



# Mid Sussex District Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment: Update 2014



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# 2014 Update

## The Study

1. Opinion Research Services (ORS) and Peter Brett Associates (PBA) were commissioned by the Mid Sussex District Council and the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) to undertake a Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment. The report was published in March 2013.

## Overall Needs for Mid Sussex in 2013 Study

2. The estimated extra site provision that is required for Mid Sussex outside of the South Downs National Park until 2031 is 41 pitches. This includes those on the waiting list for a public site, those with temporary planning permissions and the growth in household numbers due to household formation. Meanwhile the figure for the South Downs National Park Authority inside of Mid Sussex is one pitch for the household with a temporary planning permission.

Figure 1

Extra Pitches which are Required in Mid Sussex Outside of South Downs National Park Authority from 2013-2031

Reason for Requirement/Vacancy	Gross Requirement	Supply	Net Requirement
<b>Supply of Pitches</b>			
Additional supply from empty pitches	-	0	
Additional supply new sites/pitches	-	0	
<b>Total Supply</b>		<b>0</b>	
<b>Current Need</b>			
Current unauthorised developments or encampments and seeking to stay in the area	0	-	
Concealed households	0	-	
Net movement from bricks and mortar	(2)	-	
Waiting list for public sites	19	-	
<b>Total Current Need</b>	<b>17</b>		
<b>Future Needs</b>			
Currently on sites with temporary planning permission	2	-	
Net migration to the area	0	--	
Net new household formation	22	-	
<b>Total Future Needs</b>	<b>24</b>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>41</b>

Figure 2  
Extra Pitches which are Required in South Downs National Park within Mid Sussex from 2013-2031

Reason for Requirement/Vacancy	Gross Requirement	Supply	Net Requirement
<b>Supply of Pitches</b>			
Additional supply from empty pitches	-	0	
Additional supply new sites/pitches	-	0	
<b>Total Supply</b>		<b>0</b>	
<b>Current Need</b>			
Current unauthorised developments or encampments and seeking to stay in the area	0	-	
Concealed households	0	-	
Net movement from bricks and mortar	0	-	
Waiting list for public sites	0	-	
<b>Total Current Need</b>	<b>0</b>		
<b>Future Needs</b>			
Currently on sites with temporary planning permission	1	-	
Net migration to the area	0	--	
Net new household formation	0	-	
<b>Total Future Needs</b>	<b>1</b>	-	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

## 2014 Update

3. The key reason for this update is that one of the main drivers of the need for Mid Sussex outside of South Downs National Park Authority was the waiting list for public sites. The method of registering a desire to obtain a pitch on a public site is through placing your name on the waiting list held by West Sussex County Council. At the time of the 2013 study there were 25 households on the waiting list for a site in Mid Sussex. However, this figure included eight who would wish to move to a site anywhere in West Sussex. The Coastal West Sussex GTAA has already included four of these households within its pitch requirements, so to prevent double counting they were not counted again in Mid Sussex. There are also two public sites in Horsham, so of the eight households seeking a pitch anywhere in West Sussex we counted two of them as need in Mid Sussex. This left the total number of households seeking pitches in Mid Sussex as 19 and all were counted as need.
4. It was acknowledged that it could be argued that some of these households may be on waiting lists elsewhere in the country and will have their needs met elsewhere. Mid Sussex District Council subsequently requested ORS to contact and interview households on the West Sussex County Council waiting list. ORS interviewed 10 of the households.
5. Of the 10 households who ORS interviewed, four were in bricks and mortar, three on unauthorised encampments, two on a transit site and one on a private pitch. One of the bricks and mortar households confirmed that they no longer wished to be on the waiting list. Only two of the nine remaining households provided addresses in Mid Sussex with one in bricks and mortar and one on a private site. Four households have addresses in Brighton, with the remainder in Luton, Essex and South East London.

6. The households were also asked about the other waiting lists they were also registered on. 5 of the households were on other lists and 3 preferred to move to other areas.
7. Therefore, the majority of households on the waiting list for a site in Mid Sussex are currently living outside the area and those on-site may be appearing as needs in other assessments. One household wishes to move from a private pitch in Mid Sussex to a public site and this would not generate a net additional need because they would also free one pitch. Another household on the waiting list is no longer seeking a pitch because they are happy in their current bricks and mortar home.
8. The updated evidence from the waiting list indicates that the original estimate of needs for Mid Sussex Outside of South Downs National Park Authority was too high and that a lower figure should be used. It was acknowledged in the original assessment that there was potential for over counting of needs from the waiting list and the survey of households who are on the waiting list has confirmed that this is the case.
9. Based on the survey of 10 households, only 8 would add to the pitch needs in Mid Sussex and only one of those is resident in Mid Sussex. The exact figure to be used is a judgement decision because households may be on an unauthorised site in Brighton because of a lack of space in Mid Sussex. We consider that only counting the needs of households based in Mid Sussex is likely to underestimate the total needs of those who wish to live in the area. Therefore, we have halved the original estimate of 19 pitches need from the waiting list to 10 pitches to remove potential double counts across different areas. We consider that this position represents a pragmatic solution to identifying the needs of households seeking to live on site in Mid Sussex based on the survey of those on the waiting list, without the double counting which was in the original 2013 assessment.

## New Household Formation

10. It is recognised that an important group for future pitch provision will be children and young adults from existing households who will wish to form their own households in future years. Historically studies of Gypsy and Traveller population have assumed a net growth in the population of 3% per annum. However, long-term trends indicate that the number of Gypsy and Traveller caravans on site has grown by 134% nationally in the past 34 years, which equates to a net growth of around 2.5% per annum. Unfortunately, no specific figures are available for Gypsy and Traveller households. However, the UK Census of Population 2011 and ORS' own national survey data both indicate the population of Gypsies and Travellers grows at a rate which could be as low as 1.5% per annum.
11. More recently in a letter dated 26th March 2014 Brandon Lewis MP, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Department for Communities and Local Government, clarified the Government's position on household formation rates and stated:

*'I can confirm that the annual growth rate figure of 3% does not represent national planning policy. The previous Administration's guidance for local authorities on carrying out Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments under the Housing Act 2004 is unhelpful in that it uses an illustrative example of calculating future accommodation need based on the 3% growth rate figure. The guidance notes that the appropriate rate for individual assessments will depend on the details identified in the local authority's own assessment of need. As such the Government is not endorsing or supporting the 3% growth rate figure, though in some cases we are aware that inspectors have, in considering the level of unmet local need when demonstrating*

*specific traveller appeals, used the 3% growth rate figure in the absence of a local authority's own up-to-date assessment of need.'*

12. While many GTAA studies undertaken by other companies have continued to use a net growth figure of 3%, we agree with the position being taken by CLG and firmly believe that any household formation rates should use a robust local evidence base, rather than simply relying on precedent.
13. The household formation rate that ORS will use for this study will be based on evidence from the site surveys. In addition a range of alternative household formation rates from 1.5% to 3.0% will also be included.
14. The household survey for Mid Sussex indicates an age profile for the population which is very typical of those obtained elsewhere by ORS. Given that the age demographic of Mid Sussex's Gypsy and Traveller community appears to be roughly representative of the wider Gypsy and Traveller population, ORS considers it appropriate to allow for future projected household growth to occur in line with the long-term national trends identified above. Therefore, an annual growth rate of 2.5% has been used in this assessment. Given that the evidence for population is as low as 1.5% per annum, ORS considers that this relatively high rate will provide enough pitches to accommodate all newly-forming households in Mid Sussex and will also allow for any concealed households and those living in bricks and mortar, who may not have been identified in the survey.
15. The original 2013 assessment identified estimated future household formations based upon 30 households on site and a lower rate of formations for the 19 households on the waiting list. The 30 households came from the 41 pitches in Mid Sussex outside of SDNPA minus 4 which were sub-let to non Travellers, 2 households who wished to move to bricks and mortar and a small number of vacant pitches were present on sites such as Fairplace Hill and Highfields. Since the time of the original assessment a recent planning permission for the Highfield site will see some of it being redeveloped for non-Gypsy tied houses, but still leaving permission for 4 caravans on the remaining land. This confirms a lower number of Gypsies and Travellers on site.
16. For this assessment we have continued to use the 30 households on site but have added the 10 households from the waiting list to give a total of 40 households in Mid Sussex all with the same formation rate. This is in line with now standard approaches across the country and therefore does not involve estimating a lower formation rate for those on the waiting list.
17. Based on a new household formation rate of 2.5% per annum we estimate that a total of 24 additional pitches will be required during the study period as a result of new household formation, assuming that each forming household will requires a pitch of its own.

Growth rate per annum	Number of additional pitches required 2013-2031
1.50%	13
1.75%	16
2.00%	18
2.25%	21
<b>2.50%</b>	<b>24</b>
2.75%	27
3.00%	30

## Updated Overall Needs for Mid Sussex from 2013

18. The estimated extra site provision that is required for Mid Sussex outside of the South Downs National Park until 2031 falls to 34 pitches. Meanwhile the figure for the South Downs National Park Authority inside of Mid Sussex remains at one pitch for the household with a temporary planning permission.

Figure 3

Updated Extra Pitches which are Required in Mid Sussex Outside of South Downs National Park Authority from 2013-2031

Reason for Requirement/Vacancy	Gross Requirement	Supply	Net Requirement
<b>Supply of Pitches</b>			
Additional supply from empty pitches	-	0	
Additional supply new sites/pitches	-	0	
<b>Total Supply</b>		<b>0</b>	
<b>Current Need</b>			
Current unauthorised developments or encampments and seeking to stay in the area	0	-	
Concealed households	0	-	
Net movement from bricks and mortar	(2)	-	
Waiting list for public sites	10	-	
<b>Total Current Need</b>	<b>8</b>		
<b>Future Needs</b>			
Currently on sites with temporary planning permission	2	-	
Net migration to the area	0	--	
Net new household formation	24	-	
<b>Total Future Needs</b>	<b>26</b>	-	
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>34</b>

Figure 4

Updated Extra Pitches which are Required in South Downs National Park within Mid Sussex from 2013-2031

Reason for Requirement/Vacancy	Gross Requirement	Supply	Net Requirement
<b>Supply of Pitches</b>			
Additional supply from empty pitches	-	0	
Additional supply new sites/pitches	-	0	
<b>Total Supply</b>		<b>0</b>	
<b>Current Need</b>			
Current unauthorised developments or encampments and seeking to stay in the area	0	-	
Concealed households	0	-	
Net movement from bricks and mortar	0	-	
Waiting list for public sites	0	-	

<b>Total Current Need</b>		<b>0</b>		
<b>Future Needs</b>				
	Currently on sites with temporary planning permission	1	-	
	Net migration to the area	0	--	
	Net new household formation	0	-	
<b>Total Future Needs</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

## Requirement by Time Periods

19. The evidence contained in this survey is that there is a requirement for Mid Sussex outside of the South Downs National Park in the next 5 years for a total of 10 pitches to address the backlog of need for households on the waiting list for public sites plus those households who will see their temporary planning permissions expire within this time period. Household growth is then projected to be a total of 13% over the next 5 years, giving a further 5 households. From 2018 onwards all future project growth is for household formations. Therefore the identified requirement in the periods 2013-2031 are as follows:
- » 2013-2017: 15 pitches;
  - » 2018-2022: 6 pitches;
  - » 2023-2027: 7 pitches;
  - » 2028-2031: 6 pitches.
20. Meanwhile for South Downs National Park inside of Mid Sussex, the only requirement is for the one household whose temporary permission expires in the period 2013-2017.

## Travelling Showpersons

21. At the time of the original assessment ORS made contact with one Travelling Showperson currently living in Surrey who was seeking to develop a single plot site in the area and they were counted as a need for a single plot.
22. Since the time of the original assessment, both ORS and Mid Sussex District Council have been in further contact with the Travelling Showperson. They have confirmed that they are on an authorised plot in Surrey and that Mid Sussex is not his preferred destination for a new site. On this basis it would seem reasonable that the household is no longer counted as need in Mid Sussex because they are seeking to have their needs met elsewhere.