, NHS Grampian and GTEIP where appropriate; local authorities and GTEIP often come into contact with Gypsies/Travellers communities more regularly than the NHS and can therefore act as signposting organisations; and
  - awareness raising and signposting of the types of assistance which can be offered to Gypsies/Travellers with long-term illnesses and disabilities by local authorities, bearing in mind that Gypsies/Travellers may not have access to NHS services and will not therefore receive referral through these means.
- 6.59. Local authorities need to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for the delivery of a comprehensive equipment and adaptations service to Gypsies/Travellers households living on official sites – be they owned by the Local authority or privately. This service should address the need for equipment and/or adaptations relating to amenity blocks as well as individual household accommodation, irrespective of accommodation type (e.g. static or tourer/trailer). This could be organised through existing intermediaries such as GTEIP, provided such an arrangement was properly resourced.
- 6.60. In addition, a number of support issues have been identified by Gypsies/Travellers and those working with them that suggest 'quality of life' is as pressing an issue for many Gypsies/Travellers as accommodation provision. This was especially so in the case of housed Gypsies/Travellers who felt isolated and exposed, often as individuals with little educational experience who found negotiating with authorities to be a difficult – even daunting – prospect.

### **Summary of Key Points**

#### ***Those who work with Gypsies/Travellers on a regular basis***

- There is a case for separating out the functions of a site manager with the role of Gypsy/Traveller liaison officer as this can not only be potentially

contradictory, but also leave the individual officers over-stretched and unable to deliver a full service.

- Evidence suggests that GTEIP workers are overstretched and do not always have the specialist knowledge required. GTEIP might want to consider how to shift its current role to one based more on 'brokerage' and signposting, freeing up GTEIP workers to develop a casework-centred approach.

### ***Particular Support Needs***

- Local authorities need to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for the delivery of a comprehensive equipment and adaptations service to Gypsies/Travellers households living on official sites – be they owned by the Local authority, an RSL or privately.
- Mental health issues should be considered in assessing the impact of evictions, restrictions on travel or appropriateness of housing for Gypsies/Travellers.
- GTEIP should be used as an intermediary and 'broker' between Gypsies/Travellers and the health authorities.
- Local authorities need to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for the delivery of a comprehensive equipment and adaptations service to Gypsies/Travellers households living on official sites – be they owned by the Local authority, an RSL or privately.

### **Service Delivery Outcomes**

6.61. To meet these priorities local authorities should look to achieve the following Service Delivery Outcomes (see Action Plan)

- 1. Gypsies/Travellers access services they need, are more self-reliant and pro-active, and engage more with the wider community.**
- 2. Support, care and health needs of Gypsies/Travellers are better met.**
- 3. Reduced risk of harassment, disadvantage and mental health/isolation issues amongst housed Gypsies/Travellers.**
- 4. Reduced discrimination against Gypsies/Travellers.**

6.62. A detailed list of actions is given in the Action Plan at the end of this chapter.

#### **Outcome 4: Better and more constructive relationships are developed between Gypsies/Travellers and settled communities.**

- 6.63. Tensions between Gypsies/Travellers and the settled community affected their accommodation choices and often put up barriers to arriving at appropriate solutions. Friction over encampments, the development of new council or private sites and mutual distrust made it difficult to move positively to address accommodation and support needs and detracted from the quality of life of all parties concerned. Improving relations and communicating more effectively and constructively over Gypsies/Travellers issues emerged as an important theme and has implications for the fourth outcome, which is related to planning, and is part of the wider case for engaging with the previous two outcomes.
- 6.64. Although grouped under Outcome 1, **levels and patterns of unauthorised encampments** emerged as a major catalyst for tensions between Gypsies/Travellers and the settled community, and so should be considered in the light of any moves to improve relations. Ensuring **Equalities and Diversity Training** is up to date, paying attention to potential discrimination on **holiday sites**, and **considering future approaches to consultation** are also clear priorities.

#### **Equalities and Diversity**

- 6.65. There is evidence (see chapter 3) that in addition to existing training, further equalities and diversity training may need to be updated or delivered more widely across the local authority areas. This would ensure that local authority officers give an approach that is both consistent and in line with equalities requirements. While no direct requests have come from staff, equalities policies are in any case constantly changing and should be updated across all areas. The evidence for this recommendation is based partly on reports from different parts of Grampian that some local authority staff may have used inappropriate language or terminology when interacting with Gypsies/Travellers.
- 6.66. Even taking these to be unusual and isolated incidents, procedures, policies and staff training may need to be updated as a positive step to ensure compliance and emphasise the need for change. There is an opportunity here for the Grampian local authorities to be proactive.
- 6.67. There may be some scope for the Inter-Agency Group to coordinate training between all three authorities and between the different agencies, again, to ensure a joint approach that is consistent wherever Gypsies/Travellers are in contact with the authorities.
- 6.68. The scope and extent of Equalities and Diversity Training should include;
- Discussion of current prejudices and stereotypes, allowing people to voice their misconceptions in this area;
  - Cultural awareness training e.g. low literacy, multi-generational families, types of employment, health problems, the meaning of being a Gypsy/Traveller, housing issues, marginalisation and disenfranchisement;

- Awareness of the impact of encampments on local communities, including likely 'flashpoints where there may be tensions or disputes';
  - Awareness of the effect/impact of prejudice on Gypsies/Travellers;
  - Human rights training and how to negotiate through the potential 'rights clash' between Gypsies/Travellers and settled communities, and how to use human rights as a framework for a possible way forward.
- 6.69. In addition to this training, the local authorities may want to collaborate on measures that encourage more Gypsies/Travellers to report instances of discrimination, perhaps through GTEIP advocacy. This would ensure that isolated incidents of extreme discrimination are identified and dealt with.

### **Holiday Sites**

- 6.70. In conjunction with the Police, local authorities with holiday sites in their area should consider how best to tackle the difficulties experienced by Gypsies/Travellers households in using this form of accommodation. This could include, for example, raising awareness of responsibilities among site owners to meet the terms of anti-discriminatory legislation and the consequences if these are flouted.

### **Future Approaches to Consultation**

- 6.71. Future consultation by landlords of sites such as Clinterty on accommodation related matters should focus on a mixed approach of site based meetings and direct communication with individual households (face to face or by correspondence). Clinterty already has a tenants' group which if successful, could be an important point of contact.
- 6.72. However, there is likely to be a need to develop other potential structures for wider based consultation on accommodation and other matters, especially in Moray, where there is no site provision. There may be some potential to consider the development of a regional and even national panel (akin to a Citizen's Panel) of Gypsies/Travellers who are willing to be consulted on a wide range of issues as individuals rather than as representing the views of others.
- 6.73. Identifying members for such a panel is likely to involve working closely with GTEIP and other services such as education and social work to access such populations or at least to give them the opportunity to have their say. Any consultation arrangements using this mechanism would need to capture the views of different cultural identities within the Gypsies/Travellers population (e.g. Romany, Scottish Traveller etc).

### **Summary of Key Points**

#### ***Equalities and Diversity***

- There is evidence that equalities and diversity training may need to be updated or delivered more widely across the local authority areas.

***Holiday Sites***

- Local authorities with holiday sites in their area (perhaps via the Inter-agency group) should consider how best to tackle the difficulties experienced by Gypsies/Travellers households in accessing these facilities.

***Future Approaches to Consultation***

- This should involve a mixed approach of site based meetings and direct communication with individual households (face to face or by correspondence).
- There may be some potential to consider the development of a regional and even national panel (akin to a Citizen's Panel) of Gypsies/Travellers who are willing to be consulted on a wide range of issues as individuals rather than as representing the views of others.

**Service Delivery Outcomes**

- 6.74. To meet these priorities local authorities should look to achieve the following Service Delivery Outcomes (see Action Plan)
1. **General relations between Gypsies/Travellers and settled communities are improved, with clear guidelines on acceptable behaviour established for both.**
  2. **Increased understanding of the needs, culture and lifestyle of Gypsies/Travellers amongst public sector employees.**
  3. **Improved representation of Gypsies/Travellers in Grampian.**
  4. **Improved consultation with Gypsies/Travellers and the settled community.**
- 6.75. A detailed list of actions is given in the Action Plan at the end of this chapter. Information on how this applies at local level is given in the Local Area Profiles (Appendix 1).

## Action Plan

**Outcome 1 : Better planning by local authorities and partner organisations to anticipate, and plan to meet, the future needs and aspirations of Gypsies/Travellers in Grampian**

	<b>Service Delivery Outcomes</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Target Groups</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timescales</b>
<b>1</b>	An Encampment Management Strategy is established for the whole Grampian area	<p>Ensure consistency of policy, guidance and actions between the local authorities. The local authorities should consider the merits of a cross-boundary approach that will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use the interagency group to oversee Strategy and act as a mechanism for sharing information and intelligence.</li> <li>- Implement a uniform method of collecting information on encampments across Grampian, and of returning these to the Scottish Government as part of the Twice Yearly Count.</li> <li>- Build into possible G/T panel questions useful to planners, environmental health and housing.</li> <li>- Develop shared, standard encampment management policies/guidelines for all three authorities.</li> <li>- Create new provision as part of the regional Encampment Management Strategy. Consider shared sites (i.e. Moray/Aberdeenshire near Huntly, Aberdeen/Aberdeenshire between Inverurie and Dyce)</li> <li>- Build a Grampian network of halting sites of c6 pitches each, with one large capacity site for summer, used in rotation to prevent any one authority being disproportionately affected by unauthorised encampments.</li> </ul>	Gypsies/Travellers visiting the area, or those in need of temporary accommodation who cannot get into either site or housed accommodation normally resident in Grampian.	Gypsies/Travellers Inter agency Group, and individual local authority departments as appropriate.	2010 - ongoing

**Outcome 1(cont'd): *Better planning by Local authorities and linked organisations to anticipate, and plan to meet, the future needs and aspirations of Gypsies/Travellers in Grampian***

	<b>Service Delivery Outcomes</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Target Groups</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timescales</b>
<b>2</b>	Updated information on accommodation and support needs for Gypsies/Travellers in Grampian is provided.	Update and enhance findings of this report. Revisit within five years with smaller scale reviews of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Condition and Repair of Accommodation</li> <li>- Planning.</li> <li>- Unexpressed demand for provision and homelessness</li> <li>- Health issues</li> <li>- Quality of Life</li> <li>- Encampments</li> </ul>	Gypsies/Travellers, all who work with them	Housing services	2014
<b>3</b>	Gypsies/Travellers' accommodation and support needs are integrated into LHS and other appropriate local authority strategies.	Strategic aims, objectives and outcomes for Gypsies/Travellers are integrated into LHS, in reference to other local authority strategies as appropriate. The Local authorities should ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- These outcomes articulate with other areas (i.e. education, social work)</li> <li>- There is consistency in the approach to Gypsies/Travellers issues in all local authority services.</li> </ul>	Staff developing strategic plans (LHS, Local Development Plans)	GT Lead Officers	From 2009 LHS

**Outcome 2: Gypsies/Travellers normally resident in Grampian and Gypsies/Travellers visiting the area have accommodation that meets their needs, culture and lifestyle**

	<b>Service Delivery Outcomes</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Target Groups</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timescales</b>
<b>1</b>	Accommodation is reorganised to meet needs of current users and an additional 35 pitches are provided	ABERDEENSHIRE (pitch target:12) - Consider the sale of Greenbanks, taking into account needs of the current set of users. - Consider sharing pitches on a more permanent site with Aberdeen City (see below) - Re-provision as halting sites located at strategic points in Aberdeenshire (See Encampment management strategy)	Gypsies/Travellers who use Greenbanks and those who regularly visit Aberdeenshire.	Aberdeenshire Local authority Housing and Environmental Health, working with GTEIP	2009-2012
		ABERDEEN (pitch target: 0, but subject to re-provision) - Develop a detailed plan for re-provisioning Clinterty, including considering a reduction of capacity of the site to c10 pitches, with another smaller site (c6-8 pitches) located elsewhere in Aberdeen, possibly shared with Aberdeenshire.	Gypsies/Travellers normally resident in Aberdeen city or making extensive use of the area for most of the year.	Aberdeen City Council Housing Services working with GTEIP	2009-2012
		ABERDEEN - 1-2 Halting sites for high pressure areas.	Gypsies/Travellers visiting Aberdeen	Aberdeen City Council Housing Service, Environmental Health	2011-2013
		MORAY (pitch target: 23) - Develop case for a small permanent site in Moray (c6 pitches), to alleviate encampment problem	Gypsies/Travellers normally resident in Moray	Moray Council Housing Service	2009-2011
		- 1-3 Halting Sites for high pressure areas, one possibly shared with Aberdeenshire	Gypsies/Travellers visiting Moray	Moray Council Housing Service	2011-2013

**Outcome 2 (cont'd): Gypsies/Travellers normally resident in Grampian and Gypsies/Travellers visiting the area have accommodation that meets their needs, culture and lifestyle**

	<b>Service Delivery Outcomes</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Target Groups</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timescales</b>
<b>2</b>	Provision is of high quality and well-maintained, meeting the highest standards in line with current Scottish Government Guidance.	Build upon current approaches to maintenance and upgrading of accommodation in each local authority area, ensuring it applies equally to any new provision to ensure:			
		a) Cyclical upgrades to all Local authority accommodation provided to Gypsies/Travellers	Current Council site tenants	Local authority Housing Services in all areas, working with RSLs.	In place by 2010
		b) Adaptations policy and practice is reviewed for Gypsies/Travellers with particular needs/disabilities, considering <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regular visits and inspections by specialists – i.e. Occupational Therapists, Social Work</li> <li>- to ensure unmet needs/improvements are identified</li> </ul>	Current Council site tenants	Local authority Housing Services in all areas, working with RSLs and Social Services.	In place by 2010
		c) Regular consultations are undertaken with site residents groups and relevant agencies on site layout and maintenance	Current Council site tenants	Local authority Housing Services in all areas, working with RSLs.	By 2010 and ongoing

**Outcome 2 (cont'd): Gypsies/Travellers normally resident in Grampian and Gypsies/Travellers visiting the area have accommodation that meets their needs, culture and lifestyle**

	<b>Service Delivery Outcomes</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Target Groups</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timescales</b>
<b>3</b>	Provisions for privately developed Gypsies/Travellers sites are incorporated into local development plans.	Develop a pilot scheme in one local authority area (but with input from all three local authorities) to assist Gypsy/Traveller consortia/families in identifying and developing plots of land. Main elements are as follows:	Gypsies/Travellers, Planning Departments/Committees/ Environmental Health	Housing and Planning departments, Communication Depts, Legal Team, Gypsies/Travellers	2010-2012
		a) Local authorities take access and literacy into account regarding planning applications, especially as a possible deterrent.	Gypsies/Travellers, Planning Departments/Committees/ Environmental Health	Housing and planning departments, Legal Team	2010-2012
		b) Affordability is built into all plans and proposals, for both buyers and future tenants.	Gypsies/Travellers, Planning Departments/Committees/ Environmental Health	Housing and planning departments	2010 - 2012
		c) Consider the involvement of the Scottish Human Rights Commission in assessing planning consultation process, to ensure that objections submitted are not based on prejudice.	Gypsies/Travellers, Planning Departments/Committees/ Environmental Health	Legal team	2010 2012
		d) Put in place arrangements to ensure good quality provision and that Gypsies/Travellers on private sites are protected; this could involve inspection and accreditation.	Gypsies/Travellers, Planning Departments/Committees/ Environmental Health	Housing Service	2010 – 2012
		e) Evaluate pilot and amend as necessary for roll out in the other areas.	Gypsies/Travellers, Planning Departments/Committees/ Environmental Health	All	By 2013

**Outcome 3: Individual Support and Community Development Needs are identified and met.**

	<b>Service Delivery Outcomes</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Target Groups</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timescales</b>
<b>1</b>	Gypsies/Travellers access services they need, are more self-reliant and pro-active, and engage more with the wider community	Strengthen GTEIP as the major interface with Gypsies/Travellers by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promoting use of GTEIP by other agencies</li> <li>- Assessing the benefits of a 'brokerage' role for GTEIP based on building alliances with key specialist services and incorporate into SLA.</li> <li>- Undertaking information and awareness raising days for Local authority/RSL staff with regard to the work of GTEIP</li> </ul>	GTEIP	GT Lead Officers and GTEIP	2011
		Develop skills and understanding of those Local authority staff who work with Gypsies/Travellers by; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Separating, where not already the case, the role of the GTLO from Site Manager</li> <li>- Ensuring a wider spread of expertise in this area, with training for other housing/environmental health staff in Gypsies/Travellers issues – to ensure there is relief and 'backup'</li> <li>- Encouraging joint training of GTEIP staff and GTLOs to ensure that they are up to date with policy and practice developments in areas such as equalities, site management, conflict resolution</li> <li>- Considering placement for relevant Local authority Staff with GTEIP for agreed periods.</li> </ul>	GTLOs and other staff working closely with Gypsies/Travellers or providing services to them	GT Lead Officers and managers in relevant services	2012

**Outcome 3 (cont'd): Individual Support and Community Development Needs are identified and met.**

	<b>Service Delivery Outcomes</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Target Groups</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timescales</b>
<b>2</b>	Support, care and health needs of Gypsies/Travellers are better met.	Encourage Gypsies/Travellers to access support and care where it would be useful/desirable.	Gypsies/Travellers in Grampian, especially those with long term health and care needs,	GT Lead Officers, GTEIP and local authorities as signposting,	2010
		Encourage engagement from NHS, mental health services, etc <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Properly implement the use of Handheld Health Records, currently with many Doctor's Surgeries</li> <li>- Encouraging new ways, such as outreach, for health needs of Gypsies/Travellers to be met.</li> </ul>	NHS staff	NHS Grampian	2010
<b>3</b>	Reduced risk of harassment, disadvantage and mental health/isolation issues amongst housed Gypsies/Travellers	Develop services for those Gypsies/Travellers who are housed or seeking to be housed, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Specialist housing advice/support for Gypsies/Travellers, brokered through GTEIP</li> <li>- Incorporate recognition of particular needs in housing assessment and allocation procedures</li> <li>- Particular needs recognised; person centred service</li> <li>- Advice line/service on allocations and accommodation choice</li> <li>- Closer involvement with RSLs</li> </ul>	Gypsies/Travellers who are housed or seeking to be housed	Housing (esp officers with responsibilities for vulnerable tenants), social service, NHS Grampian, outside organisations including Mental Health Services, Tenancy Rights, GTEIP.	2011

**Outcome 3 (cont'd): Individual Support and Community Development Needs are identified and met.**

	<b>Service Delivery Outcomes</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Target Groups</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timescales</b>
<b>4</b>	Reduced discrimination against Gypsies/Travellers	Tackle discrimination by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establishing whether commercial/holiday sites are discriminating against Gypsies/Travellers, potentially in consultation with Grampian Police.</li> <li>- Encouraging more Gypsies/Travellers to report instances of discrimination, perhaps through GTEIP advocacy</li> </ul>	Gypsies/Travellers, Local authority/RSL employees and the general public	Housing, environmental health, equalities and other outside agencies including Grampian Police and GTEIP.	2010/11

**Outcome 4: Better and more constructive relationships are developed between Gypsies/Travellers and settled communities.**

	<b>Service Delivery Outcomes</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Target Groups</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timescales</b>
<b>1</b>	General relations between Gypsies/Travellers and settled communities are improved, with clear guidelines on acceptable behaviour established for both.	<p>Local authority wide actions should be taken to ensure all who work with or represent the local authorities are aware of G/T issues and are well informed. All agencies should be involved in trying to counteract myths and better inform both settled communities and Gypsies/Travellers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work together to counter racist media coverage and coordinate legal action where necessary.</li> <li>- Local authorities to develop 'corporate ownership' of policies towards Gypsies/Travellers and ensure a consistent approach among elected members and staff.</li> <li>- Joint responses to press inquiries about Gypsies/Travellers encampments</li> <li>- Create a joint good neighbour code for the whole Grampian area.</li> </ul>	Gypsies/Travellers, settled communities	All local authority departments, with specific departments taking the lead where appropriate.	Throughout

**Outcome 4 (cont'd): Better and more constructive relationships are developed between Gypsies/Travellers and settled communities.**

	<b>Service Delivery Outcomes</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Target Groups</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timescales</b>
<b>2</b>	Increased understanding of the needs, culture and lifestyle of Gypsies/Travellers amongst public sector employees	<p>Ensuring current equalities and human rights guidelines are widely disseminated among Local authority staff and representatives, with Equalities and Diversity Training for all staff. This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discussion of current prejudices and stereotypes</li> <li>- Cultural awareness e.g. low literacy, multi-generational families, types of employment, health problems, the meaning of being a Gypsy/Traveller etc, housing issues, marginalisation</li> <li>- Awareness of effect/impact of prejudice on Gypsies/Travellers</li> <li>- Human rights training and how to negotiate through the 'rights clash'</li> </ul>	All Local authority employees	GT Lead Officers, with relevant services and agencies	Throughout

**Outcome 4 (cont'd): Better and more constructive relationships are developed between Gypsies/Travellers and settled communities.**

	<b>Service Delivery Outcomes</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Target Groups</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timescales</b>
<b>3</b>	Improved representation of Gypsies/Travellers in Grampian	Develop mechanisms, in addition to continued support to Residents Associations, Site meetings and Women's groups, for ensuring G/Ts are better represented. Consider <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gypsy/Traveller membership of Inter-Agency Group</li> <li>- Explore potential for a representative organisation for Gypsies/Travellers in Grampian</li> <li>- Work towards encouraging Gypsies/Travellers representatives to join community representative organisations</li> </ul>	Gypsies/Travellers in the Grampian area.	GT Lead Officers, GTLOs and GTEIP	Ongoing to 2014
<b>4</b>	Improved consultation with Gypsies/Travellers and the settled community	Consider options for consulting Gypsies/Travellers and put in place biannual canvassing of views so that Gypsies/Travellers have more, regular opportunities to be consulted and to ensure that settled communities feel they are being heard. This could involve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Occasional surveys on Gypsies/Travellers in Moray Citizen's Panel for members of settled communities and Gypsies/Travellers members.</li> </ul>	Gypsies/Travellers and settled communities	Local authority communications departments, Housing, Environmental Health, GTEIP.	2010

	<b>Service Delivery Outcomes</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Target Groups</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timescales</b>
		<p>In the medium term consider other options for improving consultation with Gypsies/Travellers, by consideration of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Creating a small Gypsies/Travellers Panel, to be conducted on a 6 monthly basis. This would involve surveys of participants in sites, houses and encampments on specific Gypsies/Travellers issues.</li> <li>- Rotating panel membership to combat 'research fatigue' and prevent over-representation of a single family.</li> </ul>	Gypsies/Travellers and Settled Communities.	Local authority communications departments, Housing, Environmental Health, GTEIP.	2013