

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

Five-Year Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Supply Statement 2023

July 2023

Position as at 1 April 2023



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Introduction

1. The [Planning Policy for Traveller Sites](#) (PPTS) 2015, in conjunction with the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) 2021, requires local planning authorities to identify and annually update specific deliverable sites suitable for Gypsies and Traveller pitches.
2. The need for new Gypsy and Traveller pitches in the borough is ascertained from the [Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment](#) (GTAA) 2018, which also provides the basis for determining pitch requirements to be met through the emerging Local Plan.
3. This Statement provides a summary of the current level of need for new pitches and the five-year supply position of deliverable Gypsy and Traveller sites within Tunbridge Wells Borough for the period from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2028. It will be used to inform the consideration of planning decisions relating to Gypsy and Traveller sites/pitches.

Need for Pitches

4. As mentioned above, the present and future need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation is calculated and presented within the Tunbridge Wells GTAA. Its assessment reviews the period between 1 April 2017 – 31 March 2037.
5. **Table 1** indicates the pitch numbers required in order to meet needs in five-year periods. The total pitch need is 33 between 2017-2038, with 15 pitches needed within the first five-year period of the GTAA (2017-2022), equating to 3 per year. As the emerging Local Plan period runs one year longer than that of the GTAA, to 2038, one additional pitch has been added to the total GTAA need of 32 pitches (approximating to the annual pitch need in later years of the GTAA). Hence, the Local Plan sets an overall need of 33 pitches for the total plan period 2017 – 2038; see paragraphs 3.63 & 3.64 in the [Housing Needs Assessment Topic Paper](#).

Table 1 - Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Needs Between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2038

Period (1 April to 31 March)	Pitch Need	Transit Site Plots
2017-2022	15	0
2022-2027	5	0
2027-2032	6	0
2032-2037	6	0
2017-2037	32	0
2038	1	0
Total 2017-2038	33	0

6. Taking the above five-year need during 2017 – 2022 of 15 pitches, or three pitches/year, as well as the need of one pitch during 2022/23, there is an identified total need of 16 Gypsy and Traveller pitches as at 01 April 2023. Any shortfall or surplus in supply from this period (i.e., the period between the base date of the GTAA and the base date of this Statement), relative to the identified need of 16 pitches, will be taken into account within this five-year supply Statement. It is also noted that the GTAA accounted for any shortfall in provision prior to/at the base date of the GTAA (2017) which is reflected within the higher annual pitch need for the earlier part of the plan period.
7. Between 01 April 2017 and the base date of this Statement (up to 31 March 2023), 10 new pitches were completed, as shown in **Table 2** below.

Table 2 - Pitch Completions Between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2023

Site Name	Parish	Number of Pitch Completions	Monitoring Period	Planning Reference
Funnel Piece	Paddock Wood	1	4/2017 – 3/2018	16/504444/FULL
Willow Stables	Paddock Wood	1	4/2018 – 3/2019	18/00856/FULL
Mile Oak Stables	Paddock Wood	1	4/2020 – 9/2021	18/01543/FULL
Heartenoak	Hawkhurst	2	4/2020 – 9/2021	18/03187/FULL
Touchwood	Paddock Wood	1	4/2020 – 9/2021	19/02848/FULL
Lordship Stables	Brenchley & Matfield	1	4/2020 – 9/2021	20/01504/FULL
Oak Tree Farm	Cranbrook & Sissinghurst	1	4/2021 – 3/2022	21/02687/FULL
Cinderhill Wood	Matfield	1	4/2021 – 3/2022	20/02649/FULL
Lordship Stables	Brenchley & Matfield	1	4/2022 – 3/2023	21/00184/FULL
TOTAL		10		

8. Hence, over the period 01 April 2017 – 31 March 2023, there has been a shortfall of 6 pitches (i.e., 10 pitches completed against a need for 16 pitches).
9. In addition to the shortfall up to 31 March 2023, a further need for an additional 5.2 pitches for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2028 can be calculated from the GTAA, as below:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + 1 (annual need April 2023 to March 2024) + 1 (annual need April 2024 to March 2025) + 1 (annual need April 2025 to March 2026) + 1 (annual need April 2026 to March 2027) + 1.2 (annual need April 2027 to March 2028) = 5.2 (need from April 2023 to March 2028) 	}	Annual need calculated by GTAA 2018 (Table 1).
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10. **Table 3** below shows the components of the calculation of the total need for the five-year period, being 11.2 pitches.

Table 3 - Calculation of Pitch Needs 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2028

	<i>Number of Pitches</i>
Need – 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2023	16
Completions – 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2023	10
Shortfall – 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2023	6
Need – 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2028	5.2
Total Need = Shortfall from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2023 + Need from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2028	11.2

11. It is highlighted that this calculation provides for meeting all the outstanding need within the next five years, including any shortfall prior to the base date of this Statement.

Deliverable Supply of Gypsy and Traveller Pitches

12. **Table 4** identifies those sites with an extant planning permission for additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches as at 1 April 2022. These pitches are in addition to those which have already been delivered as set out in **Table 2**.

13. The following pitches are expected to be delivered within the next five years, with the exception of one pitch at Cinderhill Wood which involves the sub-division of an existing pitch (and is subject to its vacancy).

Table 4 - Supply of New Gypsy and Traveller Pitches as at 1 April 2023

<i>Site</i>	<i>Planning Reference</i>	<i>Number of Pitches Permitted (Net)</i>	<i>Number of Pitches Completed as at 31 March 2023</i>	<i>Pitches Within 5-Year period</i>	<i>Pitches Beyond 5-Year Period</i>	<i>Outstanding Net Pitches</i>
Cinderhill Wood	20/02649/FULL	3	1	1	1	2
Lordship Stables	21/00184/FULL	2	1	1	-	1
Mile Oak Stables	21/02389/FULL	3	0	3	-	3
Touchwood	21/02236/FULL	3	0	3	-	3
Greenfields Farm	22/02506/FULL	3	0	3	-	3
Funnel Piece	22/01294/FULL	2	0	2	-	2
Total				13	1	14

Conclusion

14. From the above, it can be seen that the total identified supply of Gypsy and Traveller pitches over the next five-year period (1 April 2023 – 31 March 2028) equals 13 (**Table 4**). Measuring this against the need for 11.2 pitches (which

includes a shortfall from the previous period), as calculated in **Table 3**, a supply of **5.8 years** is identified as at 1 April 2023.

$$\begin{array}{rcll} \text{Years of Supply} & = & \text{Period of time multiplied by Supply} & \text{divided by Need} \\ \mathbf{5.8 \text{ years}} & = & 5 \text{ years} & \times 13 \text{ pitches} / 11.2 \text{ pitches} \end{array}$$

15. This is above the target of at least a five-year supply of deliverable pitches and therefore **the Council confirms that it has a five-year supply of Gypsy and Traveller pitches within the borough as at 1 April 2023.**
16. In addition, it is important to note that, at this point, the assessment does not include the additional pitches identified and proposed on sites in the [Submission Local Plan](#). These sites (without planning permission at the base date of this Statement) are not included in the current calculation of supply, as the emerging Local Plan is yet to be adopted.
17. The [Submission Local Plan](#) and the Council’s supporting evidence base (see [Annex 1 of Housing Supply and Trajectory Topic Paper](#)) provides an assessment of estimated additional capacity at existing sites for further pitches through intensification, expansion, and/or regularisation, as well as the potential for new identified sites throughout the borough. These sites are identified in emerging Local Plan Policy H9 as well as Appendix 5 of the Submission Local Plan.
18. On the assumption that the sites/pitches in the submitted Local Plan are endorsed, then the longer-term position would be as set out in **Table 5** below.

Table 5 - Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Need Against the Potential Supply over the Local Plan Period (as at 1 April 2023)

	Number of Pitches
Pitch Need - April 2017 to March 2038 (Table 1)	33
Pitch Completions - April 2017 to March 2023 (Table 2)	10
Outstanding Need – April 2023 to March 2038	23
Pitch approvals not completed at April 2023 (Table 4)	14
Potential additional pitch capacity at existing sites (SLP)	12-14
Potential additional pitches at new site allocations	3
Estimated Pitch Capacity – April 2023 to March 2038	29-31

19. This shows that the outstanding need for 23 pitches over the Plan period, as at April 2023, should be met, and exceeded, by the provision of 29-31 pitches.
20. This potential “surplus” of 6-8 pitches compares to that estimated in the [Submission Local Plan](#) (paragraph 6.391) of +1 to +4 pitches (as at December 2020) showing that the position has improved as a result of recent pitch completions and the granting of planning permissions.

21. For those identified sites within the Local Plan that are yet to gain planning permission, the Council is pro-actively engaging with occupants and landowners to assess deliverability timescales. It fully expects that it will be able to robustly demonstrate clear evidence of deliverability for at least some of these sites in due course.
22. Therefore, in addition to the Council's strong delivery and supply of Gypsy and Traveller pitches in the borough as at April 2023, the identification of additional capacity at existing sites within the emerging Local Plan will ensure that a five-year supply of pitches will continue to be achieved in future iterations of this Statement.

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