

Item	Gypsies and Travellers
Date	14 December 2009
Summary of progress	<p>Planning Policy The emerging regional plan, the Regional Spatial Strategy sets out a proposed allocation of 51 permanent and 5 transit pitches in the South Hams planning authority area and 0 permanent and 27 transit pitches within Dartmoor National Park. These figures are based on a Devon wide Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment.</p> <p>In terms of the South Hams, work is expected to commence on considering sites to meet the needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community next year. The challenge will be to find a willing land owner in a location which meets the needs of the travelling community and has the support of local people. The absence of any one of these key requirements will make effective progress difficult. In the meantime, the emerging Development Policies document sets out a draft policy which will be used to help assess applications for Gypsy and Traveller sites.</p> <p>Protocol for unauthorised encampments In May 2006 a Council Policy Development Group considered an update on national guidance relating to Gypsies and Traveller issues as well as a cross agency draft protocol for dealing with unauthorised encampments in Devon (appendix 1) with specific guidance relating to South Hams (appendix 2). The Protocols help to ensure consistent responses to issues which arise.</p> <p>Within the South Hams there are meetings held on a regular basis within the Traveller Community to discuss issues relating to unauthorised encampments as well emerging planning policy. These meetings are facilitated by the Devon Race Equality Council, although direct funding for Penny Dane's post beyond 2010 is at risk.</p> <p>There is email circulation between partners when unauthorised encampments occur. Organisations represented include South Hams District Council (e.g. Environmental Health, Environment Services, Street Scene, Community Safety and Planning), Devon County Council (e.g. Gypsies and Traveller Liaison Officers, and Traveller Education Service), Plymouth City Council (Social Inclusion Unit), Torbay Council (Gypsy and Traveller Officer), Teignbridge District Council, Devon Racial Equality Officer, Devon and Cornwall Constabulary (Neighbourhood Liaison Officers).</p> <p>On 6 November the SHSP met to discuss travelling communities. The meeting considered how partners could raise awareness of the issues</p>

	<p>faced by travelling communities, discussed the issues raised by the Police when dealing with unauthorised encampments and looked at the work undertaken within the Council in relation to site provision and liaison with Gypsies and Traveller groups. The minutes of this meeting have previously been circulated to partners. Following the SHSP meeting, DCC is gathering information about their land holdings, particularly in areas relatively close to major transport routes to assess whether there are any sites which could be appropriate as permanent or transit sites. The initial work will review DCC land holdings within 3 miles either side of the A38, A380 and A30 across Southern Devon.</p>
SHSP Action recommended	<p>The SHSP to work jointly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To promote better awareness and tolerance between the settled and travelling communities.• To ensure a consistent and balanced response to unauthorised travelling community encampments.• To support the District Council and Dartmoor National Park Authority to find appropriate permanent and transit sites for the travelling community.