

## Rugby Borough Council



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## National Background

- 25-30% of all Gypsy and Traveller caravans have NO authorised pitch = over 4000 caravans
- Rising numbers of caravans
- No transit facility in the West Midlands
- Significant tensions between communities
- Last “legitimate” object for discrimination?



## Examples of Discrimination

If I had unfettered use of police resources, I would turn up and stop-check all Gypsies and Irish Travellers. They would never give their real names so you could arrest them. Nearly all of them are untaxed or uninsured, and they are fairly heavy drinkers. They run businesses without authorisation. Local people would support that approach, however many resources were used. **Parish councillor**

If they want a place to stay they should buy a house. If they say they can't afford it, then they are no different from anyone else – it applies to everyone. **Parish councillor**



## Examples of Discrimination

You wouldn't want Gypsies next door to you, lowering the value of your house. **Local**

### **resident**

They're involved in crime and anti-social behaviour... you and me have to foot the bill. They strip bits of cars and leave them for the local councils to clear up and foot costs. **Local resident**

[Gypsies and Irish Travellers are] thieves by birth... conditioned to criminality.

### **Local resident**



## Terminology

- Unauthorised Developments – Permanent residential sites (with infrastructure) without planning permission, on land owned by Gypsy & Travellers
- Unauthorised Encampments – Transient settlements on a third party's land.



## What were the issues

- Significant increase in unauthorised encampments during 2006
- Migration between sites over a concentrated period
- Significant community tensions
- Court capacity in summer 2006
- No alternative transit facility provision in the region
- Desire for permanent residential facilities





### Local Authority Demands

- Housing Need
- Planning Provision
- Education
- Health
- Social Care
- Crime & Disorder
- Environmental Health
- Enforcement




### Understanding Accommodation Needs

- Must carry out Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment - Regional Housing Market Areas
- Family size and Pitch requirements
- Current and future needs / demands - Informs the Housing Strategy
- A Delivery Strategy – Action Plan
- Types of Accommodation to be provided
- How sites are to be provided
- Identification of sites for development
- Affordable accommodation, fair allocation & enforcement




### Planning

- Regional Spatial Strategy
- Interim Statement
- “Need where it should be met, not where it arises”
- Local development Frameworks
- High Refusal Rates
- Permanent, transit, tolerated sites and stopping places




### Education, Health & Welfare

- Every Child Matters
- Educational Attainment
- Health Inequality
- Access to Care and Services
- Harassment, Crime and Disorder
- Obligation to Promote Community Cohesion
- Civic Leadership Role



### Addressing Encampments

- Strong and Effective Partnership with Warwickshire Police Force and County Council
- Adoption of case conference protocol
- Code of Respect for encampments
- Improved communications
- Prevention and mitigation



### Where to next?

- Councillor training programme
- County wide special Interest Panel
- Joint procurement of "Needs Assessment"
- Agreement of "Countywide" Protocol arrangements
- Explore opportunities for shared site management service
- Shared responsive encampment service
- Collaboration on site identification



### Thank You

**Any Questions**



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