

SD64

Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment

September 2011 update

Contents

1. Existing Site Provision
2. Housing Needs Assessment Interviews
3. Survey Findings
4. Secondary Data Analysis
5. Estimated Future Accommodation Provision

Council has developed a policy for dealing with such encampments that includes providing the transient travellers with a Good Neighbour Guide so they can be sure of what the Council will do for them and what the Council expects of them. (see Appendix One)

- 2.3 Since 2007 there has been no need to take any other action other than provide WC and waste disposal facilities during these short-term visits. It should be noted that the visiting groups of Gypsies and Travellers have not always complied with all the requirements of the Good Neighbour Guide. Substantial amounts have had to be spent to clear up waste after the travellers have left.
- 2.4 Cwmcrachen Caravan Site was upgraded extensively between 2007 and 2009. The site now provides 20 permanent residential pitches. 19 of these pitches provide individual amenity units for the residents. The final unit is reserved for occupants who can provide their own amenities – usually in the form of a static caravan or similar. Connections to mains water, electricity and foul water disposal are provided.
- 2.5 The site now also benefits from a full CCTV system, a children's play area, a new wardens office incorporating a small private meeting room used by school outreach and medial workers. Road signage has been improved and speed humps installed.
- 2.6 There are currently no transit pitches available on site.
- 2.7 A site warden is on site on a daily basis and the site is managed by the Environmental Health Section of the Council.
- 2.8 There are no other illegal or private sites within the County Borough.
- 2.9 A new form of License Agreement has been issued to all residents since May 2009. These set out in much more open and transparent terms the conditions attached to holding a plot on Cwmcrachen Caravan Site.

3. Housing Needs Assessment Interviews

- 3.1 Interviews were undertaken during September 2011.
- 3.2 The objective of the interviews was to assess likely household formation from within the existing families resident on the site to determine likely demands for future provision.
- 3.3 The interviews were undertaken by the Gypsy Site Warden.
- 3.4 In total 14 families were interviewed on Cwmcrachen Caravan Site.
- 3.5 In addition using information from the resident on Cwmcrachen we were able to

4. Survey Findings

- 4.1 The survey showed that the Gypsy and Traveller population within Blaenau Gwent is very static.
- 4.2 Only one family out of the 16 interviewed (6%) expressed an interest in moving. This was a move from Cwmcrachen into bricks and mortar accommodation. This decision was based on the fact that a family member was seriously ill and required care that could be better provided in a house.
- 4.3 The survey showed that of the families interviewed there had been no deaths during the last five years. Anecdotally the resident Gypsy Traveller families are mainly young families with children or young couples. Cwmcrachen has few elderly individuals or couples and none were found in bricks and mortar accommodation.
- 4.4 There had only been one move on the site where a child from a family had moved to his own pitch on the site.
- 4.5 Three families had left Cwmcrachen and moved into bricks and mortar accommodation. Of these the whereabouts of one family is known. This elderly couple moved to allow better care and treatment of an illness within the family.
- 4.6 No members of the Gypsy Traveller community in Blaenau Gwent interviewed (2 families) who currently live in bricks and mortar accommodation expressed an interest to move back onto a site.

5. Secondary Data Analysis

- 5.1 Since 2007 there have been 6 illegal encampments. These can be broken down as follows:

Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011 (to date)
	1	1	1	2	1

- 5.2 There is no pattern to the location of these illegal encampments. The sites occupied by the Gypsies and Travellers were usually privately owned land, examples include the access road to a former open cast mine and a parcel of unused land on a large industrial estate.
- 5.3 There are also records of Gypsies and Travellers occupying Council owned land mainly on industrial estates and in turn areas at the end of dead end roads on such sites.
- 5.4 Planning data shows that no applications have been received for private or other residential sites for Gypsies and Travellers in Blaenau Gwent since 2007. Indeed there is no record of such an application ever having been made.

APPENDIX ONE



The Good Neighbour Code

