

Count of Traveller Caravans, July 2013 England

- There were approximately 21,100 traveller caravans in England in July 2013, up 1,700 (9 per cent) from 19,400 a year earlier.
- Most of the increase was due to an estimated 1,000 caravans being at a festival in North Somerset in July 2013.
- This was also the main cause of a decrease in the proportion of caravans on authorised sites, from 84 per cent in July 2012 down to 77 per cent in July 2013 - although the long-term trend remains upward.
- 6,500 caravans were on authorised socially-rented sites, down about 300 since the July 2012 count.
- There were 9,800 caravans on authorised privately-financed sites in July 2013, up 400 since July 2012.
- 2,100 caravans were in unauthorised developments on land owned by travellers in July 2013, up 300 from a year earlier.
- 2,700 caravans were in unauthorised encampments on land not owned by travellers in July 2013, up 1,300 from a year earlier. These included the caravans at the festival mentioned above.

Housing Statistical Release

14 November 2013

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Introduction

This Statistical Release presents official statistics on the Count of Traveller Caravans in England. It is carried out to provide local data on the number and the 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 had not been granted) and unauthorised encampments (on land not owned by travellers and which do not have planning permission).

The count takes place twice a year to reflect winter residence and summer travelling trends and changes in demands on services. Due to the strong seasonal differences between the January and July counts, all comparisons refer to year-on-year changes. Numbers quoted in this release have been rounded to the nearest 100, given that estimates are made for non-responding local authorities and so quoting precise figures might be regarded as implying a spuriously high level of accuracy.

Further information is given in four accompanying tables.

With effect from July 2013, the Department has renamed the 'Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Count' the 'Traveller Caravan Count.' This does not reflect any changes in the coverage of the count but brings its title into line with the terminology used for planning policy purposes. It is also consistent with the fact that its scope is wider than caravans lived in by ethnic Gypsies and Travellers, also including non-traditional travellers. References in previous Statistical Releases and accompanying tables to 'Gypsies and Travellers' have therefore now been replaced by references simply to 'travellers'.

Count of Traveller Caravans

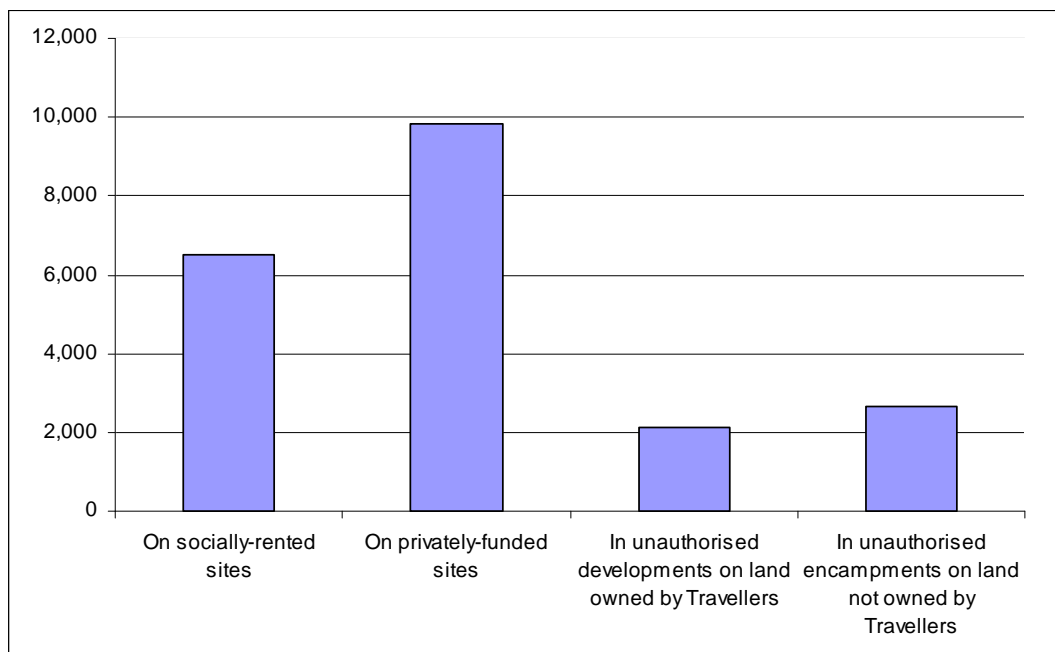
Local authorities carried out the July 2013 count on or around 18 July. Key totals from the count are given in the table below, together with comparative figures from the previous July.

Table: Numbers of Traveller Caravans, England							
	Socially- rented sites	Privately funded sites	Total on authorised sites	Unauthorised developments on land owned by travellers	Unauthorised encampments on land not owned by travellers	Total on unauthor- ised sites	Overall total
July 2012	6,800	9,400	16,300	1,800	1,400	3,200	19,400
July 2013	6,500	9,800	16,300	2,100	2,700	4,800	21,100
% of total as at July 2013	31	46	77	10	13	23	100
Change: Jul 2012 to Jul 2013	-300	400	0	300	1,300	1,600	1,700
% change: Jul 2012 to Jul 2013	-4	4	0	17	93	50	9

Numbers are rounded to the nearest 100

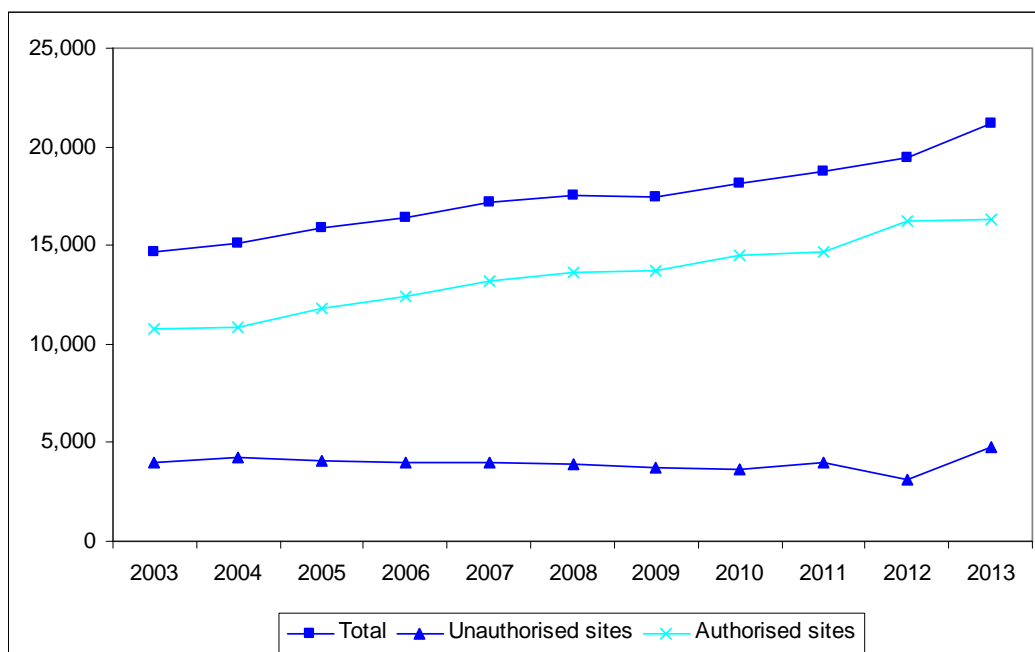
Numbers as at July 2013 are also shown in Figure 1. Corresponding figures at local authority level for the five most recent counts are given in accompanying Table 1.

Figure 1: Total number of caravans in England as at July 2013, by type of site



The total number of traveller caravans in England has increased in recent years - by 44 per cent in the ten years since 2003 - as shown in Figure 2. Further details are given in accompanying Table 4.

Figure 2: Total number of caravans in England (July counts only)



Numbers on authorised and unauthorised sites

As shown in the Table, the number of traveller caravans on authorised sites in July 2013 was approximately 16,300, unchanged since July 2012 and representing 77 per cent of all traveller caravans. Of these, 6,500 were on socially-rented sites and 9,800 were on privately-funded ones. Conversely, the number of caravans on unauthorised sites in July 2013 was 4,800, up 23 per cent since July 2012, due largely to an estimated 1,000 caravans at a festival in North Somerset.

Figure 3 shows how the caravans of private sites have formed a growing proportion of the total number of caravans on authorised sites over the last ten years. The underlying figures are included in accompanying Table 4.

Figure 3: Number of caravans on authorised sites in England (July counts only)

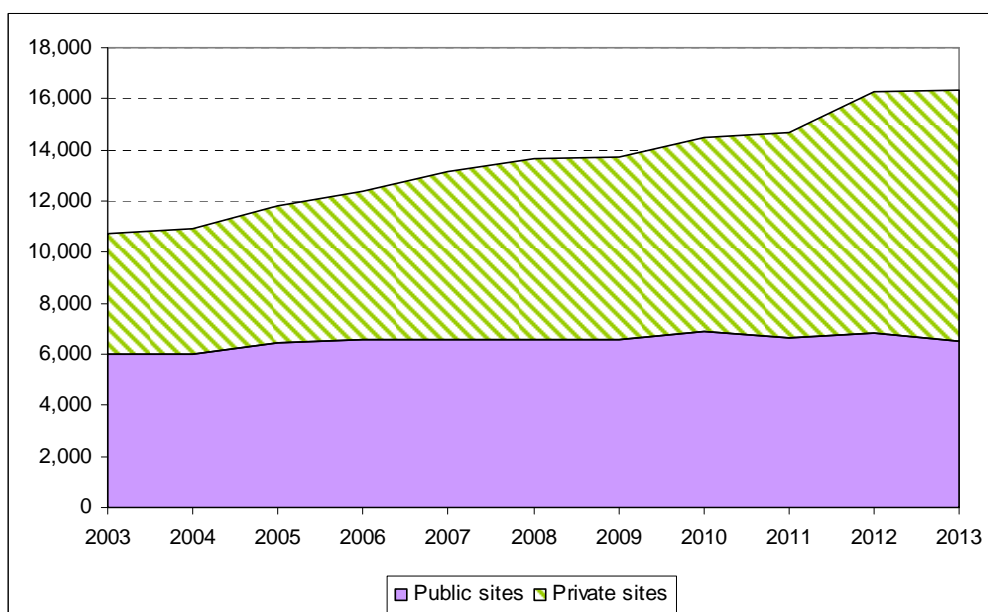
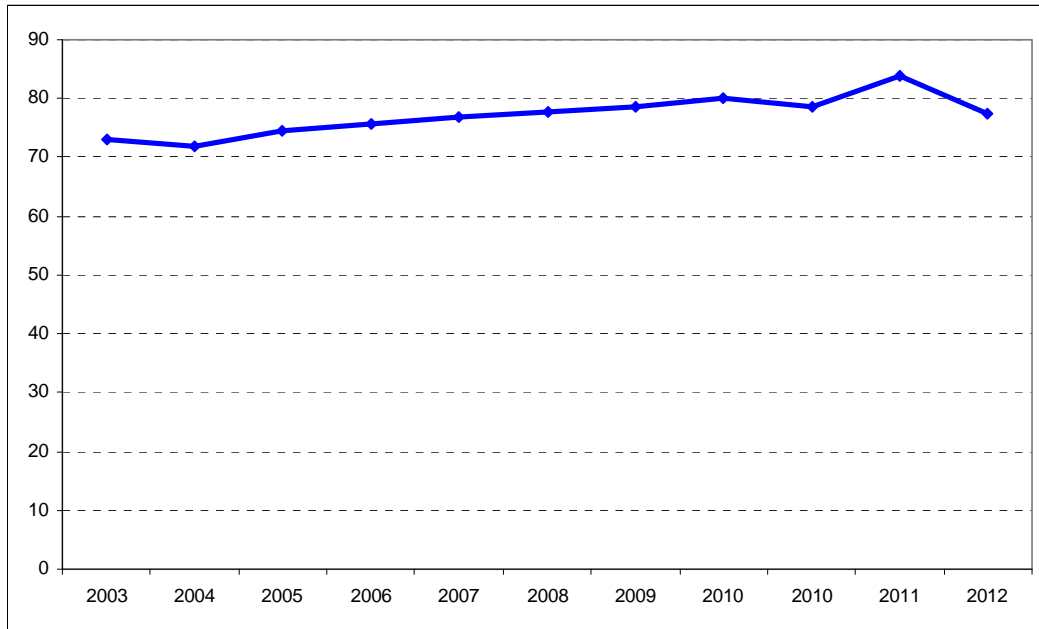


Figure 4 shows how the percentage of caravans on authorised sites has generally increased over the last ten years. It also illustrates the downward impact on the trend of the estimated 1,000 caravans at a festival in North Somerset in July 2012 and – to a lesser extent – of just over 500 caravans at a festival near Chelmsford in July 2011.

Figure 4: Percentage of caravans on authorised sites in England (July counts only)



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 Table 4. The figures show an increase in the overall total from just over 8,000 caravans in July 1979 to about 21,100 in July 2013.

New affordable residential pitches

The July 2013 count was the third July count to include a count of new affordable residential pitches in each local authority area in England. This was done to allow such pitches to be included in the calculation of the New Homes Bonus for individual local authorities. Altogether, local authorities reported that 35 such pitches on socially-rented sites and 22 such pitches on privately-funded sites had been created between July 2012 and July 2013, making 57 such pitches altogether. Details are given in accompanying Table 3, described below. The next count of new affordable residential pitches is expected to take place as part of the July 2014 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>

Accompanying tables

Accompanying tables are available to download alongside this release. They are:

- Table 1** Count of traveller caravans on authorised and unauthorised sites for the last five counts, nationally and by local authority area
- Table 2** Location and size of traveller sites operated by local authorities and private registered providers
- Table 3** New affordable residential pitches constructed between July 2012 and July 2013
- Table 4** National totals for the main categories of authorised and unauthorised sites for each count since January 1979.

These tables can be accessed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/traveller-caravan-count-july-2013>

No count of Travelling Showpeople caravans took place in July 2013. These counts began in January 2011 and now take place once a year. The next one will be carried out in January 2014.

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.

As stated in the Introduction, although this count is now known as the ‘Traveller Caravan Count’ rather than the ‘Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Count’, 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.

Technical notes

Data collection

The Count of Traveller Caravans publication is compiled from information submitted by local authorities in England. Although there is no legal requirement on local authorities to submit data, the 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, however, carry out the count and provide information to the Department. Those that do not do so are noted in the footnotes to accompanying 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>.

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 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. The number of people granted pre-release access to these statistics is eight. In total, 91 per cent of the 326 English local authorities with housing responsibilities submitted at least some figures for July 2013. Where a local authority has not submitted a return for the most recent count, figures for the number of caravans in the area are taken – without adjustment - from the most recent corresponding count for which a completed return has been received. For example, for the July count, the most recent completed return from a previous July count is used. Statisticians are working to improve the way in which estimates are made for local authorities which do not provide at least some of the requested figures: this may result in revisions to figures for some past counts in the next Statistical Release.

Revisions policy

This policy has been developed in accordance with the UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice for Official Statistics and the Department for 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.

Scheduled Revisions

Local authorities can update their returns following publication of the data. At the time of each count the previous returns will be reviewed for revision. Revisions to historic data (all data older than that currently due for scheduled revision) should be made only where there is a substantial revision, such as a change in methodology or definition. Where there are small changes that do not substantially change historic data, internal updates are maintained.

Uses of the data

The data are collected to inform central government policy, and the delivery of local services, covering travellers, and their sites and encampments. In particular, figures are used by DCLG to identify the need for site provision and in tackling unauthorised encampments and developments. Figures are also used by other Government departments, local authorities and essential services to plan service delivery.

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 the "Public enquiries" contact given in the "Enquiries" section below.

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 or around 17 January 2014. It will include the fourth annual count of Travelling Showpeople caravans.

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. In particular, a recent review of the evidence base is available at

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Equality/Equalities/GypsyTravellerScotland> and further details are available at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Equality/gypsiestravellers>.

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 Official Statistics is available via the UK Statistics Authority website:

www.statistics.gov.uk/hub/browse-by-theme/index.html

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

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

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