

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Call for Sites: Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation

1. What is a Call for Sites?

A Call for Sites is an invitation for individuals, landowners, developers, and other stakeholders to suggest land that may be suitable for development. In this case, the council is specifically seeking land that could be used to meet the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople.

2. Why are the councils and South Downs National Park Authority doing this?

The councils and South Downs National Park Authority are required by national planning policy to assess and plan for the accommodation needs of all communities, including Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople. This helps ensure everyone has access to safe, secure, and appropriate living conditions.

3. Who can submit a site?

Anyone can submit a site—this includes landowners, developers, agents, parish councils, and members of the public. Submissions can be made on behalf of others with their permission.

4. What types of sites are being sought?

We are looking for:

- Permanent residential pitches for Gypsies and Travellers
- Transit sites for temporary stays
- Yards for Travelling Showpeople, which may include space for residential use, equipment storage, and vehicles

5. What information is required when submitting a site?

You will need to complete a Call for Sites Submission Form, providing:

- Site location and boundaries (preferably with a map)
- Site ownership details
- Proposed number of pitches or plots

6. How will submitted sites be assessed?

Sites will be assessed for:

- Suitability (e.g. environmental constraints)
- Availability (e.g. landowner willingness)
- Achievability (e.g. likelihood of development within a reasonable timeframe)

7. Does submitting a site guarantee it will be allocated?

No. Submission does not guarantee allocation or planning permission. All sites will be assessed and only suitable, available and achievable sites will be considered for inclusion in the Local Plan.

8. Will the information I submit be made public?

Yes. In line with transparency and data protection regulations, submitted information (excluding personal contact details) may be published as part of the Local Plan evidence base.

9. What is the deadline for submissions?

The Call for Sites will run from 5 August 2025 and will remain open until 5 October 2025. All submissions must be received by the closing date, although submissions may be accepted after this at the discretion of the individual authorities.

10. How do I submit a site?

You can submit your site by completing the online form at:

- [Hastings Borough Council \(Hastings administrative area\)](#)
- [Eastbourne Borough Council \(Eastbourne administrative area\)](#)
- [Lewes District Council \(Lewes administrative area\)](#)
- [Rother District Council \(Rother administrative area\)](#)
- [South Downs National Park Authority \(SDNPA administrative area\)](#)
- [Wealden District Council \(Wealden district administrative area\)](#)

11. Who can I contact for help?

If you have questions or need assistance, please contact the districts and boroughs below. If you need help completing the submission, please contact the [East Sussex Gypsy and Traveller Team](#).

Area	Phone	Email
Hastings	07719415208	Fplanning@hastings.gov.uk
Eastbourne	01323 410000 – Ask to leave a message for planning policy and a member of the team will contact you.	LocalPlan@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk

Lewes	01273 471600 - Ask to leave a message for planning policy and a member of the team will contact you.	LocalPlan@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk
Rother	01424 787000 – Ask to speak to a member of the Planning Policy team	planning.strategy@rother.gov.uk
SDNPA	01730 814810 – Ask to speak to a member of the Planning Policy team	Planningpolicy@southdowns.gov.uk
Wealden	01892 602008/07985 878684 – both are a direct line to the Planning Policy team	Shelaa@wealden.gov.uk

12. Why are the councils and South Downs National Park Authority providing sites for Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople?

The councils and South Downs National Park Authority have a legal duty to assess and meet the accommodation needs of all communities. This includes Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople, whose needs are recognised in national planning policy and protected under the Equality Act 2010. It is the authorities' duty to identify where the best places are for these sites. New sites are most often privately owned and funded as there is very limited public funding available to build new sites for families to rent.

13. Why can't they live in houses?

Many Gypsies and Travellers have a cultural preference for living in caravans or mobile homes. This way of life is protected under equality and human rights legislation. For some, living in conventional housing can negatively affect their health and wellbeing.

14. Won't these sites cause problems in the local area?

There is no evidence that well-planned and managed sites cause problems. In fact, providing authorised sites helps reduce unauthorised encampments and improves community relations. Each site will be assessed to ensure it is suitable and sustainable for both residents and the wider community.

15. I don't want a site near me. Can I object?

You can share your views during public consultation stages of the Local Plan or any future planning applications. However, objections based on prejudice or stereotypes will not be considered valid planning reasons. All decisions are made based on planning policy and evidence.

16. Isn't this unfair to other residents?

No. The councils and South Downs National Park Authority plan for the needs of all residents, including housing, employment, and infrastructure. Providing for Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople is part of ensuring fairness and inclusivity in the planning process. Sites for general needs housing have been sought at earlier stages of the plan making process.

17. What are the councils and South Downs National Park Authority doing to promote community cohesion?

Each authority work with all communities to promote understanding, reduce discrimination, and support inclusive neighbourhoods. Providing appropriate accommodation for all groups is part of building a fairer, more cohesive society.

18. How big will the sites be?

A pitch for a single Gypsy or Traveller family will be around 500sqm. This should provide enough space for a residential and touring caravan as well as an amenity block and parking spaces on site. Smaller sites will also be considered. Where large sites are submitted, we would look for five pitches with expansion potential to a maximum of ten pitches.

A plot for a Travelling Showperson will be much larger and will need to include storage and maintenance space for their show equipment as well as residential accommodation. A single plot would be expected to be 0.5hectares, but could be smaller if that meets the needs of the individual.

19. Can I propose a site I already live on?

Yes, sites that are already in use for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showperson accommodation that are capable of expansion or that do not have full planning permission may be submitted for consideration. Submission of a site is not a guarantee of allocation or grant of planning permission, only that an assessment of the site will take place.