



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

**Lord Khan of Burnley**

*Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Faith,  
Communities and Resettlement*  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

Our reference: MC2025/20566

Yvonne MacNamara  
Chief Executive  
The Traveller Movement  
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SW4 6QX

12 August 2025

Dear Yvonne,

Thank you for your email of 16 July addressed to the Deputy Prime Minister, the Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP, regarding Traveller accommodation. I am replying as the Minister responsible for this policy area.

I would like to start by saying how pleased I was to meet recently with Grace Preston and officers from GRT organisations, together with Lord Bourne and Baroness Whitaker, to hear first-hand about the overarching concerns and objectives of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller organisations, as well as their tireless work on behalf of these communities. I was also deeply saddened to hear about the fire at the Ver Meadows Site in Redbourn and the impacts this has had on local community members.

In response to the requests set out in your email, I would make the following points:

In terms of national funding for Traveller accommodation, currently, local authorities can bid through the 2021-26 Affordable Homes Programme, along with other forms of affordable housing. Whilst the priority is for permanent pitch provision, local authorities are able to bid for funding for both permanent sites and transit sites. Between 2016 and 2023, 108 new Traveller pitches have been delivered from the Affordable Homes Programme.

Providing the biggest boost to social and affordable housing investment in a generation, at Spending Review the Government confirmed £39 billion for a successor to the Affordable Homes Programme over 10 years from 2026-27 to 2035-36. The programme will prioritise homes for social rent but will also fund a mix of tenures including affordable rent and shared ownership. We will publish further details shortly including on the kinds of homes and schemes it will fund and the timeline for opening bids.

In planning policy, the Government's overarching aim is to ensure fair and equal treatment for travellers in a way that facilitates their nomadic way of life. Planning policy is clear that local authorities should assess the need for Gypsy and Traveller sites in their area, and then plan to meet that need, in the same way that they plan for all forms of housing. In doing so, authorities should use a robust evidence base to establish accommodation needs, pay particular attention to early and effective engagement with traveller communities, and work collaboratively with neighbouring local planning authorities.

Plan Policies relating to the specific needs of accommodation, including for traveller provision as assessed by local authorities are tested at examination by an independently appointed Inspector before they can be adopted. The examination of the plan will consider whether adequate site provision has been made for gypsies and travellers based on assessed needs.

In December 2024, a number of changes were made to the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites. These include a change to the definition of "Gypsies and Travellers" for planning purposes, to bring it in line with domestic and international law. Changes were also made to clarify the circumstances under which the presumption in favour of sustainable development is engaged in relation to Traveller sites, and to ensure reforms to Green Belt policy are implemented appropriately in relation to traveller sites.

In the context of our wider reforms to planning policy, we will review the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) this year. The PPTS is currently under review with any further updates of the PPTS to be published in due course.

Regarding the Police, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022, I want to reassure you that this Government is committed to protecting and preserving the rights of individuals to live a private life, including a nomadic lifestyle, without discrimination. We fully acknowledge and respect the High Court's decision. As with all cases of this nature, we are now carefully considering the judgment in order to determine the best way forward.

In response to your request for a GRT Task Force / Advisory Group, I am fully aware of the wide variety of challenges that face GRT communities and encourage my officials to gather evidence to help inform the policy responses. For example, my officials have been engaging in ONS roundtables to explore the lived experiences of Roma people in England and Wales, and as you know I met with GRT stakeholder organisations on 16 July.

Finally, I note your points about refurbishment of existing sites and suspending evictions. In particular, your concern about the situation in Brent, London. My officials are engaging with Brent Council as the responsible landlord of Lynton Close, who has a duty to ensure the site is safe for residents. I understand that the council have been working closely and proactively with the community since earlier this year to address severe overcrowding and fire risks at the site. The urgency and imperative of doing this has been brought into even sharper focus following the devastating Ver Meadows Travellers site fire.

The Council have advised that they have no plans to impose either evictions or to close Lynton Close and that they are working with Site representatives to implement necessary risk

management measures, following a recent Fire Risk Assessment, while efforts continue to make the site safe. This has included the Council undertaking regular removal of bulky waste from the site, as well as organising a community support day where they had staff available to offer advice on debt, benefits, NHS health and housing options.

Brent Council remain in regular contact with site representatives and have been having monthly meetings with them since April, with most recent one taking place on Monday 21 July.

Thank you again for writing on this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Khan', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

**LORD KHAN OF BURNLEY**

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Faith, Communities and Resettlement