



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Provision of sites for Gypsy, Roma and Travellers

The Welsh Government's
response to the Local
Government and Housing
Follow Up Inquiry (Feb 2024)

3 April 2025

I am grateful to the Local Government and Housing Committee for inviting me to give evidence in October 2024 and welcome this opportunity to respond to their follow up report and recommendations in relation to the Committee's inquiry into provision of sites for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller persons.

The Committee has put forward a further 10 recommendations, which I have addressed below.

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1. Introduction

Welsh Government is committed to creating an anti-racist nation by 2030. The Anti-racist Wales Action Plan (ARWAP)¹, launched in June 2022 and refreshed in 2024, calls for zero tolerance of all racial inequality. The Action Plan contains a number of actions to recognise that safe, culturally appropriate accommodation is necessary in order for individuals to flourish in other parts of their lives and to address the lack of site provision and poor quality of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in Wales.

In 2021, the Local Government and Housing Committee initiated an inquiry into the provision of sites for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities in Wales. The 2022 report published 21 recommendations, all accepted by Welsh Government.

A follow-up inquiry was conducted by the Committee in October 2023 to assess the progress made on the initial recommendations and to identify any further actions needed. I attended in February 2024 and October 2024 to give evidence.

This is my response to the latest follow-up inquiry which made an additional 10 recommendations.

Goals and actions to improve outcomes for our Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller people and communities are embedded across policy areas, and all policy areas are responsible for reporting on outcomes for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people to the ArWAP External Accountability Group.

Fourteen actions in the ArWAP plan (Annex A) relate to housing policy for Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities. One action is in the leadership chapter, eleven are in the Homes and Places chapter, and two are in the Crime and Justice chapter.

We significantly strengthened the Race, Faith, Belief and Gypsy Roma and Traveller Team to enable significant engagement with Gypsy and Traveller people and communities and with local authorities and other partners.

Work is underway to address these actions. This includes:

- Our action to deliver advocacy and advice services to Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities has been achieved through awarding a contract to TGP Cymru (Travelling Ahead) to deliver advocacy and advice services to community members until August 2027. In addition, Travelling Ahead will be providing independent planning advice to community members either on private sites and wishing to secure planning advice or community

¹ [Anti-racist Wales Action Plan: 2024 update \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#)

- members wishing to develop their own private Gypsy and Traveller sites; this contributes to the delivery of an action within the ArWAP.
- Gypsies and Travellers Wales have been awarded a contract which will deliver against the action related to the provision of transit sites, through the provision of a national evidence base of the need for transit provision across Wales and recommendations for location and models of transit. Central to this contract is listening to the evidence base of community members who travel nomadically. This evidence base and recommendations will be provided to Welsh Government in October 2025 and will form the basis of discussion with local authorities.
 - We held the first meeting of a new Gypsy, Roma and Traveller stakeholder group in February 2025. This meeting brings Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people together with Welsh Government, local authorities and voluntary sector organisations to ensure all our policy work and decisions support the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities throughout Wales. To ensure a diversity of representation, a third sector organisation has been awarded a contract to recruit community members to participate in these meetings.
 - We are currently consulting on four Welsh Government Gypsy and Traveller guidance documents for local authorities. Opportunities have been taken to update the guidance to reference the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan, provide clearer definitions of different Gypsy and Traveller sites, make the language more human rights based and place a greater emphasis on consultation with Gypsy and Traveller residents.
 - In parallel with the public consultation, two contracts to facilitate community members to engage on the four guidance documents have been awarded.
 - We reviewed the Site Capital Grant guidance in 2024-25 and in 2025-26, considering the application process, the criteria and feedback from local authorities. Land acquisition was added to the Capital Sites Guidance for 2024-25 and as part of the review process for 2025-26, 'exceptional cases' has been removed in reference to land acquisition. Our GTAA (Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessment) monitoring arrangements have included raising awareness of the Capital Sites Grant funding and uptake this financial year to date has been excellent.
 - Procurement for the development of a Gypsy, Roma and Traveller training package for local authorities and to deliver a national training programme across all Welsh local authorities is underway and this training is expected to commence from 1 April 2026.

I thank the members of the Local Government Housing Committee for their follow up inquiry into the provision of sites for Gypsy, Roma and Travellers. I have set out my response to the Committee's individual recommendations below.

2. Response to the 10 recommendations

Recommendation 1

The Committee Recommends that:

The Welsh Government provides an update on progress made against recommendations in our 2022 report on the provision of sites for Gypsy, Roma and Travellers.

Response: Accept

An update on progress made against the 21 recommendations made by the Local Government and Housing Committee in 2022 can be found as part of **Annex B**.

Financial Implications – none.

Recommendation 2

The Committee Recommends that:

The Welsh Government should provide the Committee with the latest data on the number of transit pitches in Wales and update us on how it intends to increase transitory provision in Wales including how it will ensure that the needs of Gypsies and Travellers are met.

Response: Accept

The latest Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments (GTAA's) identified four pitches in Wales - in Gwynedd, Pembrokeshire and Torfaen. Two of these were not identified in the caravan count. These pitches are not considered truly available transit pitches in the sense that they are not openly available and known about by all community members who travel nomadically.

The responsibility for the provision of transit sites lies with local authorities. However, Welsh Ministers are committed to encouraging local authorities to work in partnership to deliver solutions to address the limited transit provision across Wales.

Local authority GTAA's (between 25 February 2016 to 24 February 2022) concluded there was some need for transit provision in Wales. In addition to the four pitches identified above from three local authorities, only four local authorities identified the need to create transit pitches in their area. All remaining local authority GTAA's did not identify a need.

Welsh Government has supported local authorities to come together and attempt to find a regional approach to transit provision. It was clear from those discussions that a national transit evidence base was needed to understand patterns of travel by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people in and out of local authorities and in and out of Wales, as well as travel for cultural and/or religious festival locations and employment opportunities.

We have awarded a contract to Gypsies and Travellers Wales (GTW) to develop this national evidence base and make recommendations for the location and models of transit and/or negotiated stopping places across Wales.

This contract includes a stipulation that the organisation must engage with community members who travel nomadically, including Irish Travellers who regularly enter through North Wales and travel across local authority areas.

The successful contractor will work with Gypsy and Traveller community members, local authorities, the police, the WLGA, Corporate Joint Committees, Public Service Boards, health boards and Welsh Government to understand practical needs around transit provision and where the most suitable locations would be.

Recommendations from this contract are due in October 2025.

Financial Implications – This work will be accommodated within existing budgets.

Recommendation 3

The Committee Recommends that:

The Welsh Government should work closely with local authorities and members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities to deliver additional temporary negotiated stopping sites. All negotiated stopping sites in Wales must provide appropriate waste and sanitary services.

Response: Accept

As part of the transit contract referenced above, the contractor will include discussions and options around negotiated stopping places in tandem with or as an alternative to transit provision. Once we have recommendations in October 2025, we will work with local authorities to deliver the recommendations.

Welsh Government provides capital site funding available to local authorities to fund either local authority sites or transit sites. In 2024-25, we extended the eligibility criteria to include the acquisition of land which can be used for new pitches, new sites, transit sites or temporary/negotiated stopping places. Sites Capital Grant guidance has also been reviewed in advance of 2025-26. For 2025-

26, the capital funding will prioritise new pitches to meet the outstanding pitch need. We have also indicated that bids requesting support for new pitches or for transit pitches will be favoured.

Financial Implications – This work will be accommodated within existing budgets.

Recommendation 4

The Committee Recommends that:

The Welsh Government sets out how it is monitoring use of the Sites Capital Grant to ensure that funds are being used appropriately and address the needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Wales.

Response: Accept

All capital grant bids are assessed by a grant assessment panel of Welsh Government officials who consider the value for money of each application and assess each bid against the capital guidance criteria. Once a grant has been awarded, monthly monitoring meetings are set up between the Gypsy Roma Traveller grant manager and the local authority to ensure all works are undertaken and completed as agreed and funds are being used appropriately.

Financial Implications – None.

Recommendation 5

The Committee Recommends that:

The Welsh Government reviews the criteria and application process for the Sites Capital Grant to ensure that it is effectively utilised by local authorities to meet the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers.

Response: Accept

As stated above, the Sites Capital Grant guidance was reviewed in 2024-25 and in 2025-26, the review looked at the application process, the criteria and responded to feedback from local authorities. For 2025-26 the bidding process is open all year round.

The Site Capital guidance for next year places a greater emphasis on the creation of new pitches to address local authorities GTAA unmet pitch need.

Financial Implications – This work will be accommodated within existing budgets.

Recommendation 6

The Committee Recommends that:

The Welsh Government should set out how it will work with local authorities to ensure that Gypsy and Traveller site maintenance is undertaken, and how it will tackle local authorities' failure to maintain and improve those sites. As part of this, it should consider how local authorities fund and prioritise Gypsy and Traveller site maintenance.

Response: Accept

We have put in place a programme of monitoring with local authorities of progress against their GTAAs. This monitoring includes plans around existing sites and any intelligence we are aware of through our Advocacy and Advice contractor about the poor condition of sites.

As part of this monitoring, discussions also focus on local authorities' plans for site management and maintenance. This includes how having a well-managed and proactive maintenance plan positively impacts the residents.

We have reviewed and updated the Designing Gypsy and Traveller sites guidance and Managing Gypsy and Traveller sites guidance which are currently being consulted on. In addition, we have contracted Gypsies and Travellers Wales and travelling Ahead to undertake direct and facilitated engagement with the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community on these guidance documents.

The revised Managing Gypsy and Traveller sites guidance has strengthened the emphasis on having a structured maintenance plan in place. It highlights the importance of comprehensive planning, clearly defines responsibilities, and emphasises high-quality standards. Additionally, it encourages community involvement to ensure the needs and preferences of the residents are considered.

Local authorities are encouraged to bid for funding, of the available £3.44 million Site Capital Grant funding for 2024-25. This is available to fund either local authority residential sites or transit sites. These can fund projects to refurbish existing accommodation, construct new pitches and improve the sustainability of sites for residents. In 2024-25 I awarded £2,000,235 funding for site improvements.

Financial Implications – This work will be accommodated within existing budgets.

Recommendation 7

The Committee Recommends that:

The Welsh Government should explore how the Sites Capital Grant could be used to support the development of private sites.

Response: Accept

Officials are considering how best to support private sites.

Financial Implications – This work will be accommodated within existing budgets.

Recommendation 8

The Committee Recommends that:

The Welsh Government should progress the pilot programme to provide advice to Gypsies and Travellers seeking help to develop private sites as a matter of urgency and update the Committee in three months.

Response: Accept

Stakeholders have indicated that there remains an ongoing problem with Gypsy and Traveller people being sold unsuitable land and struggling to gain planning permission to turn land into private Gypsy and Traveller sites.

As part of the Advocacy and Advice contract, additional funding was awarded to Travelling Ahead to provide private planning advice to Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.

Planning advice will be available from 1st April 2025. This pilot will begin from April 2025 and run for a period of 18-months.

Travelling Ahead will be sub-contracting in planning experts to provide this advice as well as undertaking targeted work to make those seeking private sites aware that this specific planning advice service is available.

They will also be undertaking some mapping about the numbers of community members in need of planning advice or wanting to set up their own private sites.

The pilot for planning advice is a distinct piece of work that will be delivered as an addition to the Travelling Ahead Advocacy and Advice contract.

This service will provide targeted planning advice to Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities looking to develop private sites.

Financial Implications – This work will be accommodated within existing budgets.

Recommendation 9

The Committee Recommends that:

The Welsh Government should reinstate the Gypsy and Traveller Forum with urgency.

Response: Accept

A Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Stakeholder Group has been reinstated, involving Welsh Government, local authorities, third sector organisations and community members. The purpose of this meeting is bringing together Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people with Welsh Government, local authorities and voluntary sector organisations to ensure all our policy work and decisions support the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities throughout Wales.

We have awarded a contract to a Gypsy and Traveller third sector organisation to recruit community members to attend and participate in the meetings scheduled across Wales.

The first meeting took place on 27 February 2025.

Financial Implications – This work will be accommodated within existing budgets.

Recommendation 10

The Committee Recommends that:

The Welsh Government should ensure that each local authority has a Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer.

Response: Accept in principle

We are not responsible for local authority staffing decisions; we can, however, encourage local authorities to appoint designated Gypsy and Traveller Liaison officers. We are aware that 15 local authorities already have designated Gypsy and Traveller posts.

In addition, the Committee might wish to be aware there is an action within the revised Anti Racist Wales Action Plan to set up community mentor liaison roles for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people, to address the under-representation of Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller voices.

Officials are considering policy options to recruit members from the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community to step into this community mentor/liaison role. Officials will also be considering mechanisms by which community mentors can be used within local authorities.

Financial Implications – Whilst Welsh Government are not responsible for local authority staffing decisions, the work to set up community mentor liaison roles for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people which will support local authorities to understand the need of this community will be accommodated within existing budgets.

Annex A

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller ArWAP actions

<u>Leadership in anti-racism chapter</u>
Action: Set up community mentor or liaison roles for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people. This work will include leadership training as identified by the mentors, ensuring it is community-led.
<u>Homes and Places chapter</u>
Action: Work with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community members, local authorities and others to provide appropriate transit provision. Decisions will be taken based on evidence of where transit is needed.
Action: Pilot additional or new ways of funding permanent provision.
Action: Fund a study to look at options for a mobile home rental scheme through social housing.
Action: Depending on outcome of the mobile home rental scheme study, set up pilot scheme.
Action: We will procure a framework for an external training company to develop and deliver a training course to upskill all 22 Local Authorities on Gypsy, Roma and Travellers nomadic ways of living. This will be developed with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community members.
Action: Commission a three-year pilot programme to provide advice to those seeking to develop private sites.
Action: Review the Gypsy and Traveller capital sites guidance. This will include reviewing the piloting of funding for buying land, feedback from the communities and a decision on funding for private sites.
Action: Re-draft and simplify the Gypsy and Traveller Sites Guidance, involving community members to reflect their needs.

Action: Welsh Government will use its powers to ensure local authorities comply with the Housing (Wales) Act 2014.
Action: Have regular meetings with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people and stakeholders to inform Welsh Government policy. Ensure people feel included in the meetings.
Action: Provide advice and advocacy services to Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.
<u>Crime and Justice chapter</u>
Action: Update the Managing Unauthorised Camping guidance, involving community members to reflect their needs.
Action: Work with police and community members to adopt unauthorised encampments protocol.

3. Annex B

Welsh Government Updates to Local Government Housing Recommendations from August 2022:

<u>Recommendation</u>	<u>Welsh Government Update</u>
<p>Recommendation 1:</p> <p>The Welsh Government should set out how it intends to support local authorities in the provision of sites that are appropriate for the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, including how it will work with local authorities and communities to mitigate the challenges of finding suitable land for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller site accommodation.</p>	<p>Welsh Government does this through the Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) process and through ongoing discussions with local authorities about their progress in meeting the needs identified in their GTAAs. These meetings are at Ministerial and official level.</p> <p>Welsh Government provides capital site funding available to local authorities to fund either residential sites or transit sites. These can fund projects to refurbish existing accommodation, construct new pitches and improve the sustainability of sites for residents. This year we have extended the eligibility criteria to include the acquisition of land to try and unblock local authority barriers to the provision of sites.</p> <p>Site capital grant funding for 2025-26 is £3.44 million and all local authorities have been encouraged to bid for funding.</p> <p>We have also put in place a programme of monitoring with local authorities of progress against their cycle 2 GTAA.</p> <p>Welsh Government has awarded funding to Travelling Ahead to provide private planning advice to communities from April 2025 over an 18-month period in addition to the existing Advocacy and Advice contract (awarded in September 2024). This will aid in mitigating the challenges for finding suitable land for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.</p>
<p>Recommendation 2:</p> <p>The Welsh Government should set out how it</p>	<p>All outstanding GTAAs for the latest GTAA cycle (2016 - 2022) were approved in 2024 by Welsh Ministers.</p>

<p>intends to support Corporate Joint Committees and individual local authorities to develop a network of transitory provision, and how it will monitor and ensure progress.</p>	<p>Welsh Government has awarded a contract to Gypsies and Travellers Wales (GTW), to provide research in the form of a national evidence base on the needs of transit across Wales. The research will make recommendations around the location and models of transit. These recommendations are due to Welsh Government by October 2025, which will then inform discussions with local authorities.</p> <p>Central to this contract is the expectation of the involvement of community members in this evidence-based approach.</p> <p>Developing a robust evidence base, in collaboration with relevant regional parties and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people will help to ensure that transit provision is located appropriately and can be accessed by those who need it.</p>
<p>Recommendation 3:</p> <p>The Welsh Government should provide an update on arrangements for an independent and trusted advice service for the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, including funding, resource and skills requirement.</p>	<p>Welsh Government has awarded Travelling Ahead (TGP Cymru) to deliver an Advocacy and Advice contract through a competitive procurement exercise to deliver advice and advocacy support to Gypsy Roma and Traveller communities. This contract will be delivered from September 2024 to August 2027.</p> <p>The objectives of the service are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate equality of opportunity for Gypsies, Roma and Travellers within Welsh society. • Provide support and connect with expert advice services to help community members integrate effectively into Welsh society, including advocating changes to public processes where necessary. • Support community cohesion through challenging negative stereotypes and fostering good relations between groups. • Empower communities and individuals to have a voice and make representations on their own behalf on policy development and any other issues raised.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the Welsh Government to eliminate racism and discrimination and advance equality of opportunity and to offer solutions to the barriers Gypsy Roma and Traveller people face. • Work collaboratively with Welsh Government to address systemic issues impacting Gypsy Roma and Traveller communities and designing solutions to resolve issues reflecting the lived experience of Gypsy Roma and Traveller people. • Fully engage with evaluation of the contract, both evaluation of the contract's performance as well as evaluation with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller service users. <p>The service will be available to adults and children and young people in the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities in Wales.</p>
<p>Recommendation 4.:</p> <p>The Welsh Government should work with local authorities to ensure that they have the necessary resources to fulfil their duties under the Housing Act.</p>	<p>My officials work in partnership with local authority Gypsy, Roma and Traveller leads to support their day-to-day interactions with community members, through monitoring of their GTAA compliance, through the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller stakeholder group and through the case work officials become involved with as highlighted by our Advocacy and Advice contract providers.</p> <p>My officials continue to work closely with local authorities to help them to meet duties to address housing need.</p> <p>The policy team has a dedicated Gypsy, Roma and Traveller grant manager to support applications from local authorities. Monitoring meetings are set up between the Gypsy, Roma Traveller grant manager and the local authority to ensure all works are undertaken and completed as agreed and funds are being used appropriately.</p>

<p>Recommendation 5:</p> <p>The Welsh Government must ensure that the Housing Act is effective in providing suitable sites for Gypsies, Roma and Travellers. It should therefore set out how it intends to tighten its monitoring of the implementation of the Act.</p>	<p>As part of the GTAA process, officials are carrying out regular monitoring with local authorities to hold them to account for their duty in meeting the need they identified in their GTAA. These monitoring arrangements have also included raising awareness of the Capital Sites Grant funding and uptake this financial year to date has been excellent.</p> <p>Where my officials believe local authorities are either not meeting their duties to meet housing need or progress against their GTAA is not adequate, my officials will in the first instance escalate this within the local authority. If a resolution cannot be found, my officials will brief me, and I may wish to escalate this with Council leaders.</p> <p>Section 104 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 gives Welsh Ministers the power to direct the authority to exercise its powers under section 56 of the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013. This is a power I will consider using if it appears that local authorities are not making all reasonable efforts to meet their duties.</p>
<p>Recommendation 6:</p> <p>The Welsh Government should provide further information about how and when it will use its powers to ensure that local authorities deliver on their duties under the Housing Act.</p>	<p>Where my officials believe local authorities are either not meeting their duties to meet housing need or progress against their GTAA is not adequate, my officials will in the first instance escalate this within the local authority.</p> <p>The escalation process is assessed considering timelines for planning activities by local authorities, ensuring Welsh Government officials are kept informed of any potential risks or delays. If progress is unsatisfactory, officials will request an immediate update from local authorities, emphasising their statutory duty. This ensures accountability and timely resolution of issues.</p> <p>If a resolution cannot be found, officials will brief Ministers, who may wish to escalate this with Council leaders.</p> <p>Section 104 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 gives Welsh Ministers the power to direct the authority to</p>

	<p>exercise its powers under section 56 of the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013. This is a power Ministers will consider using if it appears that local authorities are not making all reasonable efforts to meet their duties.</p>
<p>Recommendation 7. The Welsh Government should set out its plans, including timescales, for evaluating the effectiveness of the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan in helping to provide sites for Gypsies, Roma and Travellers.</p>	<p>The ArWAP was refreshed in 2024 and includes new actions and timelines with goals and actions to improve outcomes for Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller people.</p> <p>These actions and goals are embedded across numerous policy areas who are responsible for reporting on outcomes for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people to the ArWAP External Accountability Group (EAG).</p> <p>Following a governance review, we identified opportunities to strengthen our structure and are currently seeking to appoint three new experts to the EAG. These opportunities have been widely promoted, including to Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller stakeholder organisations, which are invited to submit expressions of interest to join the group and if successful, their participation will aid in evaluating the effectiveness of the ArWAP.</p>
<p>Recommendation 8. The Welsh Government should provide an update on the timescales for the actions in the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan which are already underway.</p>	<p>Officials met with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller stakeholders and community members to discuss the ArWAP refresh in May 2024. Feedback from community members were that the actions were too complicated, and the language needed to be simplified.</p> <p>The actions were since revised and approved by in December 2024.</p> <p>Following the refresh, one new action was included related to community mentor/liaison roles, the remaining actions were simplified and timescales reviewed. Of the 14 actions relating to housing provision, 5 have been completed, 2 are nearing completion and 7 have a workplan in place to deliver by the revised ArWAP timelines.</p> <p>Key updates include:</p>

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Stakeholder Group:

One of the most immediate actions is to set up a Gypsy, Roma and Traveller group which held its first hybrid meeting with local authorities and community members in Aberystwyth on 27th February 2025. There and Back Again invited members from these communities to join this stakeholder group. These meetings will happen every four months across Wales, which will help us to develop our activities in partnership with the community.

Transit:

The transit research contract has been awarded to Gypsies and Travellers Wales (GTW) to provide research and recommendations around where transit provision would be most suitable across Wales and what this could practically look like. Involving community members in this evidence-based approach will complement the transit provision research by facilitating an understanding of the travelling life for families across Wales and prevent social exclusion of this community.

Recommendations are due to Welsh Government by October 2025 and will be shared with relevant local authorities following this.

National Training Programme:

Work is underway to procure a national training programme for all 22 local authorities in Wales to be upskilled on Gypsy, Roma and Traveller needs. This will be designed and developed with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities at the heart of this training.

This procurement is now live for bids and will be awarded in Spring/ early Summer 2025.

	<p><u>Private advice pilot:</u></p> <p>We will be introducing a pilot programme that will be delivered through a third sector organisation to provide planning advice to families to help them avoid spending money on unsuitable land. Welsh Government have awarded ring-fenced funding as part of the Advocacy and Advice contract to Travelling Ahead to provide private planning advice to Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. This advice will be available to communities via Travelling Ahead from 1 April 2025.</p> <p><u>Guidance Documents:</u></p> <p>Officials have re drafted four guidance documents pertaining to the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community and all are now published for public consultation.</p> <p>In addition to reviewing the guidance, we have awarded third sector organisations to engage with the Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller community on what this guidance means to them, which will be published in the summer months.</p>
<p>Recommendation 9:</p> <p>In reviewing the sites guidance, the Welsh Government should explain how it intends to engage with the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities to ensure that design and location needs of communities are better reflected in the guidance.</p>	<p>In parallel with an ongoing public consultation of four Gypsy and Traveller guidance documents for local authorities, my officials have awarded contracts with two Gypsy, Roma and Traveller organisations to undertake facilitated engagement work on these draft guidance documents to inform their development.</p> <p>These documents include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Managing Gypsy and Traveller Sites in Wales 2) Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites in Wales 3) Undertaking Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessments 4) Managing Unauthorised Encampments <p>Final versions of the guidance will be published in Summer 2025.</p>

<p>Recommendation 10:</p> <p>The Welsh Government should conduct a review of all guidance relating to the provision of sites for Gypsy, Roma and Travellers.</p>	<p>All Gypsy and Traveller guidance documents have been reviewed, updated and are currently live for public consultation.</p> <p>Capital Site Guidance has also been reviewed for 2025-26.</p>
<p>Recommendation 11:</p> <p>The Welsh Government should provide further details on the learning and development support that will be provided to local authority elected members on Gypsy and Traveller communities' culture, needs and strengths. This should include details on: who will receive the training; timescales; how it will be resourced and delivered; and whether it will be a statutory requirement to undertake the training.</p>	<p>A procurement is currently live for an organisation to develop a Gypsy, Roma and Traveller training package and deliver a programme of training to local authorities over a three-year period. This training will commence from 1 April 2026 over a period of 3 years.</p>
<p>Recommendation 12:</p> <p>The Welsh Government should set out how it intends to evaluate the impact of the training for local authority elected members on Gypsy and Traveller communities' culture, needs and strengths.</p>	<p>Evaluation of the training package and training delivery is written into the contract.</p>
<p>Recommendation 13:</p>	<p>Training will be made available to Councillors as part of the training contract mentioned above.</p>

<p>The Welsh Government should include community councillors in the commitment in the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan to provide training for local authority elected members on Gypsy and Traveller communities' culture, needs and strengths.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 14:</p> <p>The Welsh Government should set out what steps, other than those in the Anti-racist Action Plan, it will take to improve knowledge and understanding of the culture, needs and strengths of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities among the wider community.</p>	<p>There is an action within the Anti Racist Wales Action Plan to set up community mentor or liaison roles for Gypsy, Traveller people.</p> <p>Officials are considering policy options to recruit members from the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community to step into this community mentor/liaison role. Officials will also be considering mechanisms by which community mentors can be used within local authorities.</p> <p>Addressing the under-representation of Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller voices, mentoring, coaching, and community leadership programmes will increase understanding of racial inequality and strengthen the knowledge and understanding of the culture and needs of the community.</p>
<p>Recommendation 15:</p> <p>The Welsh Government should review whether the existing Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments process is the most appropriate and effective way of assessing the accommodation needs</p>	<p>The GTAA process was reviewed in 2024.</p>

of Gypsies, Roma and Travellers.	
<p>Recommendation 16:</p> <p>The Welsh Government should work with local authorities to review how engagement and consultation with the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities during the accommodation assessment process can be improved, including the extent to which the measures and actions within the Anti-racist Action Plan have made a difference.</p>	<p>An effective GTAA is only as effective as its engagement with the community, we expect to see this engagement and positive relationships between the local authority and its community to inform any assessment of need and any plans to meet that need – this is the good practice that we would expect from all local authorities. As part of our review of the GTAA guidance, engagement with the community will be a fundamental expectation.</p>
<p>Recommendation 17:</p> <p>The Welsh Government should clarify what process is in place to monitor the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments on an all-Wales basis in order to gain an understanding of accommodation needs at a national as well as a local level.</p>	<p>There is a scrutiny process both at official level and at Ministerial level as part of the GTAA cycle process. Once a GTAA is submitted and scrutinised, Ministers can accept reject or accept with modifications, each local authorities GTAA but are expected to continue to deliver against their existing GTAA until the new assessment had been approved.</p> <p>Officials can use the content of the GTAA's, their existing knowledge about the quality of Gypsy and Traveller sites and any casework identified through the Advocacy and Advice contract to discuss specific sites or issues with local authorities.</p> <p>As outlined above, as part of the GTAA process, officials are carrying out regular monitoring with local authorities to hold them to account for their duty in meeting the need they identified in their GTAA. These monitoring arrangements have also included raising awareness of the Capital Sites Grant</p>

	funding and uptake this financial year to date has been excellent.
Recommendation 18: The Welsh Government should conduct a broader review of how the funding for the development of sites relates to the requirements in terms of the standards of sites.	We have reviewed our Site Capital guidance for the last two years, as a result of we have increased the maximum cost per new pitch to £200k from £150k. We have also considered feedback from local authorities and removed the bidding round deadlines, therefore for 2025-26 the bidding process is open all year round.
Recommendation 19: The Welsh Government should explore all possible options for funding Gypsy, Roma and Traveller accommodation, including whether the criteria for the Capital Sites Grant should be broadened to allow local authorities to purchase land for the development of new sites and how funding could be used to support the development of private sites.	<p>As part of the Capital Sites funding for 2024-25, we have added the option to use the capital grant for site acquisition to further support local authorities to meet their duty to provide accommodation for these communities.</p> <p>Officials are currently exploring how we can fund private sites for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.</p>
Recommendation 20: The Welsh Government should provide an update on the work undertaken to provide transit pitches across Wales before the Senedd's summer recess in 2023.	Please see response to Recommendation 2.

<p>Recommendation 21:</p> <p>The Welsh Government should set out how it intends to work with the police and partner organisations to communicate to the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities any anticipated changes to plans for enforcing the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 in Wales.</p>	<p>Officials are members of the Criminal Justice Anti-racist Wales subgroup and are working with partners to update and engage community members on The Police Forces Protocols on Managing Unauthorised Encampments.</p> <p>Once this work is undertaken officials will work with the four police forces to have these protocols signed off, raise awareness of them with community members and have the partners responsible for working with unauthorised encampments fully aware of and following the protocols.</p> <p>Once finalised, we will procure direct engagement on these police protocols with the community.</p>
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