



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Housing

Statistical Release

January 2018

Count of Traveller Caravans, July 2017 England

- The total number of traveller caravans in England in July 2017 was 22,792. This is 1,422 more than the 21,370 reported in July 2016.
- 6,701 caravans were on authorised socially rented sites. This is an increase of 429 since the July 2016 count, which recorded 6,272.
- The number of caravans on authorised privately funded sites was 12,370. This was 753 more than the 11,617 recorded in July 2016. The number of caravans on authorised private sites has increased each year since 2007 (see Figure 1).
- The number of caravans on unauthorised encampments on land owned by travellers was 2,197. This is a decrease of 19 compared to the July 2016 figure of 2,216.
- The number of caravans on unauthorised encampments on land not owned by travellers was 1,524. This was 259 caravans more than the July 2016 count of 1,265.
- Overall, the July 2017 count indicated that 84 per cent of traveller caravans in England were on authorised land and that 16 per cent were on unauthorised land. This is the same as the 2016 count.

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Housing

Introduction

This statistical release presents official statistics on the count of traveller caravans in England. The count is carried out to provide local data on the number and seasonal movement of caravans.

This publication is compiled from information submitted by local authorities in England. Local authorities carry out the count of caravans on traveller sites twice a year, in January and July, providing a snapshot of the number of caravans on the day of the count. Information is collected about caravans on authorised socially rented sites, authorised privately funded sites, unauthorised developments (sites on land owned by travellers for which planning permission has not been granted) and unauthorised encampments (sites on land not owned by travellers and which do not have planning permission).

The traveller caravan count covers data on the number of caravans and traveller sites in England; it does not cover the number of occupants residing in these caravans or caravan sites or the potential drivers for any observed change.

The count takes place twice a year to reflect winter residence and summer travelling trends. Due to the strong seasonal differences between the January and July counts, all comparisons refer to year-on-year changes.

The information in this release is based on data returned to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government by English local authorities. Users should note that revisions have been made to figures from the past five consecutive counts in this release as a result of updated data being received. These changes have had minimal impact on overall trends. This release presents the most accurate data on the number of traveller caravans in England and is therefore not directly comparable to previous releases.

Further information is given in four accompanying live tables, which can be accessed at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/traveller-caravan-count-july-2017>

This release presents revised figures from the July 2017 count, incorporating updated data submitted by Local Authorities following publication. Some totals have changed from the figures originally published on 16 November 2017. Please see the Technical notes section for further details.

Count of Traveller Caravans

Local authorities carried out the July 2017 count on or around 14 July 2017. Totals from the count are given in Table 1 below, together with comparative figures from the previous two July counts.

Table 1: Number of Traveller Caravans by site type, England						
	July 2015^r	July 2016^r	July 2017	% of total caravans	Change from July 2016 to July 2017	% Change from July 2016 to July 2017
Caravans on Authorised Sites (with planning permission)	17,941	17,889	19,071	84%	1,182	7%
Socially Rented Caravans	6,493	6,272	6,701	29%	429	7%
Private Caravans	11,448	11,617	12,370	54%	753	6%
Temporary Planning Permission	1,018	634	581	3%	-53	-8%
Permanent Planning Permission	10,430	10,983	11,789	52%	806	7%
Caravans on Unauthorised Sites (without planning permission)	3,133	3,481	3,721	16%	240	7%
Caravans on sites on Travellers' own land	1,932	2,216	2,197	10%	-19	-1%
Tolerated	1,010	1,138	1,239	5%	101	9%
Not Tolerated	922	1,078	958	4%	-120	-11%
Caravans on sites not on Travellers' own land	1,201	1,265	1,524	7%	259	20%
Tolerated	257	198	293	1%	95	48%
Not Tolerated	944	1,067	1,231	5%	164	15%
Overall Total	21,074	21,370	22,792	100%	1,422	7%
<i>^r A correction has been applied to historic figures. Please see the Technical Notes section for further information.</i>						

At the time of the July 2017 count, the total number of traveller caravans in England was 22,792. Of these, 6,701 (29 per cent) were on socially rented sites; 12,370 (54 per cent) were on privately funded sites; 2,197 (10 per cent) were in unauthorised developments on land owned by travellers; and 1,524 (7 per cent) were in unauthorised encampments on land not owned by travellers. This information is also shown in Figure 1 below. Corresponding figures at local authority level for the six most recent counts are given in accompanying Live Table 1.

The total number of traveller caravans in England has risen from 17,149 in 2007 to 22,792 in 2017, an increase of 33 per cent. Figure 1 illustrates that the number of caravans on authorised private sites has increased over the same period. A total of 6,552 caravans were recorded in 2007 compared to a total of 12,370 in 2017. Figure 2 below shows that caravan’s on authorised private sites accounted for the largest proportion of the total number of caravans across England in July 2017 (54 per cent). Caravans on unauthorised sites accounted for 16 per cent of the total with caravans on authorised socially rented sites accounting for 29 per cent. The underlying figures are included in accompanying Live Table 4.

Figure 1: Number of Traveller Caravans by site type, England

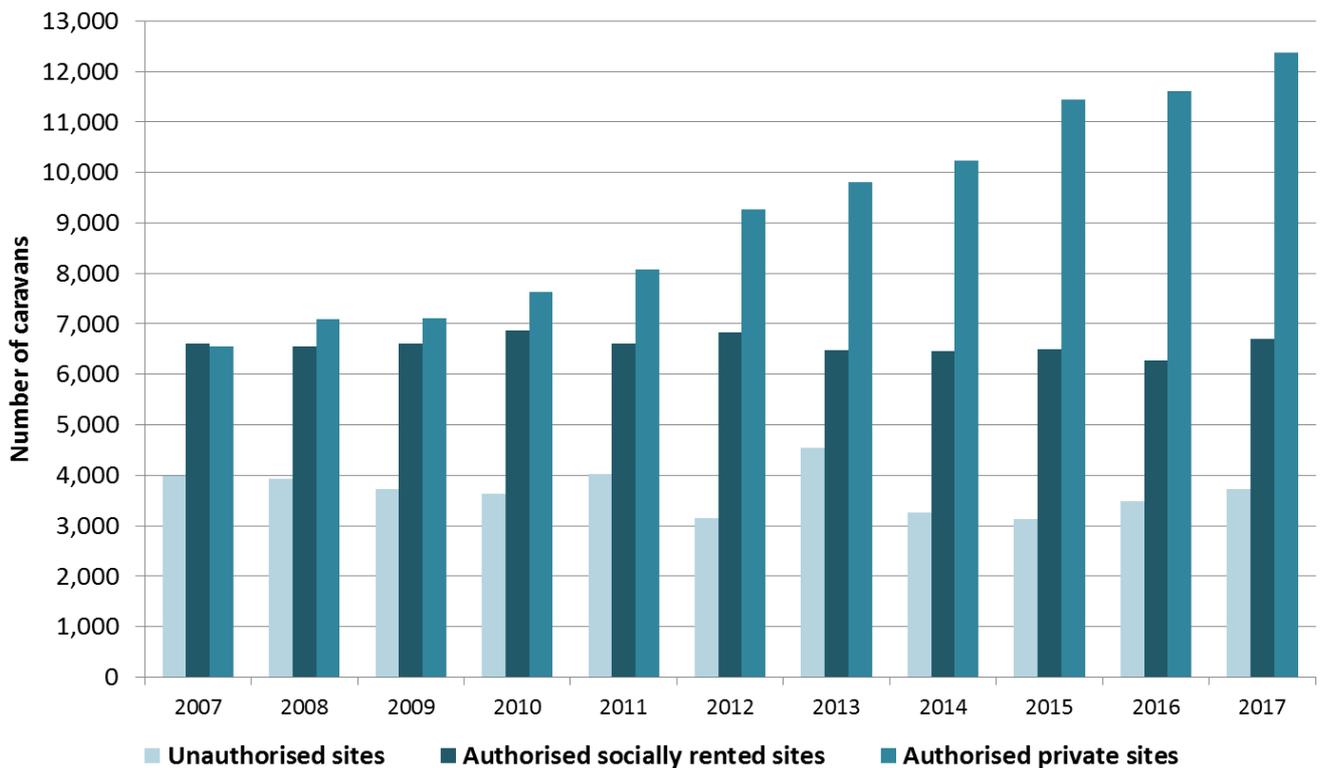
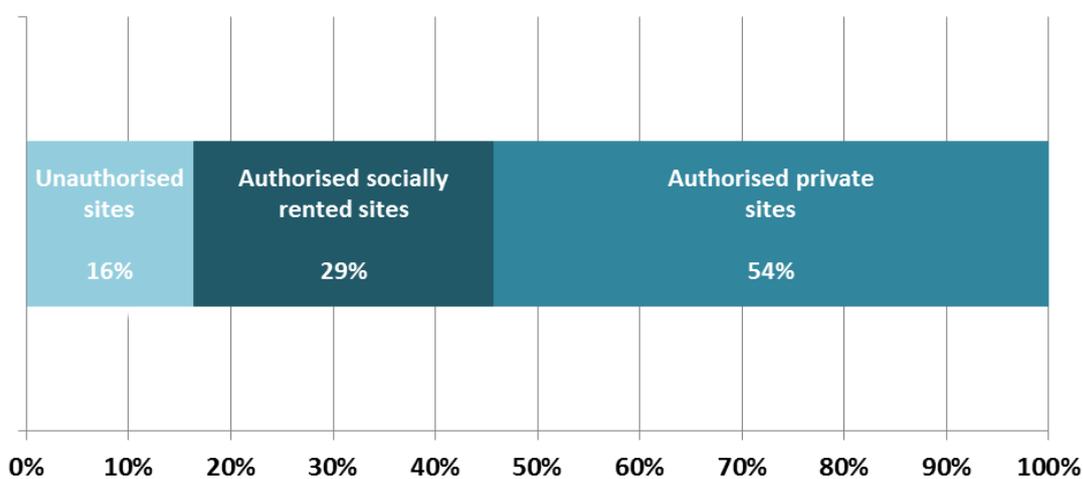


Figure 2: Proportion of Traveller Caravans by site type, England



Spatial Distribution

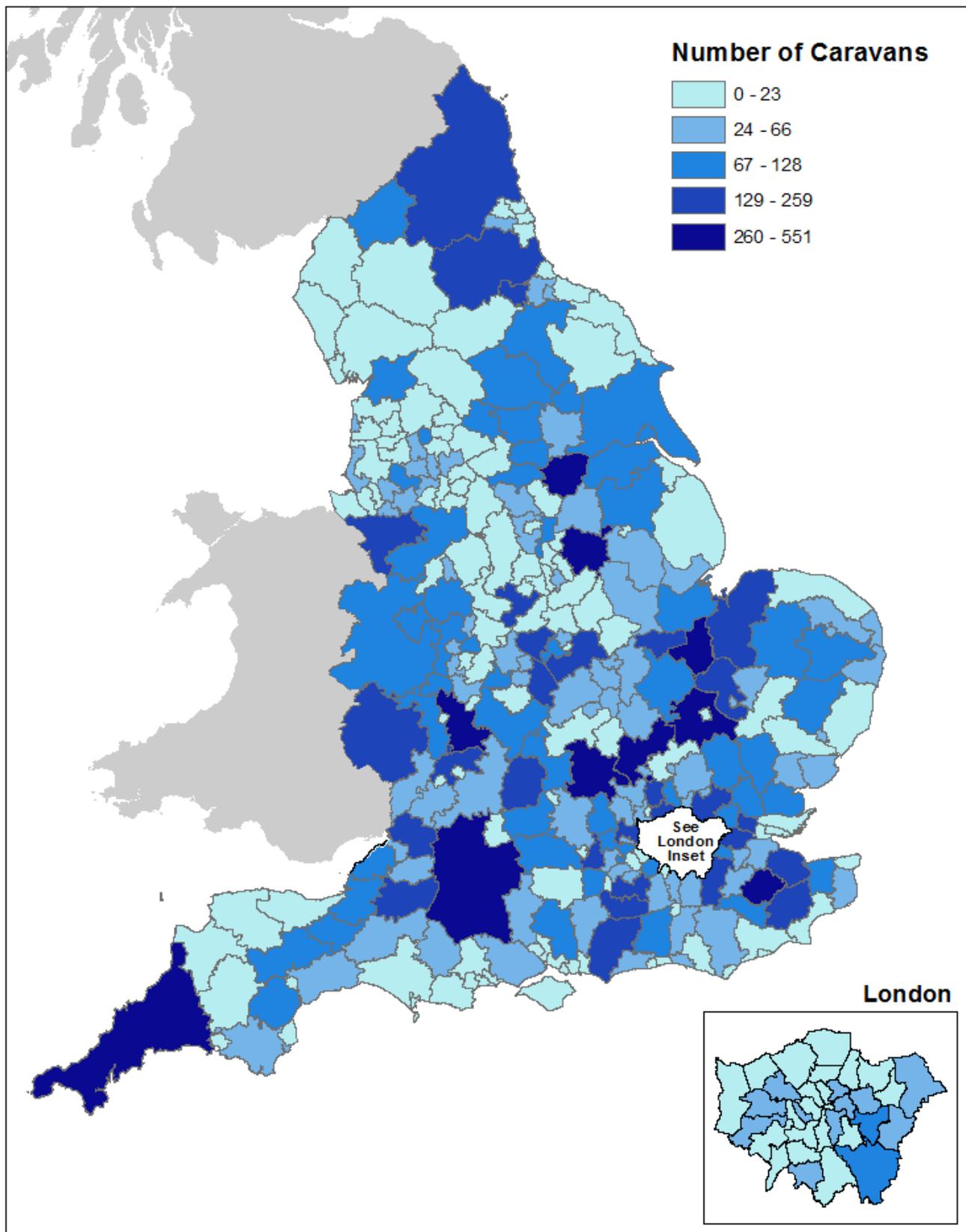
The maps below illustrate the spatial distribution of traveller caravans and caravan sites across England.

Map 1 shows the total number of caravans on authorised sites within each local authority boundary. The data has been grouped into five categories for the purposes of mapping using the Jenks natural breaks classification method. This method splits the data into intervals based on the natural groupings observed within. The class breaks identified work to minimise the variance or difference between individual cases selected in each group whilst also maximising the variances between each group taken as a whole. Maps created using this method allow trends in the underlying data to be accurately represented, aiding interpretation and further analysis.

As indicated in the key, darker colours represent those local authorities that have reported a higher number of total caravans on authorised sites whereas lighter colours indicate local authorities that have reported lower numbers of caravans.

Map 2 shows the locations of authorised socially rented sites across local authorities in England.

Map 1: Traveller Caravans on Authorised Sites July 2017

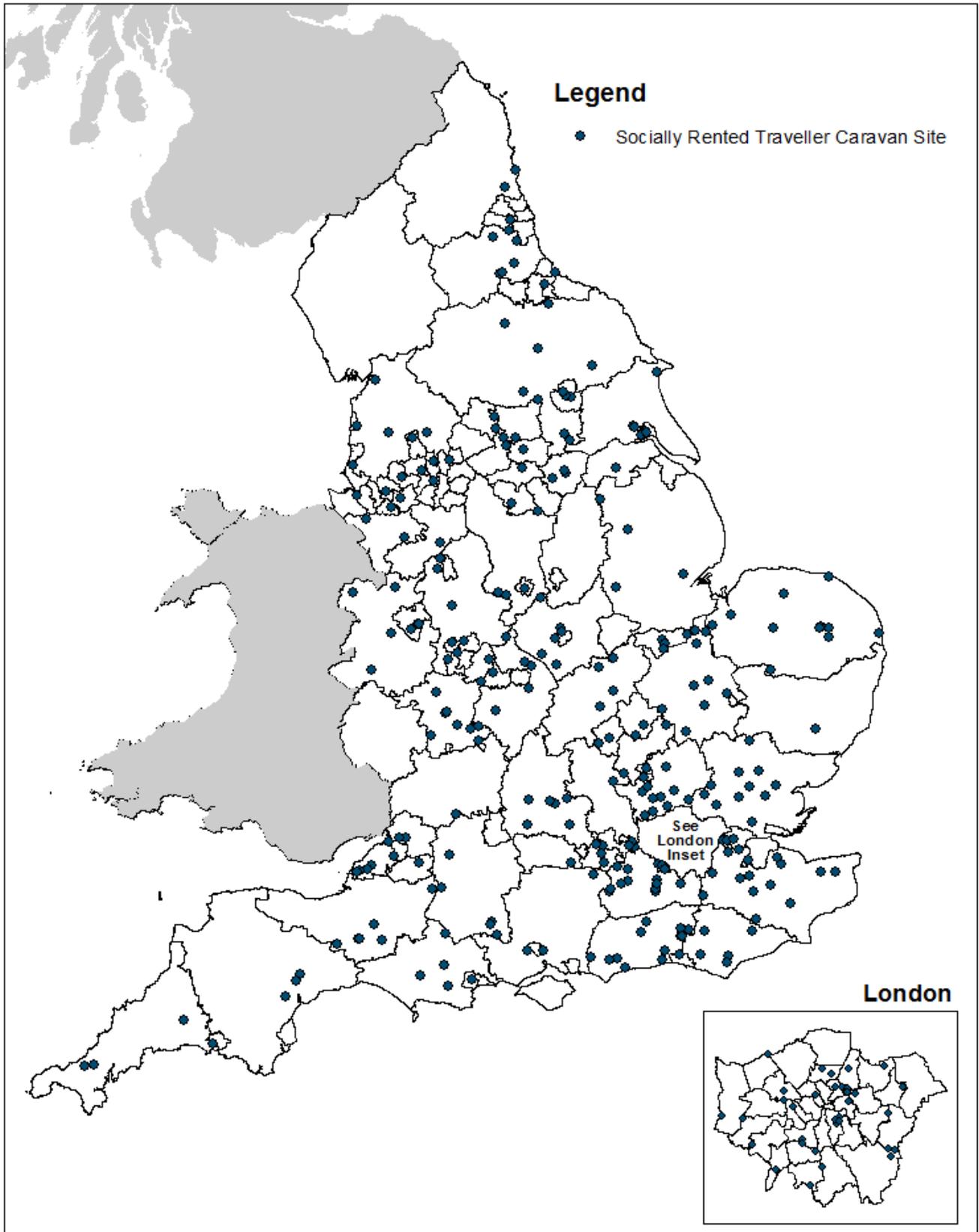


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OS Boundary-Line & DCLG November 2017 TCC

Data Sources

Map 2: Locations of Socially Rented Traveller Caravan Sites July 2017



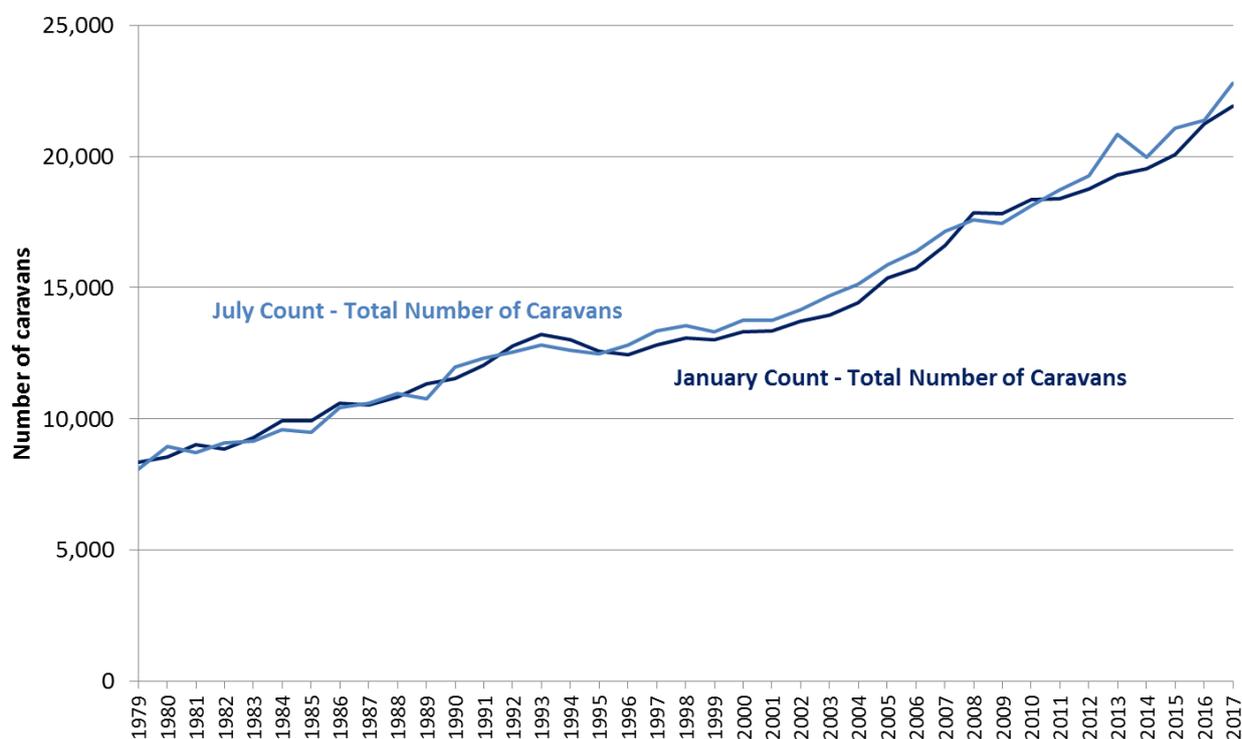
Data Sources

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Historic data

The traveller caravan count has taken place twice a year since January 1979. National totals from each count of the main categories of authorised and unauthorised sites are given in accompanying Live Table 4. The figures show an increase in the overall total from 8,065 caravans in July 1979 to 22,792 in July 2017. Figure 3 shows how the total number of traveller caravans in England has changed over time since 1979 across both summer (July) and winter (January) counts.

Figure 3: Number of Traveller Caravans from 1979 to 2017, England



New Affordable Residential Pitches

The July 2017 count was the seventh July count to include a count of new affordable residential pitches in each local authority area in England. This has been reported to allow such pitches to be included in the calculation of the New Homes Bonus for individual local authorities. Table 2 below shows that, altogether, local authorities reported that 41 such pitches on socially-rented sites and 35 such pitches on privately-funded sites had been created between July 2016 and July 2017. Further details are provided in accompanying Table 5.

The next count of new affordable residential pitches is expected to take place as part of the July 2018 count of traveller caravans.

More details of the New Homes Bonus are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/increasing-the-number-of-available-homes/supporting-pages/new-homes-bonus>

Table 2: Count of Traveller Caravans: new affordable residential pitches constructed between July 2011 and July 2017

Year (July count)	Number of new affordable residential pitches ¹		
	On socially-rented traveller sites with planning permission	On privately-funded traveller sites with either temporary or permanent planning permission	Total
2011	44	3	47
2012	96	88	184
2013	35	22	57
2014	49	0	49
2015	162	22	184
2016	27	26	53
2017 ^r	41	35	76

¹ The guidance notes required these to be new affordable residential pitches that met the 'affordable housing' definition in the National Planning Policy Framework.

^r Totals have been revised following the receipt of updated data.

Accompanying tables

Accompanying tables are available to download alongside this release within a single workbook. These are:

- Table 1** Count of traveller caravans on authorised and unauthorised sites for the last six counts, nationally and by local authority area
- Table 2** Location and size of traveller sites operated by local authorities and private registered providers in England
- Table 3** Number of Travelling Showpeople caravans on authorised and unauthorised sites for the January 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 counts nationally and by local authority area
- Table 4** National total for the main categories of authorised and unauthorised sites for all counts since January 1979
- Table 5** Count of Traveller Caravans: new affordable residential pitches constructed between July 2016 and July 2017

These tables can be accessed at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/traveller-caravan-count-july-2017>

Statistical releases and accompanying tables for previous caravan counts are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/traveller-caravan-count>.

Definitions

Local authorities carry out counts of caravans on traveller sites in England which provide a snapshot of caravans on the day of the count. These take place twice a year, in January and July, to capture information about the number of caravans on:

- *authorised public sites* – operated by local authorities and private registered providers of social housing, including housing associations, trusts and cooperatives;
- *authorised private sites* – privately funded sites with planning permission;
- *unauthorised developments* – sites on land owned by travellers for which planning permission had not been granted; and
- *unauthorised encampments* – sites on land not owned by travellers and which do not have planning permission.

Unauthorised sites are classified as either 'Tolerated' or 'Not Tolerated':

- A '*Tolerated*' site is one where the local authority has decided not to seek the removal of the encampment, and where the encampment has been, or is likely to be, allowed to remain for an indefinite period of months or years.
- Some examples of a site which would be classified as '*Not Tolerated*' are where:
 - A planning enforcement notice has been served (including Temporary Stop Notices),
 - The results of a planning enquiry are pending,
 - An injunction has been sought,
 - The compliance period has been extended.

This count was previously known as the 'Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Count', however there has been no change in the coverage of the count. It continues to include caravans lived in by Traditional and Ethnic Gypsies and Travellers as well as members of the non-traditional New Traveller groups who live in caravans or other moveable dwellings. We do not collect information on the ethnicity or any other characteristics of caravan occupants.

Technical notes

Symbols

r Revised

* Imputed

Data collection and methods

The count of traveller caravans publication is compiled on a particular count day. A local authority representative will visit traveller caravan sites and carry out a manual count. This information is then submitted by local authorities in England via an online form. This data is collected and published bi-annually to take into account seasonal variation in the use of caravan sites. A count of Travelling Showpeople's caravans or moveable dwellings is included in the January count only and a count of New Affordable Residential Pitches is included in the July count only.

The Traveller Caravan Count is included on the Single Data List, a list of all the datasets that local government must submit to central government. A large majority of local authorities do carry out the count and provide information to the Department. Those that have not done for this collection are footnoted in the accompanying Live Table 1.

More details on the Single Data List are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/making-local-councils-more-transparent-and-accountable-to-local-people/supporting-pages/single-data-list>

The analysis carried out by the department involves checking the data submitted by local authorities for duplicate sites prior to publication. This also includes checking that figures across different types of pitches sum correctly, checking for unlikely combinations of caravan counts, for example. Any discrepancies are followed up with the authority and figures are amended where needed. Some figures are imputed due to one of the following reasons:

- Local Authority non-response
- Incomplete returns
- Inability to carry out count due to not being able to access site

Site and pitch level data are then aggregated to produce local authority figures as in the live tables.

Data quality

The data are collected by the department and undergo a process of scrutiny to ensure that the published count is as accurate as possible. The department follows up late returns and conducts validation checks as outlined above.

Any large proportional or absolute changes in total caravans at a site level between annual counts are checked with the relevant local authorities. However, there may be a degree of inaccuracy in reporting due to non-responses and reporting errors by local authorities that have submitted data.

The count data are subject to the Pre-Release Access to Official Statistics Order, which means that advance access to the statistics is controlled and publicised.

In total, 93 per cent of the 326 English local authorities with housing responsibilities submitted at least some figures for July 2017, a similar response rate to that for the July 2016 count. If a local authority did not submit a return for a site for the July 2017 count, figures for the number of caravans on that site from the previous July count are taken without adjustment. If the local authority had also not submitted a return for that site from the previous count, figures for the number of caravans are taken from the next most recent January count. This is repeated for three counts: July 2016, July 2015 and July 2014. If a local authority has not submitted a return for a particular site within this period then the number of caravans is taken to be zero at this site.

Where data has been taken from previous years' counts rather than the most recent this is indicated in the accompanying live tables.

Revisions policy

This policy has been developed in accordance with the UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice for Official statistics and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Revisions Policy (found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statistical-notice-dclg-revisions-policy>). There are two types of revision that the policy covers:

Non-Scheduled Revisions

Where a substantial error has occurred as a result of the compilation, imputation or dissemination process, the statistical release and accompanying tables will be updated with a correction notice as soon as is practical. Where a local authority notifies the department of an error in the information they have submitted after publication of the release a decision on whether to revise immediately, at the next publication or not at all will be made based upon the impact of any change and the effect it has on the interpretation of the data.

Since the original publication of the July 2017 Count of Traveller Caravans, revised data has been submitted by Local Authorities relating to the count of new affordable residential pitches constructed between July 2016 and July 2017. Corrections to the data have altered the total number and location of new affordable residential pitches on socially-rented traveller sites with planning permission, including a reduction in the overall total of affordable rental pitches reported on. At a National level, this correction has reduced the overall total. The relevant tables containing this information have been updated. If you would like to know more please contact housing.statistics@communities.gov.uk.

Scheduled Revisions

We do not currently have scheduled revisions for this release. Revisions to historic data will be made only where there is a substantial revision, such as a change in methodology or definition.

Uses of the data

The data are collected to inform central government and local authority policy, and the delivery of local services, covering travellers, and their sites and encampments. In particular, figures are used by MHCLG to identify the need for site provision and in tackling unauthorised encampments and developments.

We are keen to know about how external stakeholders use these data and so would appreciate feedback from users, addressed to: housing.statistics@communities.gov.uk

User engagement

Users are encouraged to provide feedback on how these statistics are used and how well they meet user needs. Comments on any issues relating to this statistical release are welcomed and encouraged. Responses should be addressed to housing.statistics@communities.gov.uk

The Department's engagement strategy to meet the needs of statistics users is published here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/engagement-strategy-to-meet-the-needs-of-statistics-users>

Notes

1. Details of officials who receive pre-release access to the count of traveller caravans up to 24 hours before release can be found in the section on 'Pre-release access to official statistics' at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/about/statistics>

2. The next count of traveller caravans is due to take place on 30 January 2018.

Devolved administration statistics

The Welsh Government collects and publishes statistics on traveller caravans in Wales. Published information is available at:

<http://wales.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/gypsy-traveller-caravan-count/?lang=en>.

The Scottish Government collects and publishes information on travellers in Scotland and further details are available at <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Equality/gypsiestravellers>. A review of the evidence base is available at

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Equality/Equalities/GypsyTravellerScotland>

Information on traveller accommodation in Northern Ireland is available at:

http://www.nihe.gov.uk/index/sp_home/strategies/travellers.htm

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Information on the UK statistical system is available via the UK Statistics Authority website:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/about-the-authority/uk-statistical-system/index.html>

Information about statistics at MHCLG is available via the Department's website:

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/about/statistics

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