



North Lanarkshire Council Local Housing Strategy 2021-2026 Gypsy/Travellers Evidence Paper

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1. Introduction

This evidence paper provides a review of local and national issues that affect the Gypsy /Traveller community living in an around the North Lanarkshire Council (NLC) area. It provides information to inform the development of North Lanarkshire Council's Local Housing Strategy 2021/26 (LHS). The paper provides evidence to support housing need issues as identified within the most recent Clydeplan Housing Need and Demand Assessment (Clydeplan HNDA 2). The evidence paper considers information provided by local services and refers to several research and guidance documents relating to the Gypsy /Traveller community in Scotland including;

- the guidance contained within Scottish Government Local Housing Strategy (LHS) Guidance 2019 in relation to Gypsy/Travellers and
- A report published by the Scottish Government in April 2019 "Gypsy/Traveller Sites in Scotland" Summary of the Evidence Base, Summer 2019

The LHS Guidance 2019 identifies Gypsy/Travellers in Scotland as a recognised ethnic minority group. The Scottish Government uses the term "Gypsy/Traveller" for people in the Travelling communities, and that term is therefore used throughout this paper.

The Guidance details the considerations to be addressed *by the LHS including:*

- An assessment of the current level of public and private site and pitch provision and the identification of any gaps in provision together with an assessment of future need and how this will be addressed, including through the use of new sites.
- An assessment of whether currently available public sites/pitches meet the minimum standards for Gypsy/Traveller sites what action will be taken to ensure compliance and what are the timescales for achieving this?
- Consideration of how existing sites will continue to meet the needs of the Gypsy/Traveller community in the longer term and whether any redevelopment or replacement of existing sites will be required in the future.
- Evidence of recent engagement with the Gypsy/Traveller community to better understand their needs.

The evidence paper will set out how any identified need will be addressed within the LHS and whether there is need for year round provision or of a more seasonal nature.

2. Background

North Lanarkshire Council strives to create a fair and just society for all who live here. We want North Lanarkshire to be a place where race is not a determinant of an individual's ability to fulfil their potential, therefore we need to continue to remove barriers and create equal opportunities for all. The reality is that for people from minority ethnic communities, such as Gypsy/Travellers they are more as likely to be unemployed, more at risk of poverty, disproportionately affected by poor health, and have lower take up of public services such as preventative health screening programs.

The difficulties experienced by Gypsy/Traveller communities are long standing. Despite years of national and local interventions outcomes for Gypsy/Travellers remain poor. As well as seeing their traditional lifestyle eroded, Gypsy/Travellers experience poorer outcomes in terms of living standards, education, health and employment, and often face extreme and persistent stereotyping and hostility.

It is acknowledged that access to services such as health, education and social services can be difficult for Gypsy /Travellers. It is often stated that discrimination against Gypsy/Travellers is more accepted and normalised than that directed at other minority ethnic communities. While some progress has been made more needs to be done if we are to improve outcomes for this community.

In August 2006 Craigforth were commissioned to conduct a wide-ranging accommodation needs assessment of Gypsies/Travellers/Travelling Show people in West Central Scotland. While there has been other more recent research and reports produced by the Scottish Government this evidence paper will continue to refer to this report as it still remains valid due to the depth and complexity of its evidence and findings which are confirmed in the more recent national research now available and listed in the Bibliography.

The Craigforth research was jointly commissioned by eleven local authorities and Communities Scotland. The research was specifically commissioned to assist the authorities develop and update their LHSs and aimed to identify and quantify Gypsy/Travellers accommodation needs over the period as well as provide some insight into longer term requirements. The findings remain a useful tool in understanding the needs of the Gypsy/Traveller community across Clydeplan area. The priorities identified a range of issues such as:

- Continued Scottish Government Investment and availability of funding
- Lack of robust demand evidence base
- Closure of sites due to vandalism and underuse
- Anti-discriminatory work with partners
- Consultation

The evidence available from the Craigforth report provided a starting point for Clydeplan HNDA 2 to demonstrate the land requirements for Gypsies/Travellers sites. To support and update the Report Clydeplan HNDA considered other information sources such as Census 2011, Scottish Government's 'Gypsies/Travellers in Scotland: The Twice Yearly Count' and information provided by local authorities and concluded that none of the areas with local authority Gypsies/Travellers site provision had recorded any significant unmet need or demand for pitches but there was some evidence to show a demand from the community for land for private sites to accommodate family groups.

In December 2017, the Scottish Government launched the Race Equality Action Plan which set out the key actions for the Scottish Government to drive positive change for minority ethnic communities. Following this, a Ministerial Working Group was established to drive forward cross-government actions to improve the lives of Scottish Gypsy/Traveller communities.

This paper refers to evidence gathered through these sources and is supplemented by evidence gathered within North Lanarkshire by making use of the knowledge and expertise gathered locally through the Gypsy /Travellers Strategy Liaison Group Sub Group. The paper also makes reference to actual information from the Council yearly report on Unauthorised Encampments as supporting evidence (Appendix 4).

3. Gypsy/Travellers in North Lanarkshire and Scotland Data

The term Gypsy/Traveller refers to a range of distinct groups, including Romanies, Scottish, Irish, English and Welsh Travellers, who regard the travelling lifestyle as part of their cultural and ethnic identity. In Scotland, Gypsy/Travellers are recognised as an ethnic minority and the 2011 Census included an option for Gypsy/Travellers in the ethnicity category. The Scottish Government uses the term "Gypsy/Traveller" for people in the Travelling communities, and that term is therefore used throughout this document.

3.1 National Data

This section provides some statistical information about Gypsy/Travellers in North Lanarkshire and Scotland, drawn from a number of sources. The 2011 Census was the first in Scotland to add a 'Gypsy/Traveller' response category to the question relating to ethnicity. However there remains a degree of uncertainty about the number of Gypsy/Travellers living in Scotland. The following evidence paper provides a full breakdown of the most recent census and adds greatly to the understanding of the community on Scotland. [Gypsy/Travellers in Scotland a Comprehensive Analysis of the 2011 Census.](#)

Over 4,200 people identified their ethnicity as 'White: Gypsy/Traveller' in the 2011 Census this represented less than 0.1% of the Scottish population. However, it is thought that some chose not to declare their ethnicity. Organizations that work with Gypsy/Travellers believe Scotland's Gypsy/Traveller community comprises 15,000 to 20,000 people.

In the last official count of Gypsy/Travellers commissioned by the Scottish Government in 2009, over 2,000 were living on Council/Registered Social Landlord sites, private sites and unauthorised encampments in Scotland.

Scotland's Census 2011 indicated there were 1,792 households where the household reference person was a Gypsy/Traveller.

For Clydeside area the figure was 437, accounting for just under a quarter of all Gypsy/Travellers in Scotland.

205 households in North Lanarkshire indicated that they were white Gypsy /Traveller ethnicity within the 2011 Census.

3.2 Age & Gender

The 2011 Census data shows that the age profile of the Gypsy/Traveller community in Scotland is much younger than that of the population as a whole. For instance, only 28% of Gypsy/Travellers are aged 45 or over, compared to 44% for the population as a whole while only 4% were aged 70 or over compared to 12% of the general population.

The gender breakdown shows that 49% of Gypsy/Travellers are male and 51% are female. This is comparable to the gender split for the Scottish population as a whole.

3.3 Household Composition and Characteristics

Analysis of the 2011 Census data shows that members of the Gypsy/Traveller community are twice as likely as those in the wider population to live in a lone parent household and are much less likely to live in a married couple household.

Gypsy/Travellers are more likely to have dependent children; (36%) compared to the rest of the population (26%) and they are three times more likely to contain three or more dependent children.

The Census also collected data on health, which shows that Gypsy/Travellers are more likely than the general population to have a limiting long-term health problem or disability; 28% compared to 20%.

The Census also stated that in 2011, compared to the population in Scotland, Gypsy/Travellers were also:

- Much less likely to be economically active;
- Much more likely to have never worked;
- Much more likely to work in elementary occupations;
- More likely to be self-employed;
- Much more likely to be in the lowest social grade;
- Less likely to be full-time students (16-24 years);
- Much more likely to have no qualifications;
- Much less likely to own their home;
- Much more likely to live in a caravan;
- Much more likely to live in overcrowded accommodation;
- More likely to have no central heating;
- Less likely to have access to a car.

[Source: Analysis of Equality Results from the 2011 Census \(2014\).](#)

4. Gypsy/Traveller Accommodation in Scotland

The Scottish Government, through the **Scottish Social Housing Charter**, set out the standards and outcomes that all social landlords should aim to achieve when performing their housing activities. The Charter requires that “local Council and social landlords with responsibility for managing sites for Gypsy/Travellers should manage the sites so that sites are well maintained and managed

A report published by the Scottish Government in April 2019 “**Gypsy/Traveller Sites in Scotland**” provides the most current information re the provision of Gypsy/Traveller site accommodation in Scotland. Findings are based on data returns from local authorities and RSLs, and include comparison with previous data collection exercises these include data collected by the Scottish Housing Regulator in 2018, the 2011 Census, and the last report of the Twice-Yearly Count of Gypsy/Travellers up to July 2009

Many Gypsy/Travellers live on local authority owned sites, while others live on private sites or in bricks and mortar housing. However, many Gypsy/Travellers still travel, particularly during the summer months and therefore require access to suitable sites across their travel areas. In some instances, Gypsy/Travellers use unauthorised encampments as temporary sites.

The study identified a total of 54 Gypsy/Traveller sites across Scotland, comprising 29 public and 25 private sites. Providing a total of 613 pitches. The majority of these are let on a permanent basis.

Across Scotland the areas with higher levels of Gypsy/Traveller provision are located in the Forth Valley region, Fife, Highland, Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Moray, and Ayrshire.

These regions together account for 52% of public site pitches, 82% of private pitches, and 76% of encampment locations – while representing 32% of the Gypsy/Traveller population

In contrast, the Glasgow & the Clyde Valley area accounts for 12% of public site pitches and 10% of encampment locations and does not have any recorded private sites, while representing 25% of the Gypsy/Traveller population.

4.1 Public Gypsy/Traveller sites in Scotland

Gypsy/ Traveller sites in Scotland Data returns identify a total of 29 public Gypsy/Traveller sites across Scotland. This represents a small reduction in site provision since 2009, where 31 active sites were recorded. Public sites vary considerably in size from 4 to 21 pitches

A total of 397 active pitches are provided across the 29 sites. This represents a reduction in public site provision of 62 pitches over the last ten years (a fall of -14% since 2008), although the supply of active pitches is largely unchanged since 2009.

A total of 20 local authorities/RSLs provide one or more public Gypsy/Traveller sites; the remaining 12 local authority areas do not have any public site provision. Fife, Highland and Aberdeenshire report the largest site provision, and together account for nearly a third of all public site pitches.

Twelve of the 19 local authorities with public sites reported current waiting list demand and/or having turned away households in the last year who were looking for site accommodation. Levels of site occupancy vary significantly across local authority areas; 16 of the 29 sites reported 100% occupancy, while 5 sites reported occupancy of less than 70%.

Data returns indicated a small number of changes in public site provision since the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) report in March 2018, although the overall number of sites remains at 29. The main changes of note were a net loss of 62 pitches. The included a reduction in supply across North Lanarkshire (of -20 pitches), West Lothian (-15), East Dunbartonshire (-15), East Lothian (-12), Argyll & Bute (-11) and Glasgow (-9 pitches).

4.2 Private Gypsy/Traveller sites in Scotland

Local authority returns identify a total of 25 active private Gypsy/Traveller sites across Scotland, providing a total of 216 pitches. This represents a small increase from the 22 private sites reported by the last Twice-Yearly Count in 2009.

Active private Gypsy/Traveller sites are located across 9 local authority areas; Falkirk, Fife, Aberdeenshire and Perth & Kinross report the largest supply of private Gypsy/Traveller pitches; these are the only areas reporting multiple private sites, and together account for more than 80% of all private site pitches.

The majority of private site provision is in the center and east of the country, with only East Ayrshire and Dumfries & Galloway reporting private site provision in the West of Scotland. In North Lanarkshire we don't collate definitive information about the number of private sites/pitches. Some sites are long established and have no recent planning history, other sites have never been subject to an application, and even those which have got a recent planning history are not specifically recorded as Gypsy/Traveller sites on our system therefore the number of pitches is hard to know. Our information is therefore incomplete:

- Station Road Shotts – permission for 9 plots
- Nisbett Street Chapelhall – permission for caravan park (number of plots not specified)
- Chapel Road, Newmains – permission for one pitch
- Foulburn Road, Hartwood – permission for two pitches but there are currently more
- Caldercruix Road/Eastfield Road, Caldercruix – permission for 5 pitches but there are currently 8
- Gartgill Road, Gartsherrie – temporary permission for 2 pitches
- The Pines, Telegraph Road, Longriggend – permission for 2 pitches
- Peatside, Telegraph Road, Longriggend – unauthorised site with at least 3 pitches

4.3 Demand for Authorised Sites

"Gypsy/Traveller Sites in Scotland" reported on the waiting list demand for sites across Scotland in 2018/19. Of the 19 landlords providing public Gypsy/Traveller sites, 12 reported having current waiting list applicants and/or had to turn away Gypsy/Travellers within the last year who were looking for site accommodation. A total of 90 households were registered on public site waiting lists, including 44 having joined a waiting list in the previous year. A further 9 households had been unable to access a pitch in the last year but did not join a waiting list.

This level of waiting list demand shows a total of 88 public site pitches being let within the last year. This suggests it would be possible for current waiting list demand to be met by public sites within a year. However there appears to be a mismatch between waiting list demand and supply of pitches. For example, several local authority areas with current waiting list demand reported limited supply of pitches, notably Angus, Edinburgh and South Lanarkshire.

North Lanarkshire Council at present does not have an operational Gypsy Traveller Sites. Our last operational sites in Plains, near Airdrie and Annathill near Cumbernauld have not been in service since 2006 due to poor uptake of pitches and severe vandalism to the sites. There is no currently available information relating to a demand for public managed Gypsy/Traveller accommodation within the North Lanarkshire Area and there are no current plans to develop either a temporary or transit site in North Lanarkshire. In the years 2018 to 2019 there has been on average 11 unauthorised encampments each year in NLC area. However these encampments have not translated into any identifiable demand for more permanent accommodation in the area.

4.4 Unauthorised Sites in Scotland

“Gypsy/Traveller Sites in Scotland” suggests unauthorised encampments are typically the result of Gypsy/Travellers stopping for a short period when travelling through or visiting an area. Encampments can vary in size from small family groups (typically 1-2 vans) to larger groups of up to 20+ vans. Locations used also vary considerably, and can include open ground in rural locations or within/adjacent to towns, industrial locations, and retail or business parks.

“Gypsy/Traveller Sites in Scotland” report’s findings are based on data returns from local authorities on unauthorised encampment activity and is largely based on reporting of encampments by Council officers, other agencies and local communities. It is therefore difficult to assess the full extent of encampment activity. For example local authorities are more likely to be made aware of larger encampments in more visible locations and encampments in more remote areas may go unreported.

The report identified that over the last 3 years, Local authority returns identified a total of 406 locations across Scotland used for unauthorised sites. However, encampment activity varies significantly; 67 locations (17% of the total) show an average of 2+ encampments per year, including 12 with an average of 5+ encampments per year.

The last Twice-Yearly Count (2009) recorded encampment activity over the previous 12 months, and identified a total of around 600 encampments over this period more than 40% higher than the annual activity recorded by the present study. This suggests that the overall level of encampment activity may have reduced since 2009. However, the study has not been able to include data for several local authority areas and will have under-estimated the total number of encampments across Scotland.

Data indicates that unauthorised encampments are more prevalent across some regions than other and appear to be most prevalent across North Ayrshire, Fife, Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Moray, and the area around and to the north of Inverness. Local authorities across these regions reported an average of more than 30 unauthorised encampments per year, compared to an average of 15-20 across other parts of Scotland. In the years 2018 to 2019 there has been on average 11 unauthorised encampments each year in NLC area.

Encampment locations are typically in and around small towns and urban areas which remains consistent with previous research which has identified employment and visiting family members as significant factors in Gypsy/Traveller travel patterns. However it is suspected the limited number of rural encampments recorded by local authorities may be due to these being less visible to landowners and local communities, and therefore less likely to be reported.

4.5 Managing Unauthorised encampments

Many Gypsy/Travellers live on local authority/ RSL owned sites, while others live on private sites or in bricks and mortar housing. However, many Gypsy/Travellers still travel, and

therefore require access to suitable sites across Scotland. Gypsy Travellers feel that they are unfairly treated as there are not enough places to stop across Scotland and in some areas nowhere to stop at all. This often results in unauthorised encampments which can be seen as anti-social or dangerous, this can bring conflict with local authorities, communities, police etc. Local authorities are encouraged to manage these encampments in line with the Scottish Governments Guidance on Managing Unauthorised Encampments.

This guidance has been prepared to assist local authorities in Scotland to develop effective policies and strategies for responding to unauthorised encampments. The term "unauthorised encampment" describes a site which has been established by Gypsy/Travellers without permission from the landowner. Such sites will normally be in place for a number of days, but can sometimes be in place for longer. Gypsy/Travellers have a variety of reasons for travelling and camping. It therefore follows that approaches taken by local authorities to manage these encampments, in order to be effective, will depend on the type of camp they are engaging with.

In North Lanarkshire, the Gypsy Travellers Liaison Officer (GTLO) currently attends all reported unauthorised encampments and offers support and assistance to residents. They can call on support of health, education and other Council services if required to meet the needs of the Gypsy/ Travellers. In the years 2018/21 there has been 35 unauthorised encampments. While records would indicate this is a reduction in the number of unauthorised encampments across North Lanarkshire recently, there remains a number of challenges arising as a result of the encampments i.e. fly tipping; damage to surrounding areas; pollution and disturbance to public areas.

The Council recognises more could be done to improve the management of unauthorised encampments. The Council Gypsy Travellers Strategy Group have developed policies and procedures that are intended to set out clearly how the Council will manage unauthorised encampments. The Council recognises that having a more strategic approach to unauthorised encampments will enable cost savings in regard to any clean ups and mitigating environmental costs while ensuring the Gypsy/Travellers rights as they travel.

North Lanarkshire Council has recently published its policy in regard to Managing Unauthorised Encampments (Appendix 1) .The Council also publishes details re the number and duration of unauthorised encampments. The Council is currently considering developing a negotiated stopping policy taking heed of the lessons learned during the Scottish Governments national action plan pilot projects and best practice elsewhere and will consult with the community while developing and potentially trialling this approach in the near future.

5. Planning Applications for Private Gypsy/Traveller Sites in Scotland

Many Gypsy Travellers feel that they are unfairly treated as there are not enough places to stop across Scotland and in some areas nowhere to stop at all. This is compounded by high levels of planning application refusals for private sites. A Study into how the planning system supported the Gypsy/Traveller community by the Scottish Government in 2019 identified a total of 88 planning applications for Private Gypsy/Traveller sites across Scotland, received between 2005 and 2018.

Seventeen local authorities recorded one or more planning applications for Gypsy/Traveller sites; the remaining 15 authorities did not record any applications. The majority of planning applications sites are in areas classified as 'accessible rural' or 'remote rural'. Most applications were for single pitch sites, although several applications have been received for larger sites of 15 or more pitches.

Of the 88 planning applications, 35 were approved at the initial application stage, 34 were refused and a further 19 were pending or withdrawn. The majority of refused applications proceeded to appeal (29 of 34) and the majority of appeals were approved (18 of 29), equivalent to around half of all proposals refused at the application stage.

A total of 53 planning applications for Gypsy/Traveller sites were approved at application or on appeal, equivalent to 60% of all applications recorded. Reasons for refusal were published for 28 of the 34 applications which were refused at the application stage.

Published notices indicate that reasons for refusal most commonly relate to proposals being contrary to the Local Development Plan and Strategic Development Plan policies, and/or having an adverse impact on the character of the local area. This was most commonly in relation to the impact of proposals on the local natural environment although some also referred to potential detrimental impact on the amenity enjoyed by neighbouring residents.

In North Lanarkshire in 2019/20 1 application was received for private sites and 1 was approved. However monitoring of these applications is not straightforward as the Council did not record whether an applicant is a Gypsy/Traveller.

In order to address issues raised by the Gypsy/Traveller community a review of planning regulations was carried out and a 10 point Action Plan "Gypsy/Travellers and the planning system: Action Plan" (Appendix 6) produced and published in 2019 by the Scottish Government. This action plan is supported by the Scottish Government, the Gypsy / Traveller community plus HoPS, ALACHO and CoSLA and will be monitored by the Ministerial Working Group on Gypsy Travellers. This action plans clearly restates the Scottish Governments' intent in supporting Gypsy Traveller community in being able to access suitable land to meet their needs across Scotland.

5.1 Targets for number of Sites and Pitches

The Scottish Government no longer sets targets for the number of sites or pitches a local authority should provide. That policy was brought to an end following the recommendations in the final report of the Advisory Committee on Scotland's Travelling People, published in 2000. It has been superseded by the requirements of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. This creates a legal requirement for a local authority to prepare a Local Housing Strategy supported by an assessment of accommodation needs in their area, including those of Gypsy/Travellers. The Local Housing Strategy must be submitted to Scottish Government Ministers. Based on evidence from a housing need and demand assessment (HNDA), the planning authority for an area is required, where need is identified, to plan for the current and future needs of the Gypsy/Traveller community.

6. Housing Needs and Demand North Lanarkshire and Scotland

Guidance states HNDAs should provide evidence of need for sites for Gypsy/Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. Subsequent Development Plans and LHSs should address any need identified. If there is a need, LDPs should identify suitable sites for these communities. They should also consider whether policies are required for small privately-owned sites for Gypsy/Travellers, and for handling applications for permanent sites for Travelling Showpeople. The number and size of unauthorised encampments in an area should be considered when assessing the need for sites and/or pitches.

Clydeplan HNDA concluded that none of the areas with local authority Gypsies/Travellers site provision had recorded any significant unmet need or demand for pitches but there was some evidence to show a demand from the community for land for private sites to accommodate family groups. HNDA2 did not find evidence of a shortfall in provision for Gypsy/Traveller or travelling Showpeople sites in North Lanarkshire or Scotland as a whole.

Although the information gathered provided a broad indication of need it was acknowledged that further work was required at a local level to establish if current provision was sufficient to meet requirements. Further work is required to develop ways of engaging with the Gypsy/Travellers communities to better understand their needs in respect of accommodation in the North Lanarkshire Area.

7. LHS 2016 - 21 Progress to Date

North Lanarkshire Council LHS 2016/21 Action Plan		
<p>KEY ACTION 1.7:</p> <p>Contribute to the wider strategic planning for housing in Glasgow and the Clyde Valley.</p>	<p>Continue joint working locally and at a regional level with Glasgow and Clyde Valley LHS Group and Clydeplan Housing Market Partnership to identify housing need of gypsy/travellers.</p>	<p>Complete 2021</p>
<p>KEY ACTION 4.14:</p> <p>Help ensure Gypsy Travellers accommodation and related support needs are met.</p>	<p>Complete research with Ayrshire and GCV authorities to establish current levels of site and pitch provision for Gypsy Travellers.</p> <p>Review the role and remit of the corporate Gypsy Traveller working group and explore how membership and remit can be developed.</p> <p>Monitor the outcomes of planning applications for Gypsy Travellers.</p> <p>Monitor CHR applications from Gypsy Travellers</p> <p>Maintain and update procedures for collection of information on encampments</p>	<p>Complete 2019</p> <p>Complete 2017</p> <p>Complete 2021</p> <p>Complete 2020</p> <p>Ongoing 2021</p>

The LHS 2016/21 Action Plan made reference to several issues related to the Gypsy Traveller Communities and included actions to be taken forward. To date there has been progress in meeting these aims. However there are still actions to take forward and these are being addressed currently by the Strategic Gypsy Travellers Liaison Group through its Action Plan. This group consider the overall requirements of Gypsy/Traveller households including health, social care, education, waste and environmental issues as well as housing.

Clydeplan Housing Need and Demand Assessment, 2015 indicated that there was no evidence to support requirement for site and pitch provision within North Lanarkshire over the period of the Strategic Development Plan. The Gypsy Traveller Evidence Paper 2016 provided an overview of services provided and an insight into the scale of unauthorised encampments within North Lanarkshire. The anecdotal evidence gathered suggested households are passing through North Lanarkshire and choose to stop in locations that they feel are safe and accessible. The majority of households contacted who responded indicated that they would not use an official site if this was available. The Council remain of the view that due to travel patterns, especially during the summer months, the existence of unauthorised encampments in North Lanarkshire still does not at this time indicate a need for year round sites/pitches.

The Council accepts that access to services remains an issue for Gypsy/Travellers on unauthorised encampments and recognises the importance of services such as the 'Keep

Well' programme to improve access to health services for Gypsy Travellers and to signpost and link Gypsy /Travellers into other services. It is intended that ways in which we can further improve access to services and engagement with this community will be explored further and the Council are considering implementing a Negotiated Stopping Procedure to gauge whether this would be more effective in meeting the needs of Gypsy/Travellers while in the area.

7.1 Travelling Show People

Clydeplan Housing Need and Demand Assessment, 2015 indicates that four authorities within the Strategic Development Plan Area (SDPA) have sites for travelling Showpeople, providing some 812 pitches, the vast majority (over 90%) are located in Glasgow City, with substantial variation in site size, density and conditions across sites. The conclusion was that there was no strategic requirement for additional future accommodation provision for travelling show people across the SDPA. North Lanarkshire has one permanent Show people site within the Motherwell Housing Sub Market Area. The site is a permanent base and provides not only accommodation but storage and maintenance of equipment. The site has 12 pitches. At this time, North Lanarkshire have received no further applications for Planning Permission for Show people sites and can therefore conclude that the needs of this community are being met within North Lanarkshire.

8. Local Service Provision

The Council Corporate Strategy Liaison Group and The Operational Sub Group remit is to have a strategic overview of issues, policy development and compliance for the Council in relation to the Gypsy/Traveller population and to oversee the implementation of any key actions identified by the group. The Group has representation from Housing, Equalities, Education, Legal, Environmental, Planning, Employability, Police Scotland and NHS Lanarkshire.

North Lanarkshire Council also has an operational **Gypsy/Travellers Sub Group** whose role it is to look at the current and future needs of Gypsy /Travellers in North Lanarkshire. This Working Group is drawn from both internal Council service as well as external agencies. The Groups have developed and Action Plan that addresses the priorities within the national action plan with a localised response from relevant partners. The Council groups' **Action Plan** can be found at Appendix 1.

North Lanarkshire Council has a Gypsy Traveller Liaison Officer based within Enterprise and Communities Service. A recent reorganisation of services has resulted in the responsibilities of this post being transferred to the Community Safety Hub and work is underway to facilitate this move. The remit of the post is to provide guidance support and advice to Gypsy/Travellers stopping in the area and liaise with other council services and external partner agencies on issues relating to Gypsy /Travellers.

The NHS Lanarkshire Keep Well Team have a remit to engage with Gypsy/ Travellers who live and stay in the area to offer access to health care and the opportunity to have a Keep Well health check. The team receive referrals from the NLC Gypsy Traveller Liaison officer where a need has been identified for health care provision following discussion. The number of referrals has decreased in recent years. In 2019 no referrals were made to the team, however one family from NLC made a self-referral to Keep Well, this was due to difficulties they were experiencing in relation to health matters. Other issues dealt with on behalf the family included a referral to the financial inclusion team and to the NLC Safer Homes service all of which had a positive outcome for the family. Engagement opportunities with the community is limited and the Keep Well team tend to meet Gypsy /Travellers in other local authority areas and at events held by the community. Keep Well are supporting the National Gypsy Traveller Action plan and have been sharing information discussed with regard to the national health action plan at local levels.

Employability Resources report that out of the over 2000 people on their programme in 2019 only 4 declared as Gypsy/Travellers with none entering employment. This bears up the assertion that Gypsy/Travellers do not access available public services in the same manner as other communities.

Legal Services report that for 2019 there were 8 unauthorised encampments that resulted in Legal Action being initiated although only 2 of these resulted in specific costs being incurred. In relation to evictions, during 2018 there were 5 evictions and none in 2019, however all evictions have taken place on private land. During 2018 there were no encampments on NLC Land, however in 2019, 40% were on council land. NLC have initiated legal action, however not needed to utilise legal sanctions. The Council's Legal Services team has recently updated and circulated its protocol to advise other services re taking legal action for recovery of possession of Land relating to unauthorised encampments.

9. Local Housing Services

9.1 Current Tenants

Reference to the Council HSMS system provides limited information regarding the number of Gypsy / Travellers accessing local authority housing services. Records indicate that there are currently 21 current tenants who identify themselves as Gypsy / Travellers. The longest running tenancy began in 2004 and the latest tenancy start date was February 2015. There was 1 Gypsy/Traveller housed between 01/01/2019 & 31/12/2019 which was in the Shotts Area.

9.2 Common Housing Register Waiting Lists 2019

There are currently 5 live Common Housing Register Applications as at 31/12/2019 there were 5 applicants on the Waiting Lists who identified themselves as Gypsy/Traveller:

- 4 were listed for Wishaw
- 1 was listed for Shotts
- 2 were listed for Motherwell
- 2 were listed for Bellshill
- 2 were listed for Viewpark
- 1 was listed for Coatbridge
- 1 was listed for Airdrie

9.3 Homeless Applications

There were 0 Homeless Applicants who identified as Gypsy/Traveller 2019.

9.4 Evictions

There were 0 evictions in 2019 were the main tenant identified as a Gypsy/Traveller.

9.5 Housing Support

There were 3 Housing support cases opened/completed in 2019 were the main tenant identified as a Gypsy / Traveller.

9.6 Anti-Social Behaviour

We were unable to identify from our Anti-Social Records the number of complaints relating to the Gypsy/Traveller community either as a victim of perpetrator.

9.7 Authorised Sites

There are no Council operated sites in North Lanarkshire. Previous sites within North Lanarkshire closed some years ago due to lack of demand and serious disrepair issues. The LHS 2016/21 did not identify any particular demand for the creation of new permanent site.

9.8 Unauthorised Encampments

In 2019 there were 11 reported unauthorised encampments that were visited by the GTLO in North Lanarkshire. Although the number of encampments have remained consistent over the last two years there has been a significant drop in the length of time they remain on site i.e. they appear to move on a lot quicker than in previous years. Between the two years, the length of time has reduced by approx 50% (2018 = 42 days and 2019 = 20 days). The most recent report from the Council GTLO re Unauthorised Encampments for 2020/21 is attached at Appendix 5. Through the period of the pandemic numbers of encampments have continued to decrease, 5 in 2020 and 8 so far in 2021.

9.9 Overview of Council Services

Although the numbers reported as utilising the various aspects of the Council Housing services are relatively small it should be recognised that it is considered there are approximately some 200 to 250 people within North Lanarkshire who identify themselves as Gypsy/Travellers. There appears to have been consistent, if low, levels of demand for social rented housing from households identifying themselves as Gypsy/Travellers within the Common Housing Register (CHR).

The Council monitor a variety of information on an annual basis across a number of services. Housing Services are committed to monitoring information in relation to unauthorised encampments, CHR applications and referrals to and from other services. However the research has identified the difficulty in collating this information consistently or accurately across the different functions. There also remains the perception that many Gypsy/Travellers elect not to identify themselves as part of that community when dealing with official agencies and services

North Lanarkshire Council has in place guidelines and procedures for dealing with unauthorised encampments, details of these encampments are recorded and included in the National Count which is conducted each year. There is a section on the Council website which gives helpful information on Gypsy Travellers and their way of life.

Through training, staff are made aware of issues concerning Gypsy/Travellers while the profile of Gypsy/Travellers is maintained through the Council's Corporate Equality Group which can advise on procedures and any changes to legislation. The Council is currently developing a range of educational and training material to provide an elearning module for all staff and elected members about issues that affect the Gypsy/Traveller community. The first of these sessions has been delivered by MECOPP in September and November 2021 with a section of council staff and elected members attending. We are currently evaluating feedback from these awareness raising sessions and hope to deliver more sessions in the near future.

10. Consultation

Consultation is an area where there is little evidence that progress has been made locally. There is limited interaction between the Council and the Gypsy/Traveller community across all areas of the Council services. We have recently begun to engage with MECOPP who have developed and delivered awareness raising sessions for our staff and elected members, we aim to develop this relationship further and hopefully develop better links with the community in North Lanarkshire. There are few unauthorised encampments and opportunities for meaningful consultation are limited. However it is recognised that further efforts require to be made to engage more effectively with the Gypsy/Traveller community in North Lanarkshire. The NHS Keep Well service is currently leading on efforts to begin a dialogue and will be supported by colleagues across other council services to achieve this.

11. Scottish Government Action plan

In the absence of any recent local research or consultation with the Gypsy/Traveller community the joint action plan by the Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities 'Improving the lives of Gypsy/Travellers: 2019-2021', launched on 10 October 2019, ([Appendix 2](#)) becomes a very important document in understanding the needs of the community nationally and locally.

The Scottish Governments Working Group determines priorities for action and drives forward the changes required to start making improvements for Gypsy/Travellers across a range of issues. The Scottish Government state that their focus will be on five areas that Gypsy/Traveller communities have identified as being important to them;

- More and better accommodation,
- Improving access to public services,
- Better incomes in and out of work,
- Tackling racism and discrimination, and
- Improving Gypsy/Traveller representation.

These high level aims are where appropriate reflected in North Lanarkshire Council Corporate Action Plan (Appendix 1) and that group will seek to progress these issues to deliver better outcomes for the Gypsy/Traveller community.

12. Literature Review

While there has been no further recent specific research or investigations into service provision for Gypsy/Travellers conducted by the Council there has been a number of recent research papers prepared by the Scottish Government. This evidence paper refers to these papers and action plans as well as reference to reports that informed previous LHS evidence papers. Preparation for this year's LHS suggests the review of existing evidence and literature review should again focus on answering a small number of core questions that would assist authorities to address the LHS Considerations. The questions to consider include:

- To gain a better understanding of the accommodation needs of Gypsy/Travellers
- Improve access to public services
- Better incomes in and out of work services
- Tackle Racism and Discrimination
- Improve Gypsy/Traveller representation

The Literature Review considered the above statements and the documents reviewed are listed with links in the Bibliography at Section 15 (Appendix 4). The documents address the key questions identified for investigation. Importantly there are similar findings across all the documents reviewed which inform the conclusions and recommendations of this paper.

Gain a better understanding of the accommodation needs of Gypsy/Travellers communities

The Council are key partners within both the Clydeplan Housing Market Partnership and within the Glasgow and Clyde Valley and Ayrshires LHS Group. North Lanarkshire Council has previously carried out considerable work internally and improved our local knowledge by better monitoring of unauthorised encampments allowing the Council to identify trends and future requirements. The joint work with the Glasgow and Clyde Valley and Ayrshires LHS Group has also helped to develop the evidence base through consideration of both national and local data.

Most of the literature reviewed referred or related to the issues Gypsy/Travellers faced across Scotland although some documents do make specific reference to Lanarkshire and West Central Scotland. Clydeplan HNDA 2 has indicated that there is no unmet need within North Lanarkshire and that there was no evidence to support requirement for site and pitch provision within North Lanarkshire over the period of the current LHS.

The Gypsy Traveller Evidence Paper 2016 and the more recent reports from our Community Safety team provides an overview of services provided to Gypsy/Travellers and an insight into the scale of unauthorised encampments within North Lanarkshire. The evidence gathered to date suggests households are passing through North Lanarkshire and choose to stop in locations that they feel are safe and accessible.

Evidence suggests site standards and facilities are an area Gypsy/Travellers feel needs to be addressed across the whole of Scotland due to the inconsistencies. As there are no Council sites within North Lanarkshire there is still no direct action for the Council to take in relation to this issue at this time. The desktop literature review and analysis of national and other relevant local data sources indicate that there is no increase this year in unauthorised encampments within North Lanarkshire. The literature review has indicated that generally across West and Central Scotland there remains a lack of suitable stopping places

In North Lanarkshire Landowners who have experience of dealing with unauthorised encampments tend to understand that the sites are generally short term and Council Services

are put in place in relation to waste and site clean ups. There are good relationships between landowners, Police Scotland, NHS Lanarkshire and Council Services and it is often less resource intensive to manage the unauthorised encampment than to serve notices for the group to move on.

Local authorities, including North Lanarkshire, have identified that the annual count in 2009 was the last official count and is now outdated. This only took account of Council and RSL sites and therefore didn't include households in unauthorised encampments. Further issues arise in identifying a true picture and pattern of households as the counts in summer are greater than in winter with no information collected or gathered in relation to where households come from or go to. The accuracy of information is therefore a key issue.

Recent changes to Planning systems and Welfare Reforms were also identified as key issues and are likely to also affect households in North Lanarkshire. The production of the Scottish Government Action plan and adoption by CoSLA is a major impact on future service provision for the Gypsy/Travellers community. Other issues identified relate to site conditions, tenancy agreements and rental charges as well as lack of suitable stopping places for Gypsy/Travellers on the move. Gypsy/Travellers feel private sites should be regulated in terms of site condition and tenancy agreements and this is something that the Council could reconsider in the future.

Improving communications and reviewing service delivery is regarded as vital. The literature reviewed suggests working with Gypsy/Traveller communities to explore options for improving the management of encampments and the potential for developing more informal stopping places. This could enable agreed joint protocols for data gathering around encampments and needs assessment on an on-going basis. This will allow for better evidence to be developed, which in turn could support the process of site development in the future.

The Scottish Government Planning Action Plan suggests looking at how Gypsy/Traveller communities can realise aspirations with respect to private site development, including working better with Planning Authorities and agencies such as Planning Aid Scotland this could lead to a significant change in outcomes for those who want to develop their own sites.

Improve access to public services

Health and access to services appears to be a cross cutting theme with publications indicating that Gypsy/Traveller household life expectancy and NHS outcomes are far poorer than that of the general public. The evidence suggests that positive health outcomes for Gypsy/Travellers are below average and improved links with health services is recommended. An overview of the recommendations within the publications highlights key areas North Lanarkshire should address including access to health services and considering how best to develop engagement with the Gypsy/Travellers community.

It is recommended Councils work with the community to raise awareness of key rights and entitlements and ensure that services are responsive to Gypsy/Travellers' specific needs and preferences. Councils should strive to improve educational outcomes for Gypsy/Travellers by supporting them to take advantage of their right to education. The Council's strategic working group currently has membership from a range services including health, education and social care. The groups' current action plan has recognised these issues as an area for continuing focus.

Better incomes in and out of work services

Research suggests Gypsy/Traveller communities are at high risk of poverty and recommends working with Gypsy/Travellers both in and out of work to maximise family incomes, address

financial exclusion and improve opportunities for good quality employment. Key considerations are to maximise incomes and increase uptake of social security and take action to reduce daily living costs. Good practice promotes working in partnership with the third sector to maximise the take-up of eligible benefits amongst Gypsy/Traveller communities. Delivering proactive and focused work to enable Gypsy/Travellers to benefit from services provided by Skills Development Scotland. This will include careers information, advice and guidance, work-based learning and employability programmes as well as promoting the opportunities offered through Scotland's Enterprising Schools. Clearly it is felt that this community has not benefitted or had easy access to a range of services taken for granted by many within the settled community. The Council action plan currently recognises these issues and the working group is attended by representatives from the Financial Inclusion team and Employability Team and a focus will continue to be placed on improving engagement with the Gypsy/Traveller community in these areas.

Tackle Racism and Discrimination

The Scottish Attitudinal Survey highlighted that negative opinions about Gypsy & Traveller communities remain at a significant level. The Scottish Government's Race Equality Action Plan should be used as a means to drive forward action at a local level, as well to continue, and enhance, joint working at a regional level to tackle the negative stereotypes of the community. The inclusion of a specific section on Gypsy/Travellers should also allow for joint working, partnership and input at a national level.

The Council's strategic working group currently has membership from a range services including health, education and social care. The groups' current action plan has recognised this issues as an area for continuing focus. In particular efforts are being made to improve representation and strengthen community engagement to ensure Gypsy/Travellers are fairly represented in decisions that are made at local level. Training has been sourced regarding the issues facing the community and this training will be delivered to elected members and a range of local authority staff to raise the profile and begin to tackle the racism and discrimination while promoting rights and recognising gypsy/traveller history and culture.

Improve Gypsy/Traveller representation

Improving engagement and consultation is an area where little progress has been made locally. This reflects the case across the rest of Scotland, however there are aspects of good practice and it is evident that this occurs in areas where there are more and better accommodation options. Locally there is limited interaction between the Council and the Gypsy/Traveller community across all areas of the Council services. There are few unauthorised encampments and opportunities for meaningful consultation are limited. However it is recognised that further efforts require to be made to engage more effectively with the Gypsy/Traveller community in North Lanarkshire. The NHS Keep Well service is currently leading on efforts to begin a dialogue and will be supported by colleagues across other council services to achieve this.

13. Summary Findings

Clydeplan HNDA 2 has indicated that there is no unmet need within North Lanarkshire and that there was no evidence to support requirement for site and pitch provision within North Lanarkshire over the period of the current LHS.

The Gypsy Traveller Evidence Paper 2016 and the reports from GTLO provides the most recent insight into the scale of unauthorised encampments within North Lanarkshire. The evidence pre lockdown suggests households are passing through North Lanarkshire and choose to stop in locations that they feel are safe and accessible however the number and scale of these encampments does not suggest the need for permanent provision in the area.

National evidence suggests site standards and facilities are an area Gypsy/Travellers feel needs to be addressed across the whole of Scotland due to the inconsistencies. As there are no Council sites within North Lanarkshire there is still no direct action for the Council to take in relation to this issue.

The Council believes the key areas to consider most urgently include;

- managing unauthorised encampments better,
- providing better access to public and health services, and
- considering how to develop engagement with the Gypsy/Travellers community

It is clear that identifying and engaging with the Gypsy/Travellers population has been difficult. Given that a significant proportion of Gypsy/Travellers live in bricks and mortar housing and do not readily identify themselves, add the transient nature of the community and the true figure of the community in NLC area remains unknown. It is therefore not surprising in a time of increasing budgetary constraints that this lack of robust evidence will impact on the provision of services. However, it remains the case that Gypsy/Traveller communities in Scotland face concerning levels of inequality, discrimination and prejudice, and this situation will not be resolved until suitable access to services is available .

Research identifies a small number of Gypsy/Travellers who have applied to the Council for housing however this remains a consistent number. This demand can be met via the existing Allocations policy however again better monitoring of access to Housing and other services is required.

There is no Council site provision within North Lanarkshire and the Clydeplan HNDA indicated that there is no unmet need for the Gypsy/Traveller accommodation within North Lanarkshire. The Council remain of the view that due to travel patterns, especially during the summer months, the existence of relatively low numbers of unauthorised encampments does not at this time indicate or support a need for year round sites/pitches.

14. Recommendations

This evidence paper has considered a range of information and research from a number of sources. Links to all the research and reports are provided in the Bibliography. From this research, literature and the review of local service provision the following actions are recommended for taking forward within the Local Housing Strategy 2021/26;

- Continue joint working locally and at regional level with Glasgow and Clyde Valley LHS Group and Clydeplan Housing Market Partnership to identify housing need of

Gypsy/Travellers and continue to develop our understanding and evidence base in relation to housing need for Gypsy/Travellers through Clydeplan Housing Need and Demand Assessment 3.

- Develop methods of engagement and Consult with Gypsy/Traveller community in relation to development of Council's Local Housing Strategy and other issues that affect the community.
- Develop and Pilot Negotiated Stopping Procedure to better manage unauthorised encampments in North Lanarkshire.

More immediately the Council Strategic Groups Action Plan can continue to develop actions and activities around the following issues;

- Continue to support and develop the work and membership of Gypsy/Travellers Strategy Liaison Group.
- Monitor local trends and update evidence base on an annual basis.
- Monitor planning applications and outcomes for Private Gypsy/Traveller site provision.
- Monitor compliance of Council Services with Government Guidance in relation to equalities matters in respect of the Gypsy /Traveller community.
- Maintain Register of Unauthorised Encampments in North Lanarkshire.
- Demonstrate accessibility of access for social housing by monitoring a range of indicators around access to Housing services e.g. the number of Common Housing Register Applications and Allocations to Gypsy/Travellers, HPA, ASB and Housing Support.
- Develop and implement housing options and information advice resources for Elected Members, Council Staff and Gypsy/Travellers.
- Develop methods to consult with Gypsy/Traveller community in relation to issues that affect the community.

15. Bibliography

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- Scottish Government Action Plan ([Appendix 2](#))
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16. Appendices

Appendix 1: GT Strategy Group Action Plan, 2019/20

North Lanarkshire Council Gypsy Travellers Strategic Liaison Group Action Plan 2021/22 CSH – Community Safety Hub BDS- Business Development and Support BDO- Business Strategy Officer EO- Equality Officer NHS ~ Keepwell Planning LOD -Learning and Development FIT – Financial inclusion Team -					
Strategic Aims					
1. To gain a better understanding of the accommodation needs of Gypsy/Travellers					
Strategic Action	Baseline Milestone Target	Comments/Progress	Next Steps	Lead Officer	Timescale
Carry out data analysis to better understand the accommodation needs and preferences of Gypsy/Travellers to inform future provision in terms of both unauthorised encampments and the settled community.	HNDA 2 for current LHS concluded no current demand for permanent site in NLC area.	Preparations for LHS 21/26 underway. Evidence Paper for LHS 2021/26 prepared. HNDA 3 will provide further updated evidence re need and demand in NLC area. Consultation response sent to SG 4 th May 21 in response to sg/cosla draft guidance re more and better accommodation for GT.	Data analysis report submitted to sub group quarterly and strategic group 6 monthly for noting.	Nikola Graham CSH Joanne Thomson BDO	Reported quarterly to sub group and 6 monthly to strategy group. Next Operational sub group 22 nd June 21 Next Strategic group meeting 21 st September 21
Manage Unauthorised Encampments	CSH officers attend encampments to provide advice and information to residents. Monitoring data to be collected and collated as and when Unauthorised Encampments arise by CSH.	Data re encampments and activity for 2020 submitted to operational group and Strategic group for consideration. Numbers significantly down due to COVID.	Stopping as an approach sessions first session on Children's rights scheduled 8th June 21 CSH and BSO will attend national pilot Negotiated Stopping meetings with SG to take forward learning to develop NLC services re Managing Unauthorised Encampments and any future Negotiated Stopping services.	Nikola Graham CSH Tom Hester BSO	Ongoing

Ensure policies and procedures, including legal processes, for dealing with unauthorised encampments are reviewed annually to continue to meet legislative requirements and the needs for all.	Develop and review policy's and procedure related to GT and publish on intranet. Legal services advice re unauthorised encampments published on Intranet	Managing Unauthorised Encampments protocol and Legal Service Protocol have been reviewed updated and agreed by groups and are now on connect and will be reviewed yearly. Procedures review scheduled for Dec 21	Small work group will be established to review procedures by target date end December 21.	Joanne Thomson BDS Nikola Graham CSH Tom Hester BSO	December 21.
Develop a 'Negotiated Stopping' approach in order to better meet the needs of Gypsy/Travellers	CSH and BSO will attend national pilot Negotiated Stopping meetings with SG to take forward learning to develop NLC services re Managing Unauthorised Encampments and any future Negotiated Stopping services.	Draft policies and procedures have been circulated ;they will require updating per SG negotiated stopping guidance after national pilot scheme reports.	BSO and CSH will attend "Stopping as an approach sessions" first session on Children's rights scheduled 8th June 21	Tom Hester BSO Nikola Graham CSH	March 22 Dependant on progress of National Pilot Negotiated
Collate and Provide information on Private Sites in NLC. Collate information re Planning Applications and monitor to ensure legislative requirements are met and take appropriate measures where required	Quarterly report to be collated and submitted to Sub Group re activity planning issues and Private sites	Update received for Evidence Paper for next LHS.	Email to KB for update on activity re private sites sent 27 /05/21	Keith Bathgate Planning services	Reported quarterly to sub group and 6 monthly to strategy group. Yearly report to be collated and distributed to both groups and CMT
Strategic Aim 2. Improve access to public services					
Strategic Action	Baseline Milestone Target	Comments/Progress	Next Steps	Lead Officer	Timescales
Transfer responsibilities of GTLO to Community Safety Hub to provide additional resources and expertise to better meet needs of	CSH officers attend encampments to provide advice and information to residents .	Handover of tasks and responsibilities now complete.	CSH to further develop their role in respect of Operational Sub Group and to become more involved in new developments and Strategic matters.	Nikola Graham CSH	22 June 21

Gypsy/Travellers in NLC area.					
Review and update Council Website, policies, procedures and paperwork to ensure fit for purpose and meet good practice guidance to ensure Gypsy/Travellers within NLC have access to or and have access to relevant information and to ensure G/T communities are aware of their rights in relation to statutory services	Review current resources/source and format and/or create new materials and publish when content agreed.	Working group to convene to review website and information advice available to GT community ,staff and elected members	Small work group meeting arranged	Joanne Thomson BDS/ Nikola Graham CSH Tom Hester BSO	22 nd June 21
Respond to the health and welfare needs of G/T's within encampments and within the settled community	Keep Well nurse resource available to respond to the health need of Gypsy/Travellers	Continue to attend and discuss/issue relevant information e.g., 'blue cards' which promote the right to register with a GP No visits. Referrals received by Keepwell team	NHS to provide referral procedure for consideration and agreement .	Sandra Kelly Keepwell NHS Nikola Graham CSH	22 nd June 2021
Respond to Educational needs within G/T communities	Consider approach to improve experiences and access in relation to Education provision (including early years and adult literacy)	Update Statement required from Education?	Meeting arranged 30 th May to discuss Education resources re GT children	Lindsey Mitchell Education Tom Hester BSO	22 nd June 21
Promotion of awareness and understanding of the issues affecting G/T communities	Reviewed online training module currently used by NHS and now adapting for eLearning training/awareness modules to be rolled out to a range of Council employees, including elected members to ensure better understanding of	Small group to convene and agree content of eLearning module re GT matters to be presented to Subgroup and Strategy group for approval.	Tom Hester BSO Isabel Brownlie LOD	21 st Sept 21	Promotion of awareness and understanding of the issues affecting G/T communities

	Gypsy/Travellers rights and culture.				
Strategic Aim					
Better incomes in and out of work					
Strategic Action	Baseline Milestone Target	Comments/Progress	Next Steps	Lead Officer	Timescale
Gypsy/Traveller communities are at high risk of poverty. We will work with Gypsy/Travellers both in and out of work to maximise family incomes, address financial exclusion and improve opportunities for good quality employment	We provide income maximisation information through our First Stop Shops ,our website and a range of other local authority services	Will continue to work with G/T to maximise opportunities, however engagement is limited and an update from our Employability service advises that out of the over 2000 people on Employability Programme in 2019 only 4 declared as Gypsy/Travellers Update required from Social Work FIT and other advice services re uptake and engagement with Gypsy/Traveller community	Investigate ways of improving engagement with Gypsy/Traveller communities. Financial Inclusion Team now running report re income maximisation work with GT community and will forward ASAP	Nikola Graham CSH Tom Hester BSO Amanda Gallagher Cairns FIT Paul Kane Employability Resources &	Ongoing Sept 21
Strategic Aim					
4. Tackle Racism and Discrimination					
Strategic Action	Baseline Milestone Target	Comments/Progress	Next Steps	Lead Officer	Timescale
Gypsy/Travellers experience high levels of racism and discrimination and are often stigmatised because of their identity. We will work to bring about a zero-tolerance approach to racism and unfair treatment towards Gypsy/Traveller communities	Provision of training/awareness for council employees, including member services as above. Provision of online resources and materials that can be accessed by public and GT's (use of videos in response to possible literacy issues)	Limited progress so far. Further emphasis required urgently to scope extent of issue within NLC area. Collate report to assess extent of racism, discrimination and harassment of Gypsy/Traveller community in NLC area.	Meetings arranged with LOD and MECOPP to arrange online training sessions for key staff and development of eLearning resource for wider distribution.	Joanne Thomson BDO Tom Hester BSO Audrey Cameron Equalities Officer Isabel Brownlie LOD Erica Baillie Police Scotland	22 nd June 21
Strategic Aim					
Improve Gypsy/Traveller representation					

Strategic Action	Baseline Milestone Target	Comments/Progress	Next Steps	Lead Officer	Timescale
<p>Gypsy/Travellers are not always represented in our decision-making forums. We will work to make sure that Gypsy/Travellers have opportunities, encouragement and any support they might need to have a voice in decisions that affect them and their communities.</p>	<p>Strategic Group has discussed proposal of representation by member(s) of Gypsy/Traveller community at the Strategic Group or separate focus group to participate in discussions and decision making. Further discussion is required and Keep Well team is hoping to set up initial discussion opportunities to progress this issue with members of community.</p>	<p>Consider appropriate opportunity's for engagement. with Tenant Participation Team. Provides an opportunity in terms of engaging with under-represented groups</p>	<p>Now in discussion with MECOPP group who have good links with GT community , aim to develop better contacts for consultation and engagement.</p> <p>Keep Well team to set up initial meeting to discuss engagement opportunities</p>	<p>Tom Hester BSO Sandra Kelly Keep Well Team Tracy Lennon TP Audrey Cameron EO</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Appendix 2: Scottish Government Action Plan

Scottish Government and Local Government are working together during 2019-2021 to improve the lives of Scotland's Gypsy/Traveller communities.

- We have spoken to many Gypsy/Travellers and listened to their concerns about accommodation, education, health and access to services. We know that the community face many disadvantages and that action needs to be taken to make sure that Gypsy/Travellers are treated fairly, have positive experiences of our public services and can access all of their rights and entitlements.
- We are working with the Gypsy/Traveller community and with organisations who deliver services, to make sure that Gypsy/Travellers:
 - have safe and culturally appropriate places to live and travel
 - understand their rights and have positive experiences of accessing services
 - have support to maximise incomes, increase employment opportunities, and improve the standard of living
 - feel safe, respected and valued members of Scotland's diverse population
 - Have a seat at the table, are listened to, and have a say in decisions that affect their lives.

Our Commitments

- To help make this happen, we will work together to:
 - Provide more and better accommodation
 - Ensure the needs of Gypsy/Travellers are appropriately and collectively resourced
 - Understand the accommodation needs and preferences of Gypsy/Travellers to inform future provision
 - Make sure the planning system works better for Gypsy/Traveller communities
 - Improve access to public services
 - Work with the community to raise awareness of key rights and entitlements
 - Help to ensure that services are responsive to Gypsy/Travellers' specific needs and preferences

- Improve educational outcomes for Gypsy/Travellers by supporting them to take advantage of their right to education
- Test new ways to tackle health inequalities
- Better incomes in and out of work
- Help Gypsy/Travellers maximise their incomes and increase uptake of financial support they are eligible for
- Support parents to overcome barriers to work, and in-work poverty and
- Improve standard of living by reducing daily living costs for Gypsy/Travellers
 - Tackle racism and discrimination
 - Provide leadership to challenge racism and discrimination
 - Promote Gypsy/Traveller's rights
 - Recognise and value Gypsy/Traveller history and culture
 - Improve Gypsy/Traveller representation
 - Strengthen community development and engagement
 - Make sure Gypsy/Travellers are fairly represented in decisions that are made at national and local level
 - Support a national Gypsy/Traveller 'movement for change'

The Actions

Our action plan describes some of the key activities we will deliver during 2019-2021 to fulfil these commitments and help to make changes now and lay foundations for lasting change that will see an end to deeply-embedded inequalities.

SG Planned Activities			
Key Activities	Year 1 2017-18	Year 2 2018-19	Year 3 2019-20
We will establish a Gypsy/Traveller Ministerial Working Group to cover the areas of Education, Health, Employment and Housing/Planning, which will be attended by the Ministers for these portfolios.	√		
An annual event will be held during Gypsy/Traveller month in June to promote and celebrate the cultural heritage of the community.	√	√	√
Our Gypsy/Traveller Programme of Work will bring together all the relevant policies across Scottish Government to help secure improved outcomes for the community.	√		
We will establish a mechanism to ensure continued engagement with stakeholders and members of the community.	√	√	√
We will work with National Records of Scotland as they engage with Gypsy/Travellers and devise their plans for Scotland's Census 2021		√	√
A joint Scottish Government and COSLA summit will be held in 2018 with local authorities to share best practice on improving the lives of Gypsy/Traveller communities.	√		
A review will be held into the progress of local authorities and Registered Social Landlords towards meeting the minimum site standards for Gypsy/Traveller sites ahead of the June 2018 deadline.	√		
Educational guidance will be published aimed at schools, including early learning and childcare settings, and local authorities, to help them improve educational outcomes for Traveller children.	√		
We will continue to engage with the Health and Social Care sector to improve Gypsy/Travellers' access to and experience of healthcare services over the lifetime of this Parliament.	√	√	√

We will financially support organisations working to improve outcomes in areas such as employment, health and education for the Gypsy/Traveller and Roma communities.	√	√	√
We will use social media and the One Scotland website to promote the Gypsy/Traveller community and organisations.	√	√	√
We remain committed to Scotland's plan-led system being more effective, and we will review the Scottish Planning Policy (SPP), including to enable the positive planning of family sites for the Gypsy/Traveller community, over this parliamentary term. The Planning Bill will pursue a higher, statutory status for policies contained within the SPP. It will also pursue measures aimed at encouraging wider engagement in the development plan.			

Appendix 3: Gypsy/Travellers and Planning System Action Plan

Gypsy/Travellers and the planning system Action plan 10-point action plan to involve Gypsy / Travellers in planning. Published: 27 Mar 2019

We are committed to ensuring that everyone has a stronger voice in the planning system. The quality of our places matters to all of us, and planning has a responsibility to ensure that the needs of all of our communities are understood and met. To do this, we are determined to break down any barriers that stop people getting involved in shaping the future of their places. Planning can play a vital role in ensuring that Gypsy / Travellers have safe and secure places to stop or settle. As a priority, in 2019 we will take forward the following actions to ensure that Gypsy / Travellers have a stronger voice in guiding the future development of their places.

- We will look at how we can improve the way we plan for Gypsy / Traveller sites Including the role of Housing Need and Demand Assessments (HNDA) and Local Housing Strategies and specifically we will ask that Local Authorities, through the HNDA, must consult all relevant stakeholders about their accommodation needs, including consultation with Gypsy/Travellers.
- We will work with the Gypsy / Traveller community to support them to use community led design approaches in shaping development in their area.
- We will require all planning authorities to alert us to any planning applications for Gypsy/Traveller sites to help us build an accurate picture of activity in the planning system.
- We will commit additional resources to PAS, to provide dedicated support and advice to Gypsy / Travellers who are involved in the planning system.
- We will update (as required) and adopt PAS advice on Gypsy / Travellers as Scottish Government planning guidance.
- We will bring forward an amendment to the Planning Bill to ensure that planning authorities properly involve Gypsy / Travellers in planning the future of their places as part of further improvements to engagement in development planning.
- We will meet with the conveners of local authority planning committees and raise awareness of the need to involve Gypsy / Travellers in planning.
- We will raise awareness of the need to provide accommodation for Gypsy / Travellers directly with Heads of Planning Scotland at our annual meeting in November.
- We have commissioned research to find out more about how the planning system currently addresses the need and demand for Gypsy / Traveller sites
- We will have a wider conversation on Gypsy / Traveller sites and the National Planning Framework, following the completion of scrutiny of the Planning Bill.
- This action plan is supported by the Scottish Government and has been discussed with members of the Gypsy / Traveller community plus HoPS, ALACHO and CoSLA. It will report to the Ministerial Working Group on Gypsy Travellers.

Appendix 4: Legal Costs 2019 - Unauthorised Encampments by Gypsy / Travellers

		24 hours' Notice Fee	Court Fee	Eviction Notice Fee	Legal Fees	
Mar-19	Edinburgh Road, Newhouse	£52.02	£102.00	£251.74		
Apr-19	22 Earn Avenue, Righead Industrial Estate, Bellshill	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00		
May-19	Strathclyde Park	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00		
Jun-19	22 Earn Avenue, Righead Industrial Estate, Bellshill	£74.70	£102.00	£127.48		
Aug-19	Gavell Road, Kilsyth/Queenzieburn	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00		
Jul-19	Colzium Park, Kilsyth	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00		
Oct-19	A8 Cycle Route	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00		
Oct-19	Strathclyde Park	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00		
	Total	£126.72	£204.00	£379.22	£1,296.59	£2,006.53

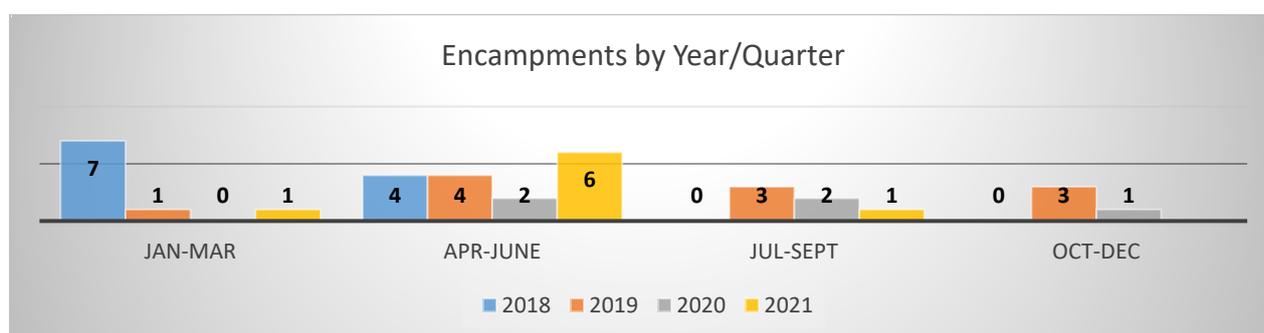
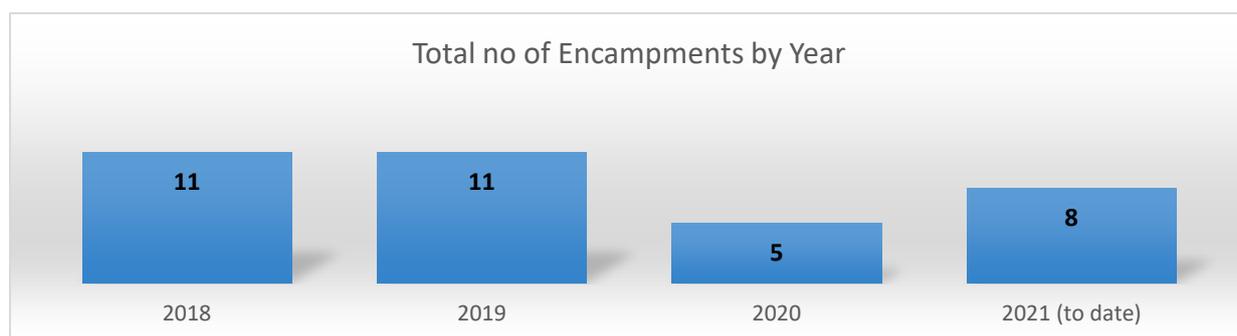
Appendix 5: Gypsy Travellers Unauthorised Encampments Data

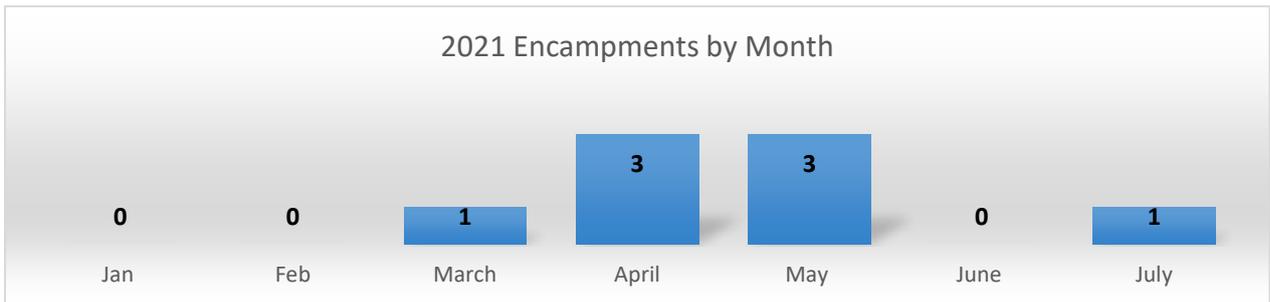
Gypsy Travellers Unauthorised Encampments Report (January to July 2021)

This report provides a breakdown of the data collected during visits by officers and information provided by residents of the encampments. The report will only include data where the council have been made aware of the encampment and carried out a visit.

1. Number of Encampments

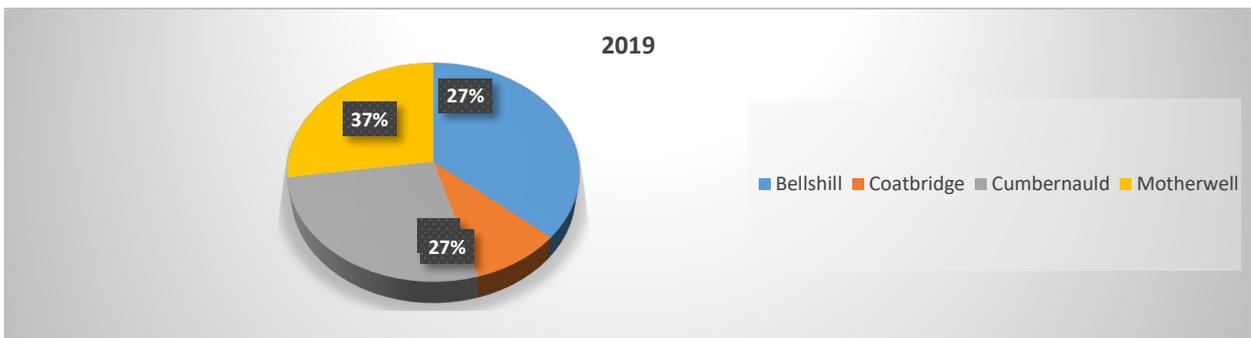
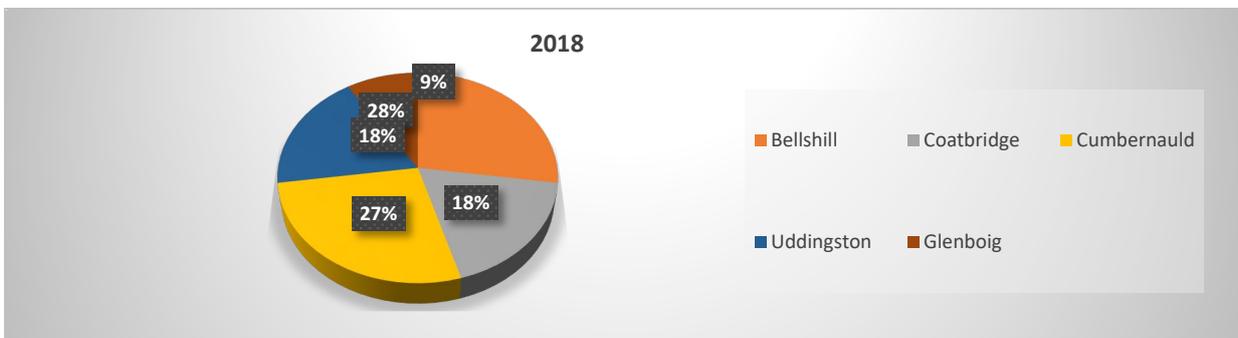
- During period (Jan – July 2021) there was 8 unauthorised encampments (1 encampment had moved on before visit could take place and 1 was under the responsibility of West Lothian)
- This is an increase already in comparison to last year (2020) when there was 5 in total – however the numbers may have increased due to the relaxation of travelling restrictions
- Although more encampments should be expected, historically the period between July and December have less encampments than the period January to June
- January, February and June had no encampments, March had 1 and April and May, both had 3
- **Although 8 encampments, 3 of these were from the same large family who moved around the authority (2 x Newhouse and 1 x Carfin)**
- Since the beginning of 2018 There have been 35 encampments in total

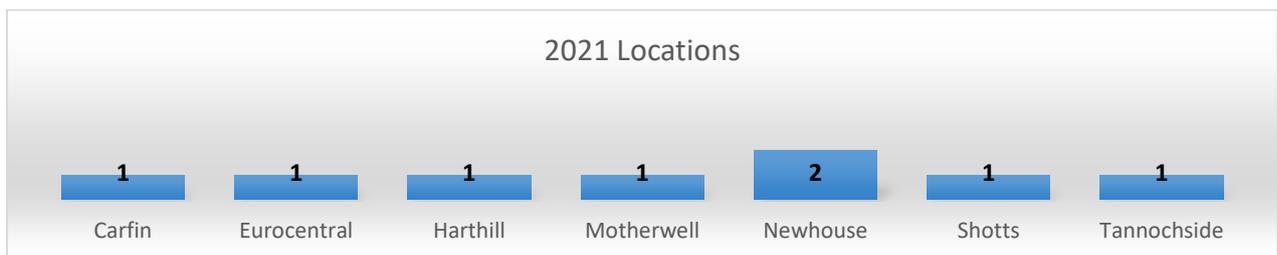
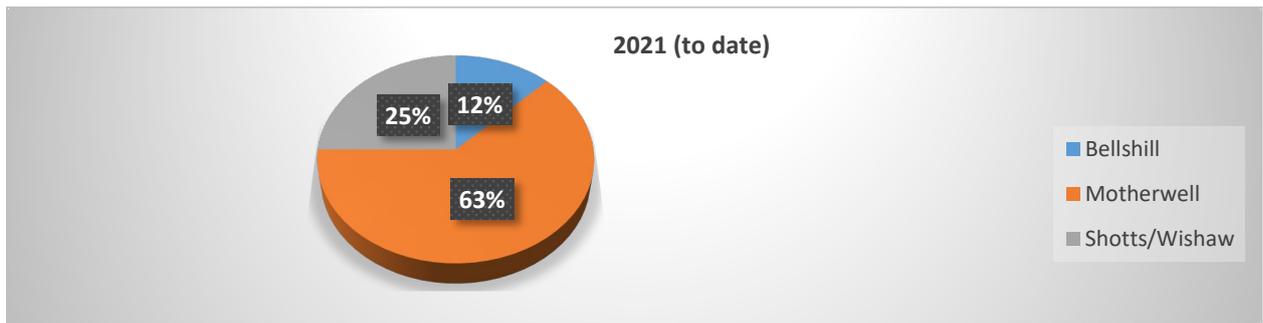
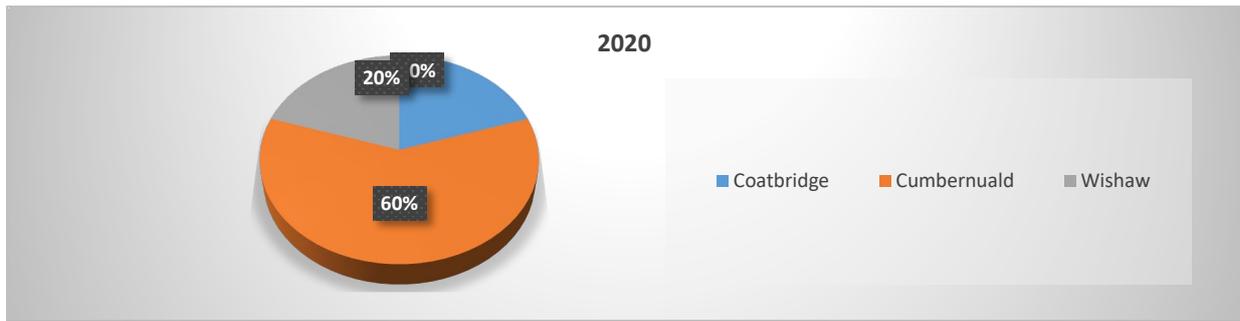




2. Breakdown by Locality

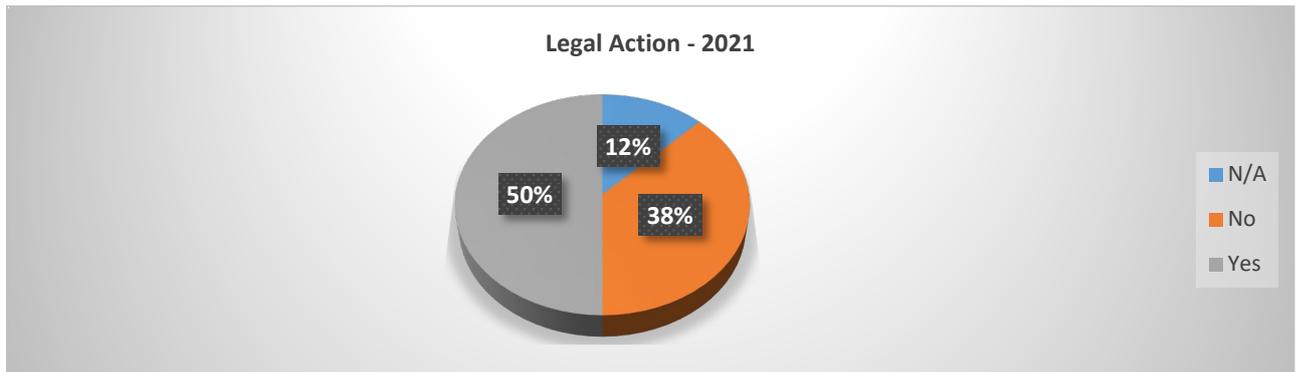
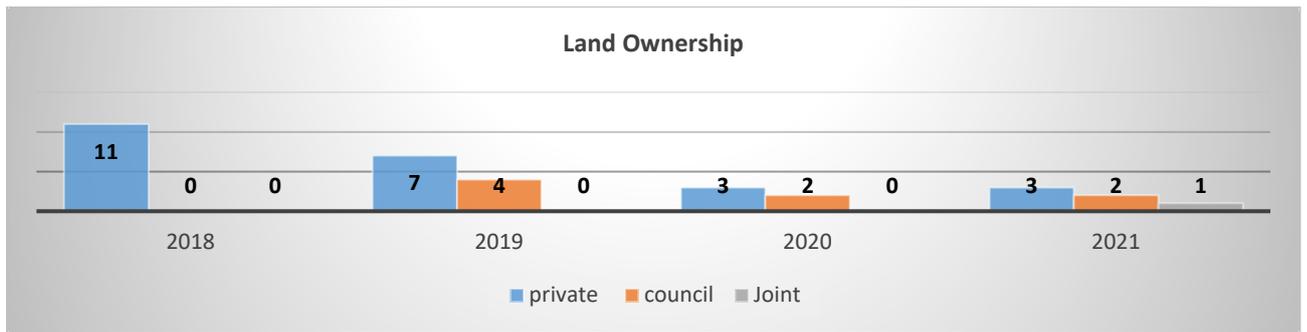
- Over the last 3 years the localities being used for encampments have reduced – possibly due to certain actions taken to reduce the opportunity for encampments to be set up in these areas
- The only location to be used more than once was Newhouse (Jan-July) – this was by the same large family who moved to three different locations during the period
- 63% of encampments were located within the Motherwell locality





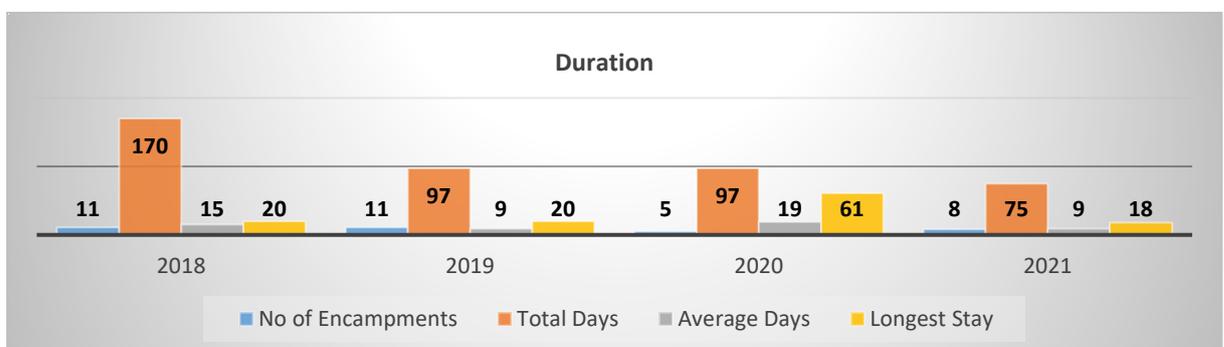
3. Ownership of Land & Legal Action

- Over the last 3 years, there has been an increase in council land being used for encampments – in 2018 = 0%, 2019 = 36%, 2020 = 40% and 2021 = 38% (there were two encampments in 2021 where land ownership was not confirmed) – also in 2021 there was an area with joint ownership between private and council
- Legal action was initiated for 50% (4 of the 8) of the encampments (1 x Council, 2 x private and 1 where there was joint ownership) – 3 of the 4 encampments related to the same family
 - Joint ownership (Carfin) – legal action initiated however private landowner then disengaged with CSH
 - Private (Newhouse) – Sheriff Officer confirmed they had vacated after serving papers
 - Council (Newhouse) – Left after Court Order served
 - Private (Harthill) – West Lothian Council area – Landowner secured a decree and site was vacated
- 4 clean ups were required – no information available in relation to costs (2 from the same large family) – (2 x private and 2 x unconfirmed ownership)



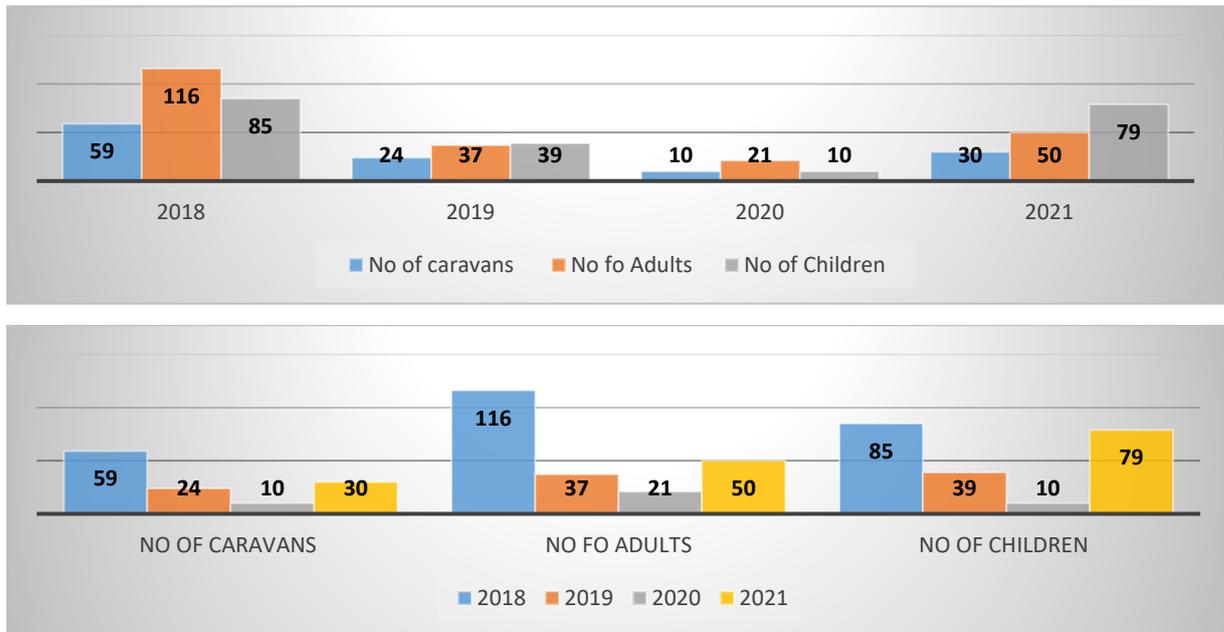
4. Duration of encampments

- Although the number of encampments were consistent in 2018 and 2019 there was a significant drop in the length of time on site i.e., appear to move on a lot quicker than in previous years
- For 2020, the total number of days were the same as 2019, however there were only 5 encampments compared to 11 in 2019
- Although the number of encampments reduced significantly in 2020, the longest stay increased – contributed to 2 encampments that lasted 24 days and 61 days (same family)
- Covid-19 restrictions on movement could have attributed to the longer periods within the encampments
- During the first part of 2021, (Jan-July) the 8 encampments attributed to 75 days in total, the average stay was 9 days, and the longest stay was 18 days
- Although the longest stay was 18 days – there was one family who had three separate encampments, totalling 33 days



5. Number of people/vehicles within Encampments

- Although the number of encampments were the same in 2018 and 2019 the figures suggest the size of the encampments have reduced (*however needs to be taken into consideration that we have not always managed to obtain this information*) – this is also reflected in 2020
- During Jan – July of this year, there was a large family of 10 adults and 20 children, who occupied three different sites, which attributed to the majority of the figures



6. Reasons for coming to NLC

The following reasons were given:

- 3 x awaiting release of a family member from prison – then heading down south
- Visiting a shrine at Carfin Grotto – then back to London
- Travelling through the area – no destination given
- Visiting family - no destination given
- 2 x unknown

It appears that none of the occupants have visited the area in the last 12 months

7. Would G/T remain in the area if there was a permanent site?

Of the five responses received, 100% advised that they would not remain here if there was a permanent site.

8. Repeat Locations

It appears that there are two areas that would be considered repeat locations over the last 3 years, which are Strathclyde Park and Newhouse. Newhouse has been used twice in the last 6 months. Strathclyde Park is yet to be used this year; however, this area has been used a number of times of the last 3 years.

9. Referrals to other Services

Although there were no referrals made to NLC Education or NHS Lanarkshire, the Community Safety Hub was in contact with West Lothian Council (encampment at Harthill Services).

10. Further Encampment Information

-
1. Roman Road – reported by Social Media – joint visit with police, left after 3 days – 3 bags of rubbish left – no issues

 2. Bell Quadrant, Newhouse x 2 – large extended family – moved to three different locations waiting on family member being released from prison – various issues with dogs, complaints, waste and damaged caravan left

 3. Condor Glen – no issues, family travelling through, 3 bags of waste left (uplift arranged)

 4. Ellismuir Way – reported by the Police, encampment had moved on when visited

 5. Harthill Service Station – liaised with West Lothian Council until encampment left – service station reporting thefts

 6. Belmont Drive – located within garden – no issues - remained until family member no longer needed to self-isolate – all rubbish cleared from side of the property
-