



**FRIENDS,
FAMILIES &
TRAVELLERS**

**LLOYDS BANK
FOUNDATION**
England & Wales



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Freedom of Information research: Local authority transit provision for Gypsies and Travellers across the UK

Summary Report

Friends, Families and Travellers

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Introduction

This report is a summary of [Freedom of Information \(FOI\) research](#) published by Friends, Families and Travellers (FFT), examining transit site provision for Gypsies and Travellers across the UK.

The report highlights legal obligations, existing inequalities, and the challenges in accessing safe and secure stopping places. Despite policy recommendations from national and international bodies, transit site provision in the UK remains inadequate, leaving many Gypsy and Traveller people without secure accommodation options.

For the state, the situation on the ground reflects a failure to uphold legal obligations and human rights. Despite clear and repeat recommendations from national and international bodies, there are nowhere near enough sites. This increases enforcement, encourages legal battles, and begets emergency interventions. All while deepening social inequalities and weakening the social contract.

For Gypsy and Traveller families, the hostile environmental means continuing to experience ongoing hardship, discrimination and insecurity. Forcing many into an endless cycle of unsafe stopping locations, repeat evictions, criminalisation, and cutting off from essential services healthcare and education. It can be easy to understate the devastating impact on people's mental and physical health, employment opportunities, and on the ability to maintain centuries-old cultural traditions.

Sadly, it's often emphasised that these experiences affect Gypsy and Traveller people 'from cradle to grave'.

Key Findings

- **92% of authorities had no transit sites or pitches**, with 54 authorities (out of 362 respondents) holding no relevant data.
- Only **9% (31) of local authorities** across the UK reported having transit site provision.
- **39% of authorities with transit sites** indicated that the police had used legal powers to direct Gypsies and Travellers to these sites.
- **74% of authorities with transit sites** imposed a maximum stay, ranging from **14 to 180 days** (90 days being the most common limit).
- **58% of authorities** enforced a minimum 'no return' period, ranging from **28 days to 365 days**.
- The **cost of staying** on a transit pitch varied widely, with pitch fees ranging from **£0 to £125 per week**. Deposits, where required, ranged from **£100 to £500 per caravan**.
- **50% of authorities with transit sites** charged extra fees for utilities, leading to additional financial burdens.

Challenges in transit site provision

There are a range of challenges that arise in transit site provision, from identifying lines of accountability, to legal instruments encouraging punishment over provision:

- **Lack of clear responsibility:** Many authorities redirected responsibility for transit site provision to county or local councils (and vice versa), creating confusion and gaps in service.
- **Discrepancies in official data:** The number of transit sites reported in the Government's Caravan Count (49 sites, 464 pitches) differed significantly from the data obtained by FFT (29 sites, 351 pitches).
- **Accessibility of information:** Information about transit sites was often unclear or difficult to find on local authority websites, further complicating access.
- **Use of police powers:** The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 enabled police to **ban individuals from an area for up to 12 months**, exacerbating accommodation insecurity.

Good practice and alternatives

While the under-provision of sites can cause extensive [waiting lists](#), there are key examples where a community-centred approach has led to positive outcomes for families passing through, as well as for settled communities.

Some authorities, including **Durham**, **Anglesey**, and **Rochdale**, reported implementing '[Negotiated Stopping](#)', an alternative approach allowing temporary agreements between Gypsies, Travellers, and local authorities. This model has been shown to foster cooperation, reduce evictions and sidestep confrontations.

Recommendations

These recommendations have been developed to create a tangible pathway towards better living conditions, reduce discrimination, and ultimately disarm the hostile environment.

A fair, sustainable approach benefits both communities and local authorities, creating a more just and inclusive society:

- **Clarify remit:** Local authorities and county councils should agree roles and remits in transit site provision for Gypsies and Travellers, alongside consistent messaging.
- **Increase engagement:** Authorities should actively consult Gypsies and Travellers to better understand need and towards the development of best practice guidance.
- **Improve information accessibility:** Clear, co-produced and user-friendly resources should be created, covering transit site availability, costs, and conditions.
- **Secure necessary funding:** Funding should be allocated for the maintenance and development of decent quality sites and accompanying outreach services.
- **Review legal provisions:** The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 should be repealed; as a minimum, Parliament should urgently review the High Court's [Declaration of Incompatibility](#).

Conclusion

This research highlights the critical **lack of transit site provision** across the UK, leaving Gypsies and Travellers without safe places to stop. Addressing these gaps requires **policy reform, dedicated funding, and collaboration** with Gypsy and Traveller communities to ensure fair and inclusive accommodation options.

The full research can be found [here](#).

About us

Friends, Families and Travellers (FFT) is a leading national charity that seeks to end racism and discrimination against Gypsies, Travellers and Roma communities and to protect the right to pursue a nomadic way of life. www.gypsy-traveller.org

Tel +44 (0)1273 234 777 | **Email** fft@gypsy-traveller.org | **X** [@GypsyTravellers](https://twitter.com/GypsyTravellers)

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