



Brent

London Borough of Brent

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Framework and Action Plan

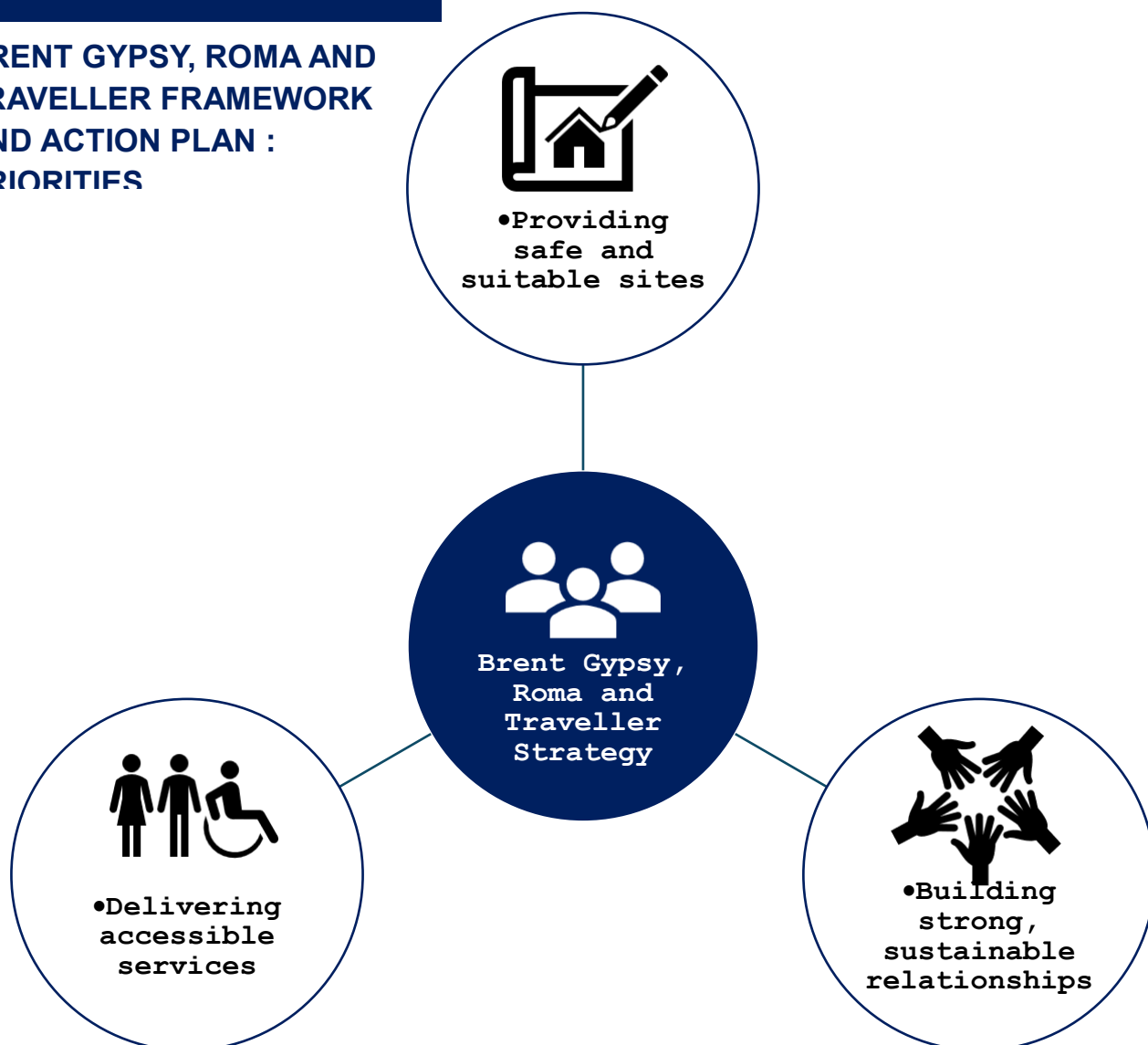
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BRENT GYPSY, ROMA AND TRAVELLER FRAMEWORK AND ACTION PLAN : PRIORITIES



Foreword

Brent is a unique borough, home to residents from all over the world who have chosen to build their lives, families and futures here. Our diversity is one of our greatest strengths, and we are committed to making Brent a place where every community feels respected, included and able to access the support they need.

This includes our Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, who are an important part of Brent's identity and history. We recognise that our Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities continue to face significant challenges, including discrimination, poor access to services, unsuitable accommodation and a lack of trust in public institutions.

This Framework and the Action Plan that will sit alongside it sets out how we will work with our Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, partners and services to improve outcomes. It focuses on three priorities: providing safe and suitable sites, building strong and sustainable relationships, and delivering accessible services.

We know that trust cannot be built through words alone. It requires honest engagement, consistent action and a willingness to listen, learn and do things differently. This Framework and Action Plan is an important step, and we are committed to working with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities to make sure it leads to meaningful and lasting change.

Cllr Robert Johnson

Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness and Renters

Introduction

The council's new Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Framework and Action Plan outlines our ambition to ensure Brent's Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities are appropriately supported to thrive and the actions that we will take to deliver on that ambition.

This Framework and accompanying Action Plan reflects the journey the council is undertaking to improve the quality of our support for and establish sustainable relationships with these communities. We recognise that we have not done enough to meet these communities' needs in the past but, by delivering this Framework and Action Plan, we will reach a place where their needs are met and the council is viewed as a trusted public organisation.

Brent is a borough abundant in cultures, which is why we fiercely and unapologetically champion diversity as the borough's greatest strength and are dedicated to helping our residents to live their best lives. This is reflected in our [Borough Plan 2023-2027 ambitions](#), as we commit to supporting thriving communities that are empowered and celebrated; and our [Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy](#) that focuses on establishing an inclusive borough where everyone belongs, including our Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.

Brent's Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities

Brent has longstanding Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. We have one permanent traveller site in Stonebridge which was established in 1997. According to the Census, Brent's Roma community is concentrated in the south, east and north of the borough, namely: Willesden Green, Harlesden & Kensal Green, Dollis Hill, Queensbury and Welsh Harp.

It is difficult to quantify Brent's Gypsy, Roma and Traveller population. The [Census 2021](#) is one of the most reliable sources although we believe the figures are under-representative:

	Brent	London	England & Wales	Brent's national ranking (out of 331)
White Gypsy or Irish Traveller	237	7,031	67,768	226
White Roma	2,520	37,689	100,981	3

Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Traveller (Irish/Scottish Traveller) communities are not homogenous – they are distinct, each with their respective heritage, culture and needs. These communities' diversity and uniqueness is captured well in a [recent report from the Traveller Movement](#). Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities' groups commonly comprise of:

- Romani Gypsies (Gypsy), including English Gypsies, Scottish Gypsy/Travellers, Welsh Gypsies and other Romany people.
- Roma, who originate from areas of India and are the largest ethnic minority in Europe. Many Roma are migrants from countries in Central and Eastern Europe.
- Irish Travellers, who have specific Irish roots. Travellers can also encompass groups that travel, including, but not limited to, New Travellers, Boaters, Bargees and Show people.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities are recognised as protected ethnic groups under the Equality Act 2010, which means the council has a responsibility to recognise and support their culture and way of life, helping to tackle any discrimination that they experience. As far as possible, the council recognises and refers to these communities as respective groups. In some instances, particularly in relation to existing data and insights, the strategy may refer to Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities in different ways or as a collective – this is solely due to how data is collected and presented by other bodies and organisations. Our insights around these communities are limited, therefore we need to rely on the range of different types of information available.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller outcomes in Brent: what the data tells us

Nationally, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities experience some of the lowest outcomes. Unfortunately, this is also reflected within the Brent context. Our aspiration is to work with these communities to improve these outcomes.



Age¹

Brent has a young Gypsy, Roma and Traveller population, with average ages lower than the Brent average:

- Brent population, median age: 35
- Brent White Gypsy and Irish Traveller population, median age: 27
- Brent White Roma population, median age: 32

¹ Census 2021



Education, Health and Care Plan²

- Twice as likely to have an EHCP compared to the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller national average
- Three times as likely to have an EHCP compared to the Brent pupil average



Special Educational Needs (SEN) support³

- More likely to have SEN support when compared with the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller national average
- Twice as likely to have SEN support when compared with the Brent pupil average



Grade attainment⁴

- Poorer outcomes compared to the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller national average across Early Years, Phonics Trend and Key Stage 2
- Better outcomes compared to the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller national average for Key Stage 4



Health⁵

- Compared to the Brent average, residents at Lynton Close (Brent's permanent traveller site) have higher rates of multiple long-term conditions, anxiety, depression and learning disability.
- Brent's wider Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities have had fewer GP visits, but higher hospital admissions compared with the rest of Brent.



Economic activity⁶

- Brent's White Roma population has one of highest employment rates across all ethnic groups in the borough, ranking 2nd at 77%.
- The Roma population is twice as likely to be self-employed compared to the Brent average.
- Brent's Gypsy and Irish Traveller population has the lowest employment rate at 40%.

² Brent Council data

³ Brent Council data

⁴ Brent Council data

⁵ NHS NWL Whole Systems Integrated Care data, 2024/25

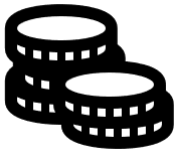
⁶ Census 2021



Qualifications⁷

Brent's Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities are among the least qualified ethnic groups in the borough:

- Brent White Gypsy and Irish Traveller population: 61% have no qualifications, ranking the lowest.
- Brent White Roma population: 27% have no qualifications, ranking 3rd lowest.



Deprivation⁸

Lynton Close, Brent's Gypsy, Roma and Traveller site, is in the top 1% of the most deprived neighbourhoods in England.

How we developed Brent's Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Framework and Action Plan

To shape this Framework and Action Plan, we engaged with residents, particularly those from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, to understand their ambitions for themselves and their expectations of the council. The consultation focused on three themes:

1. General issues related Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities and improving access to support services
2. A new Pitch Allocation Policy: how permanent and temporary pitches are allocated
3. Site designs and features

To conduct the consultation and engagement, we worked with the Traveller Movement (to engage with Gypsy and Traveller communities) and the Romanian and Eastern European Hub (RO-EE Hub) (to engage with Roma communities). Overall, we adopted mixed methods, recognising that we are engaging with seldom heard groups that will have different engagement needs and preferences. As the consultation focused on marginalised groups, we also delivered sessions and engagement that was designated for specific groups only to ensure they felt they were in a comfortable and safe space.

More detail on the consultation and engagement activity that we undertook, and key findings from it, are set out in **Appendix A**.

Our priorities for Brent's Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities

We want our Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities to thrive. We recognise their uniqueness, particularly in relation to their identity and needs, and the importance of tailoring the way we engage, work with and support them. This is not limited to our statutory responsibilities; this is also about delivering the right support that addresses their needs.

Our priorities are grounded in our responsibilities with the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty, which recognises Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities as ethnic minorities, and government guidance that outlines how to support their way of life.

The core priorities in the Framework are:

⁷ Census 2021

⁸ Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2025

- **Providing safe and suitable sites**
- **Building strong, sustainable relationships**
- **Delivering accessible services**

An Action Plan will sit alongside the Framework and set out the specific actions that the council will take to deliver on these priorities.

Providing safe and suitable sites

Brent currently has one dedicated Gypsy, Roma and Traveller site at Lynton Close which has been active since 1997 and under the council's management since 2017. This is a permanent site that consists of 31 pitches.

A core council responsibility to Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities is to provide designated sites that accommodate their way of life. Our first priority is to provide safe and suitable sites. Within this, we commit to:

1. Providing well maintained sites
2. A clear and fair way to allocate pitches: developing Brent's Pitch Allocation Policy
3. A vision for future sites: meeting the communities' accommodation needs
4. A transparent way to respond to unauthorised encampments

Commitment	Detail
1. Providing well maintained sites	We will: • Conduct a full site survey and establish an improved maintenance and repair log at Gypsy, Roma and Traveller sites – we will conduct a comprehensive site survey that will inform an updated log of all maintenance and repair needs. The survey will act as a base to understand the scale of activity required and help establish targets for completed maintenance, ultimately with the aim of getting reported issues as close to zero as possible. The maintenance and repair needs will be delivered through an action plan that will be reviewed on a monthly basis. • Improve communications around the status of maintenance and repairs – while our goal is to address issues as quickly and effectively as possible, we will also improve how we inform residents around the status of maintenance and repairs in a way that is accessible. The approach around this will form part of the new Lynton Close Engagement Plan (detailed in the 'Building strong, sustainable relationships' priorities). • Invest £500k into site improvement – this was committed by Cabinet in September 2025 to be used from 2026/27. We will consult with Lynton Close residents around how best to invest into site improvements
2. A clear and fair way to allocate pitches: Brent's Pitch Allocation Policy	We will: • Develop a new Pitch Allocation Policy – we are undertaking work to develop a new Pitch Allocation Policy that will ensure pitches are allocated fairly, consistently and transparently. Our Policy will be shaped by comprehensive feedback from Gypsy and Traveller communities and draw on best practice. It will capture a range of components, including eligibility criteria, priority banding, assessment and application processes, to establish clarity and consistency for pitch allocations. We will periodically review the demand for pitches, the effectiveness

of the allocation process and any changes in policy or legislation that may impact provision.

• **In September 2025 we committed to reduce our pitch rent to the London average for similar sized pitches** – this change will be backdated to 8 September 2025. This change marks our recognition that our rates were too high, therefore we have adopted a fairer rate which we hope will reduce households' living costs and support their livelihoods.

We have:

- **Established a small team of officers who act as central points of contact for those living on Gypsy and Traveller sites.** This team directly manages the current, and any future sites and delivers all aspects of high-quality, visible and accessible site management, end to end and let to re-let. The team aims to ensure these communities have access to financial inclusion and support, can meet their rental obligations and live in good quality, safe, suitable and affordable homes.

3. A vision for future sites: meeting the communities' accommodation needs

We will provide more homes for our Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. Currently, Brent does not have enough pitches to meet the communities' needs, or the most recently assessed housing demand. Brent's sole site, Lynton Close, is overcrowded which is exacerbating health and safety issues for the tenants. While we are taking steps to mitigate overcrowding, including reducing fire risk and providing alternative accommodation for those households willing to relocate to bricks and mortar, the longer-term challenge still remains.

When [Brent's Local Plan 2019-2041](#) was adopted in 2022, the West London Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment 2018 determined that no additional sites were required. However, in 2024 the national definition of Gypsies and Travellers for planning purposes, which was used in this assessment, was found discriminatory and unlawful, resulting in an underassessment of accommodation needs. Our latest assessment determines that Brent requires an additional 52 pitches to meet the communities' housing needs – there is only one site in Brent of 31 pitches, therefore we must secure more.

This, combined with the need to tackle the existing overcrowding, is why Brent commits to **securing a new Gypsy, Roma and Traveller site(s) that is safe, secure and suitable for the communities' needs.**

We have established several design principles which will guide how we will seek to identify and develop future sites. These have been shaped by external expert advice, residents' voices, learning from our management of Lynton Close, criteria outlined in the Local Plan and best practice:

1. Vehicle access: Ensuring sites have appropriate vehicle access, parking, and servicing, including direct road access for larger vehicles.
2. Access to services: easily accessible to essential services such as schools, healthcare facilities, and shops.
3. Site size: Develop new sites with pitch numbers that are in line with best practice.
4. Child-friendly spaces: Providing child-friendly sites with safe spaces to play.
5. Community spaces: Easy access to community spaces and buildings.
6. Key utilities: water, electricity, drainage, and waste disposal.

There is considerable work to do to deliver future sites. Through this journey we will ensure that any new sites are designed and delivered thoughtfully using best practice, codesign and consultation.

4. A transparent way to respond to unauthorised encampments	Our unauthorised encampments policy We aim to have an effective and fair approach to the management of unauthorised Gypsy, Roma and Traveller encampments that balances these communities' rights with the available space and capacity within Brent to accommodate their needs. Brent's approach to unauthorised encampments is driven by government guidance, which amplifies the importance of flexibility and care. The approach focuses on two possible routes: Section 61 Notice and serving a Section 77 Notice. Our policy is that the most appropriate legal route will be used depending upon the specific circumstances of the case. These routes mostly mirror those that have been agreed across local authorities within the West London Waste Authority to ensure there is consistency: • London Borough of Brent • London Borough of Ealing • London Borough of Harrow • London Borough of Hillingdon • London Borough of Hounslow • London Borough of Richmond upon Thames More information on how the council and police can respond to unauthorised encampments, including the use of Section 61 and Section 77 notices, can be found in Appendix B.
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Building strong, sustainable relationships

Building strong, sustainable relationships with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities is imperative. These communities are marginalised, underserved and experience some of the poorest outcomes in the country; yet they are distrusting of public authorities which is often due to historic experiences and neglect. We want to support our Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities to thrive, but we know the council, partners and these communities must build mutual trust, respect and collaboration to achieve this. As this trust builds, we will be able to establish better tailored and culturally informed services that meet these communities' needs more effectively. Our commitments within this priority are to:

1. Continue improving our relationship with Gypsy and Traveller communities
2. Develop a Roma community engagement plan
3. Continue working with trusted organisations that understand Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities

Commitment	Detail
1. Continue improving our relationship with Gypsy and Traveller communities	We have made progress on improving our relationship with our Gypsy and Traveller communities, particularly those residing at Lynton Close. To build on this we will: • Position the new dedicated site support as community advocates – as previously referenced, we have established a small team of officers who will act as central points of contact for those living on Gypsy, Roma and Traveller sites. Beyond site related issues, this team will support and advocate for residents on any additional needs. If the team cannot deliver the support themselves, they will liaise and signpost to relevant services and partners to ensure these communities can access the support they need. • Maintain a Lynton Close Engagement Plan – recent engagement activities have provided valuable insights into community needs and informed the development of tailored communication and engagement methods. The Lynton

	Close Engagement Plan will establish a consistent and structured approach to communication, ensure alignment with the commitments set out in this Framework and accompanying Action Plan (such as communications around site maintenance), and provide a forward-looking framework for ongoing engagement. It will also support the timely dissemination of information to these communities regarding wider council and borough developments and opportunities. Core principles underpinning this activity are to listen, embed clear feedback loops and empower Gypsy and Traveller communities to drive conversations and solutions that will support them to thrive. We also recognise the importance of avoiding engagement fatigue. While we have established the foundation for a renewed relationship with these communities, we know there's a long way to go to build trust. We also know there is more to understand about these communities, particularly so that we can provide appropriate and tailored support. Establishing a better relationship and understanding of these communities has been a recent priority for the council, however this comes with the risk of over-engaging which can potentially damage relationships and affect the willingness to participate. Both the new dedicated team and engagement plan will play an important role in managing engagement with these communities to ensure it is appropriate and proportionate.
2. Develop a Roma community engagement plan	The Census suggests Brent is home to one of the largest Roma communities in the country, so it is vital to ensure this community feels welcome and supported within the borough. Despite our attempts, engagement with the Roma community to develop this Framework and Action Plan was limited and, therefore, our understanding of the community in Brent remains inadequate. Because of that, we cannot confidently establish a series of commitments to the Roma community, but we do commit to developing an engagement plan that will build our understanding of the Roma communities' diversity and make-up in Brent and those communities' respective needs. The engagement plan will seek to: • Understand the make-up of Brent's Roma community • Build an understanding of the different Roma community needs and a foundation for tailored service provision • Identify Roma community leaders and trusted voices in Brent • Establish a mechanism for maintained dialogue with the Roma community We do not anticipate the relationship and our understanding changing overnight. This approach acknowledges that engagement with Roma communities requires long-term trust-building, and depends on our cultural competency, sustained commitment and ongoing investment.
3. Continue working with trusted organisations that understand Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities	We currently lack the knowledge and expertise to enable our Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities to thrive, so it is important that we work with those experienced organisations that can support us to deliver this Framework and Action Plan. To date, we have worked with several organisations as we progress each priority, including Three Dragons, the Traveller Movement, London Gypsies and Travellers, Roma Support Group, Romanian and Eastern European Hub. We will continue to work with these, and other partners to ensure we build sustained relationships and deliver effective support to our Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. This also includes local organisations that have existing relationships with these communities and other local authorities.

Delivering accessible services

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities are marginalised and underserved communities; they are also culturally unique with their own traditions and ways of living. Within this context, traditional methods of public service provision are inaccessible and we must tailor service delivery to align with these communities' uniqueness and needs. Culturally competent and tailored service provision is nothing new to Brent – given our diversity, we have already established and embedded adaptive delivery approaches, however we haven't yet established this for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. That is why our final priority is to deliver culturally competent, accessible services for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. By delivering more accessible services that are used and trusted by these communities, we will help to improve outcomes. This includes equipping children and young people with the foundation to thrive; greater household financial resilience and better health and wellbeing.

This priority includes two commitments:

1. Establish an accessible model of support for Gypsy and Traveller communities
2. Embed a Gypsy, Roma and Traveller cultural competency training offer that is undertaken by services that frequently engage with these communities

Commitment	Detail
1. Establish an accessible model of support for Gypsy and Traveller communities	Findings from the consultation and engagement on this Framework and Action Plan, and insights from Gypsy and Traveller outcomes suggest that these communities are not accessing support services, particularly those that can prevent challenges from escalating. There may be several reasons for this, such as the communities' distrust in public services; poor outreach from public services; lack of understanding about available support etc. We believe that we can do more to tailor our support to those communities and deliver it in places where they are comfortable. In response, we will establish an accessible model of support hub for Gypsies and Travellers – this means providing in-person support with a variety of services available to speak with, in a physical space(s) close to the community and/or on site (i.e. Lynton Close). Reflecting data around Gypsy and Traveller outcomes and the consultation and engagement feedback, this support will include, but is not limited to: • Debt advice and arrears • Mental health and wellbeing • Support to access NHS services • Employment and skills • Education support: school readiness for under 5s, after school clubs and learning support; SEND support and adult learning (e.g. around employment and digital exclusion) • Youth support This model will be developed with these communities and relevant partners.
2. Embed a Gypsy, Roma and Traveller cultural competency training offer that is undertaken by services that frequently engage with these communities	Given these communities' uniqueness we need to ensure staff and partners that deliver services to them genuinely understand their culture, history and background and how to provide appropriate support. We will work with an organisation(s) with relevant expertise to design and deliver cultural competency training, centred around Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, for all teams that regularly work with these communities.

Evaluation and monitoring

To make sure we are delivering on our commitments to Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, we will develop a detailed action plan which will be reported on to Cabinet annually. The table below provides a high-level indication of the different council services that are responsible for leading on delivering our different commitments to Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.

We will explore opportunities for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller residents to help oversee delivery, review progress and share their views on how the Framework and Action Plan are working in practice.

Priority	Commitment	Responsible service(s)
Providing safe and suitable sites	Providing well maintained sites	Housing Services
	A clear and fair way to allocate pitches: Brent's Pitch Allocation Policy	Housing Services
	The vision for future sites	Property and Assets
	Our unauthorised encampments policy	Public Realm – Environmental Enforcement
Building strong, sustainable relationships	Continue improving our relationship with Gypsy and Traveller communities	Housing Services
	Develop a Roma community engagement plan	Strategic Commissioning Capacity Building and Engagement
	Continue working with trusted organisations that understand Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities	All
Delivering accessible services	Establish an accessible model of support for Gypsy and Traveller communities	Resident and Housing Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Group
	Embed a Gypsy, Roma and Traveller cultural competency training offer that is undertaken by services that frequently engage with these communities	Resident and Housing Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Group

Appendix A

Brent Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Framework and Action Plan: Engagement summary

This appendix summarises what we heard through engagement with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, wider Brent residents, councillors and local partners. The purpose of the engagement was to better understand people's experiences, what is working well, what needs to improve, and what matters most when planning future support, site provision and pitch allocation.

The findings give us valuable insight, but they do not tell the whole story. We know that our relationships with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities are still developing, and that more work is needed to build trust, listen properly and strengthen our understanding over time. The findings should therefore be read alongside the limitations set out below.

Consultation method	Number of respondents
Brent Have Your Say online survey	28
Door knocking: Gypsy and Traveller community only	28 households
Focus group: Roma community only	10
Open engagement sessions: Private Renters Fair and Tenant and Leaseholder Fair	c.20 in-depth conversations
Briefing with Brent Councillors	c.15 attendees
Additional discussion	Local school

Consultation and engagement limitations

The consultation and engagement approach succeeded in capturing a breadth of voices and in holding quality conversations. However, there were some limitations that impacted the volume of voices we were able to engage with and are important to acknowledge for future engagement.

Central to these limitations is the council's relationship with these communities. We are at the beginning of improving our understanding of, and trust with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities and an implicit aim of the consultation and engagement exercise was to contribute to these efforts. However, there is still a

long way to go, and we are not yet in a position where these communities will engage within the council confidently and freely.

The key limitations were:

1. Gypsy & Traveller communities: door knocking and actively engaging in the community's space – namely Lynton Close – was the most effective method of engagement. We also attempted to hold focus groups to allow for group discussion and as an alternative engagement method for the community but we failed to secure attendance.
2. Roma communities: the council currently has little to no relationship with Brent's Roma communities. With the support of RO-EE Hub, we were able to conduct a focus group, however this only comprised of the Romanian Roma community which represent one sub-section of the wider Roma community. Anecdotally, we believe Brent's Roma community also includes those from Polish, Bulgarian and Slovakian backgrounds. More information (both quantitative and qualitative) is required before we can confidently say we understand the unique needs of Brent's Roma communities.
3. Non-Gypsy, Roma or Traveller community voices: there were limited responses from Brent's non-Gypsy, Roma or Traveller communities and most of the consultation's responses came from Gypsy and Traveller communities. During the open engagement sessions, non GRT voices expressed a limited understanding of these communities which may explain the low response rate.

Key findings

The following key consultation and engagement findings are categorised within the three consultation themes. As referenced in the limitations section, most responses were from Gypsies and Travellers and therefore overwhelmingly reflect their perspectives and experiences:

1. General issues related Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities and improving access to support services.

- Access to housing and lack of pitches: an overwhelming number of comments focused on the lack of available accommodation. Lynton Close is currently experiencing overcrowding, resulting in large multi-generational households across the site. The community want suitable accommodation, particularly for young adults so they can start families of their own.
- Site conditions: repairs and maintenance. Respondents shared their frustration around the pace of and communication around site repairs and maintenance.
- The relationship with the council: Gypsy and Traveller communities feel they have been treated unfairly and neglected by the council.
- Mental health: Gypsy and Traveller communities are acutely aware of their own and the wider community's mental health challenges, characterised by high levels of anxiety, depression and suicide. While some have accessed mental health support, they shared that the available services can be difficult to navigate and lack cultural sensitivity.
- Perspective of non-Gypsy, Roma or Traveller respondents: this group raised concerns and experiences of anti-social and violent behaviour from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. However, they also recognise that the community are marginalised and that their way of living should be respected.
- Perspective of Roma respondents: while our engagement and relationship with the Roma community is in its infancy, the challenges we heard were wide ranging including: generally poor literacy and English proficiency; low immunisation rates; poor housing conditions and fear of eviction; confusion around the EU Settlement Scheme; challenges around school registration and exclusion.

2. A new Pitch Allocation Policy: how permanent and temporary pitches are allocated.

As part of the consultation, we shared a draft Pitch Allocation Policy with respondents and invited their feedback. We heard the following key points:

- The proposed bidding system is culturally inappropriate and divisive and should be scrapped in favour of a council-led direct award system.
- Priority bands should include larger families and a more specific definition around how overcrowding will be prioritised should be established.
- The 48-hour window to respond to a pitch offer is too short and requires a clearer explanation.
- Eligibility criteria: uncertainty around why immigration rules are applied and how to provide proof of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller identity. Concerns around the Roma community being eligible for pitches as, given Brent's current site is predominantly Gypsy and Irish Traveller, this may cause community tensions.
- Concerns around rent arrears impacting people's eligibility – some view this as unfair due to how some rent arrears have been inherited and accumulated.

3. Designs and features of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller sites

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities were asked to share desired features for sites, particularly for potential new sites. The feedback included:

- On-site community facilities that include activities around education (e.g. schooling; digital exclusion), youth support, mental health and wellbeing.
- Larger accommodation and facilities, including more space for trailers.
- A play area in the middle of the site.
- Having a site(s) that is away from industrial areas with poor air quality.
- The preference for a site size of 15-20 pitches but, ultimately, communities want everyone to have a home.

Appendix B

Responding to unauthorised encampments

The following sections detail how the council and police can respond to unauthorised encampments, using Section 66 and Section 77 notices.

Section 61

The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 allows the Police to serve a Section 61 Notice requiring persons to evacuate the land. A Section 61 Notice can only be served by the Police if certain criteria is met;

- two or more persons are trespassing on land with a common purpose to reside there

And

- reasonable steps have been taken by the landowner to ask the persons to leave. The landowner must ask them to leave.

In addition, that it is further believed

- that one or more persons have caused damage to the land or property on the land

or

- one or more persons has used threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour towards the occupier, a member of his/her family or an employee or agent of his/hers

or

- There have been between them six or more vehicles (including caravans) on the land

Before the Section 61 Notice can be served, Brent Council has an obligation to carry out a welfare assessment on the persons in the incursion. The assessment should identify any welfare issues that need to be addressed before any enforcement action.

A Section 61 Notice can be served within a couple of hours of attending the site provided the criteria has been met and it is the Police who lead and enforce the Section 61 Notice with Brent Council supporting. If there is a return of unauthorised campers within 3 months, the Police can impose criminal sanctions.

Section 77

The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 allows local authorities to serve a Section 77 Notice, this Notice:

- Can be used on any land within the local authority's area, regardless of ownership.
- Requires the persons to leave the specified land and remove all their property including vehicles. Vehicles and property details must be specified in the Notice.

Where persons fail to comply with a Section 77 Notice, a case file must be sent to Brent Council's Legal Team, who will prepare summons and submit them to the Magistrates.

- Once the Magistrates approve the summons and a court date is set, they are then served on the unauthorised encampment.
- At court, Brent Council will seek to have granted an Order for Removal of Vehicles and Persons granted.
- This will then be issued to the traveller incursion. Bailiffs or security personnel may be required to take possession and facilitate the removals.

As with a Section 61 Notice, a welfare assessment must be completed prior to serving a Section 77 Notice.

If there is a return of unauthorised campers within 3 months, criminal sanctions can be imposed. Serving a Section 77 Notice can be a lengthy process if the traveller incursion fails to comply.

Negotiated Stopping

While we recognise the flexibility negotiated stopping provides, at this stage the council is unable to advocate for this option in the borough.

We have exercised negotiated stopping in the past, but we do not consider this a possible option throughout the duration of this strategy due to the lack of available space and sites to accommodate an incursion. As outlined in this strategy, we have established a plan to address accommodation challenges and once this plan is realised we hope to reach a position where we can adopt greater flexibility around unauthorised encampments.