

Jane Hutt MS

**Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyfiawnder Cymdeithasol, y
Trefnydd a'r Prif Chwip**

**Cabinet Minister for Social Justice, Trefenydd and Chief
Whip**



**Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government**

John Griffiths MS
Chair, Local Government and Housing Committee
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN
SeneddHousing@senedd.wales

23 October 2024

Dear John,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide an update into the provision of sites for Gypsy, Roma and Travellers at the recent Committee's inquiry on 3 October.

The Committee asked for clarification on the definitions of a Gypsy and Traveller site and pitch, and examples of how local authorities intend to use Site Capital Grant funding. Please refer to **Annex A**, which provides definitions of pitches and sites as well as additional key terms relating to all Gypsy and Traveller accommodation. **Annex B** outlines some of the examples of local authority bids through the Site Capital Grant funding.

I hope this information is helpful in assisting the Committee.

Yours Sincerely

Jane Hutt MS

**Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyfiawnder Cymdeithasol, y Trefnydd a'r Prif Chwip
Cabinet Minister for Social Justice, Trefenydd and Chief Whip**

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Gohebiaeth.Jane.Hutt@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Jane.Hutt@gov.wales

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Annex A - Gypsy and Traveller Definitions

<p>Gypsies and Travellers -</p> <p>(a) Persons of a nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin, including:</p> <p>(i) Persons who, on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependant's educational or health needs or old age, have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, and</p> <p>(ii) Members of an organized group of travelling show people or circus people (whether or not travelling together as such); and</p> <p>(b) all other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or of living in a mobile home.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Source: Section 108, Housing (Wales) Act 2014</p>	
<p>A Gypsy and Traveller site can be privately owned (with or without planning permission) or owned by the local authority. A Gypsy and Traveller site is designated for use as a Gypsy and Traveller site indefinitely and has the required planning permission to operate as a site.</p>	
<p>Pitch</p>	<p>A pitch is a private space secured by a lockable gate, which should be capable of accommodating an amenity block, a mobile home, touring caravan and parking for two vehicles.</p> <p>The layout of the pitch will depend on the overall site design. An important element in the design and size of pitches is the intended capacity. Section 60 of the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act defines 'mobile home' as measuring up to 20 metres in length and 6.8 metres in width.</p>
<p>Site</p>	<p>A site will include a range of facilities, including up to 20 pitches (dependant on size of land and requirements), connections to utilities, community building, play area, footpath around the site, public lighting and fencing/trees to create a perimeter boundary for security and enclosure.</p>
<p>Local Authority Site</p>	<p>Residents on a local authority site can occupy their pitches for as long as they abide by the terms of their pitch agreements, under the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013. Working space may also be provided on, or near, sites for activities carried out by community members.</p> <p>Welsh Government 'Designing Gypsy and Traveller Site' Guidance state, new sites should comprise of 20 pitches or less, other than in exceptional circumstances and where consultation and engagement have taken place with all stakeholders.</p>
<p>Private Site</p>	<p>These can be owned by a member of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community, who have purchased land and sought the necessary planning permission to be used as a Gypsy and Traveller site. They tend to be smaller than</p>

	<p>local authority sites and only accommodate sufficient pitches for their family members.</p> <p>Private sites may also include small sites owned by and for use of family members but without planning permission yet granted.</p>
Transit Site	<p>Transit sites are permanent facilities designed for temporary use by occupiers for a maximum of 3 months at a time. Local authorities will be responsible for maintaining the site, including the provision of waste disposal, water supply and sanitation will be available.</p> <p>Specific terms under the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013 apply on these sites. Working space may also be provided on, or near, sites for activities carried out by community members.</p> <p>These sites must be designated accordingly and must provide a means for Gypsy and Travellers to maintain a nomadic way of life.</p>
Unauthorised Encampment	<p>Land occupied without the permission of the owner or without the correct land use planning permission.</p> <p>Encampments are used in the absence of available transit or negotiated stopping places provision and may be accepted by the local authority, whilst alternative sites are developed.</p>
Unauthorised Development	<p>Land occupied by the owner without the necessary land use planning permission.</p>
Negotiated Stopping places	<p>These are intended to be short-term in nature to assist local authorities where a need for pitches is accepted. Provision must be made for waste disposal, water supply and sanitation.</p> <p>These sites only have planning permission or a site licence for a limited period. Residents on these sites can expect to occupy their pitches for the duration of the planning permission or site licence (or as long as they abide by the terms of their pitch agreements, under the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013 – whichever is sooner).</p>
Bricks and Mortar	<p>A house or a flat, often referred to as conventional housing. They may be socially rented, privately rented or owned.</p>

Annex B – Gypsy and Traveller Sites Capital Grant

Building on my written evidence, you requested examples of how our £3.44 million budget for 2024-25 has been administered. I hope the following is helpful.

Of the 17 applications received to date from 10 Local Authorities, 12 have been approved. The 12 approved applications will positively impact 144 pitches by providing funding for:

- The installation of individual pitch electric metres.
- The installation of individual solar panels to existing amenity blocks and community buildings.
- The demolishing and refurbishment of amenity blocks. (consist of 2 separate rooms; a bathroom and a kitchen, with a washing area).
- Improving safety within sites, by creating boundary fences, CCTV and vehicular access.
- The development of a new negotiated stopping place.
- The development of new and refurbished existing play areas.