



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

# Count of Traveller Caravans, January 2018 England

- The total number of traveller caravans in England in January 2018 was 22,946. This is 1,026 more than the 21,920 reported in January 2017.
- 6,924 caravans were on authorised socially rented sites. This is an increase of 141 since the January 2017 count, which recorded 6,783.
- The number of caravans on authorised privately funded sites was 13,038. This was 822 more than the 12,216 recorded in January 2017. The number of caravans on authorised private sites has increased each year since 2008 (see Figure 1).
- The number of caravans on unauthorised encampments on land owned by travellers was 2,179. This is an increase of 38 compared to the January 2017 figure of 2,141.
- The number of caravans on unauthorised encampments on land not owned by travellers was 805. This was 25 caravans more than the January 2017 count of 780.
- Overall, the January 2018 count indicated that 87 per cent of traveller caravans in England were on authorised land and that 13 per cent were on unauthorised land.

## Housing Statistical Release

June 2018

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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 local authorities in England. Users should note that revisions have been made to figures from previous 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-jauary-2018>

# Count of Traveller Caravans

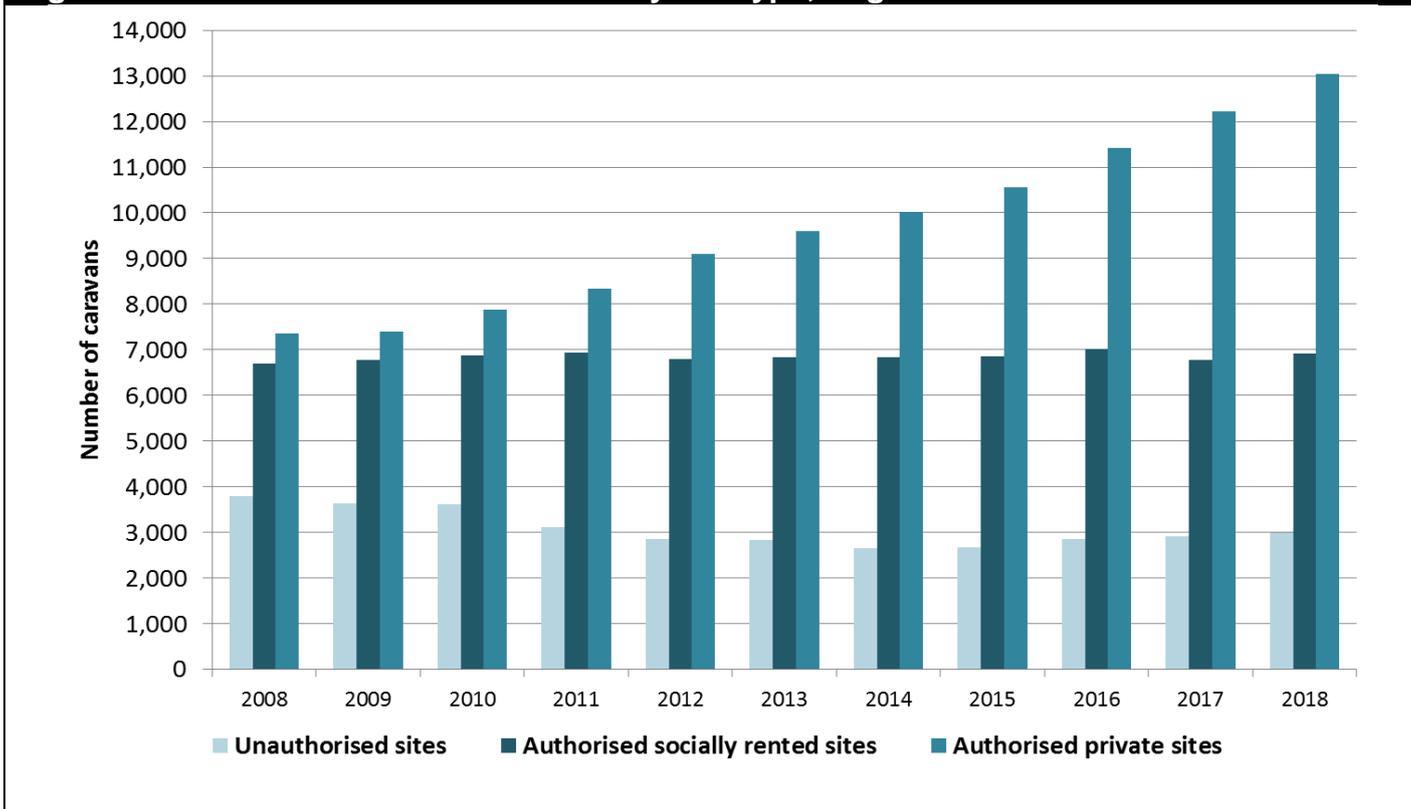
Local authorities carried out the January 2018 count on or around 30 January 2018. Aggregated totals by site type are presented in Table 1 below, together with comparative figures from the previous two January counts.

<b>Table 1: Number of Traveller Caravans by site type, England</b>						
	<b>Jan-16</b>	<b>Jan-17</b>	<b>Jan-18</b>	<b>% of total caravans</b>	<b>Change from Jan 2017 to Jan 2018</b>	<b>% Change from Jan 2017 to Jan 2018</b>
<b>Caravans on Authorised Sites (with planning permission)</b>	<b>18,456</b>	<b>18,999</b>	<b>19,962</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>963</b>	<b>5%</b>
Socially Rented Caravans	7,026	6,783	6,924	30%	141	2%
Private Caravans	11,430	12,216	13,038	57%	822	7%
Temporary Planning Permission	718	575	686	3%	111	19%
Permanent Planning Permission	10,712	11,641	12,352	54%	711	6%
<b>Caravans on Unauthorised Sites (without planning permission)</b>	<b>2,856</b>	<b>2,921</b>	<b>2,984</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>2%</b>
Caravans on sites on Travellers' own land	2,155	2,141	2,179	9%	38	2%
Tolerated	1,054	1,282	1,011	4%	-271	-21%
Not Tolerated	1,101	859	1,168	5%	309	36%
Caravans on sites not on Travellers' own land	701	780	805	4%	25	3%
Tolerated	264	237	294	1%	57	24%
Not Tolerated	437	543	511	2%	-32	-6%
<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>21,312</b>	<b>21,920</b>	<b>22,946</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,026</b>	<b>5%</b>

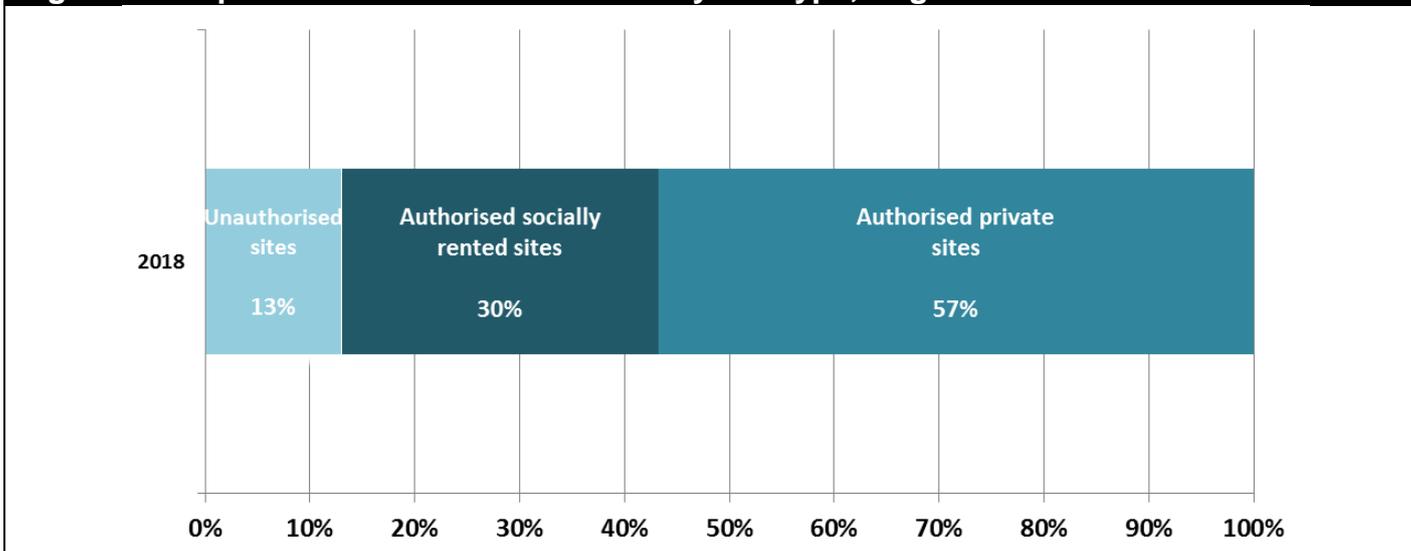
At the time of the January 2018 count, the total number of traveller caravans in England was 22,946. Of these, 6,924 (30 per cent) were on socially rented sites; 13,038 (57 per cent) were on privately funded sites; 2,179 (9 per cent) were unauthorised developments on land owned by travellers; and 805 (4 per cent) were unauthorised encampments on land not owned by travellers. This information is also illustrated in Figure 1 below. Corresponding figures at local authority level for the seven most recent bi-annual counts are presented in accompanying Live Table 1.

The total number of traveller caravans in England has risen from 17,844 in January 2008 to 22,946 in January 2017, an increase of 29 per cent. Figure 1 illustrates that the number of caravans on authorised private sites has increased over the same period. A total of 7,351 caravans were recorded in 2008 compared to a total of 13,038 in 2018. Figure 2 below shows that caravans on authorised private sites accounted for the largest proportion of the total number of caravans across England in January 2018 (57 per cent). Caravans on unauthorised sites accounted for 13 per cent of the total with caravans on authorised socially rented sites accounting for 30 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

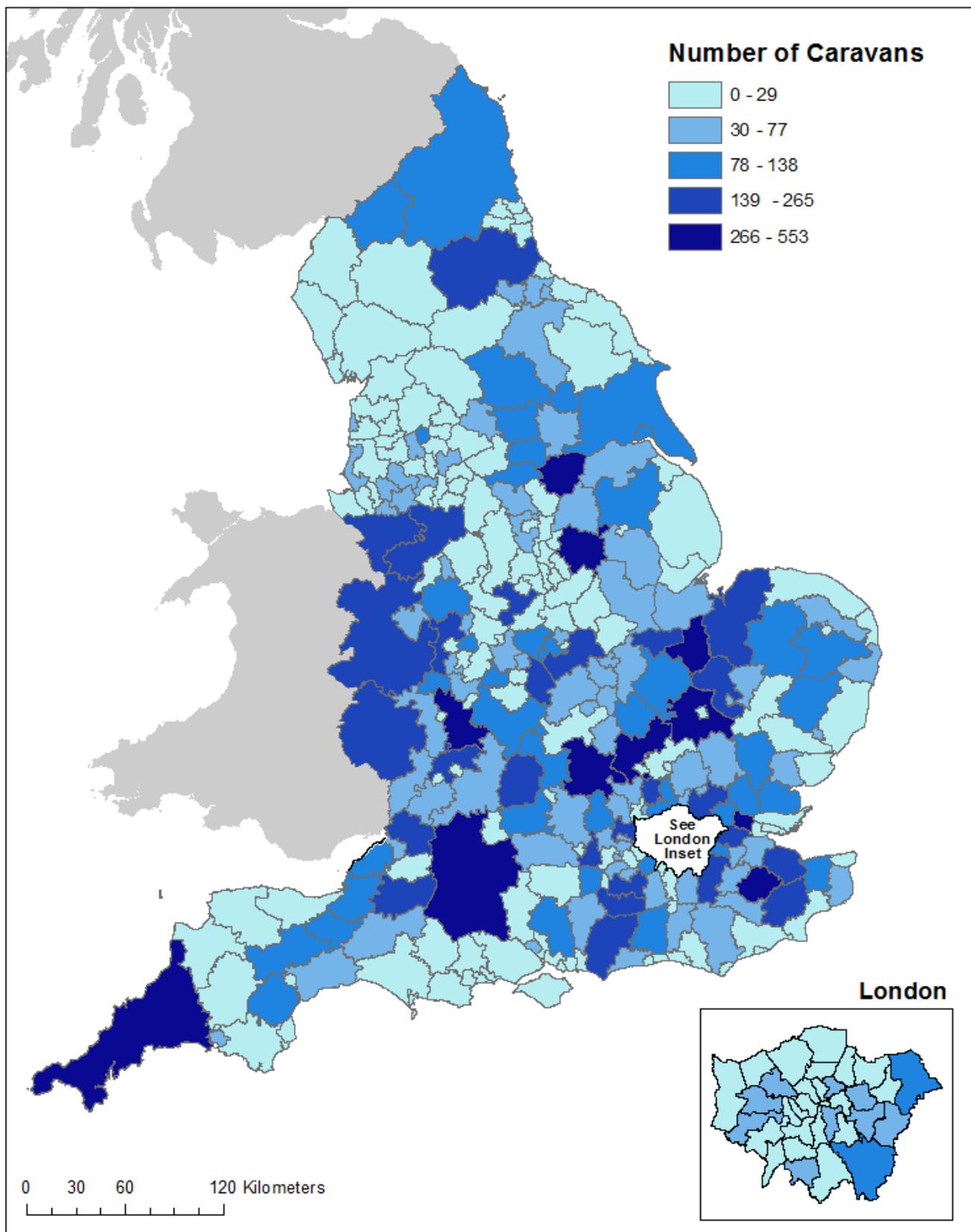
The spatial distribution of traveller caravans varies across England.

Map 1 below 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 1: Traveller Caravans on Authorised Sites, January 2018



Produced by Local Policy Analysis Division, MHCLG

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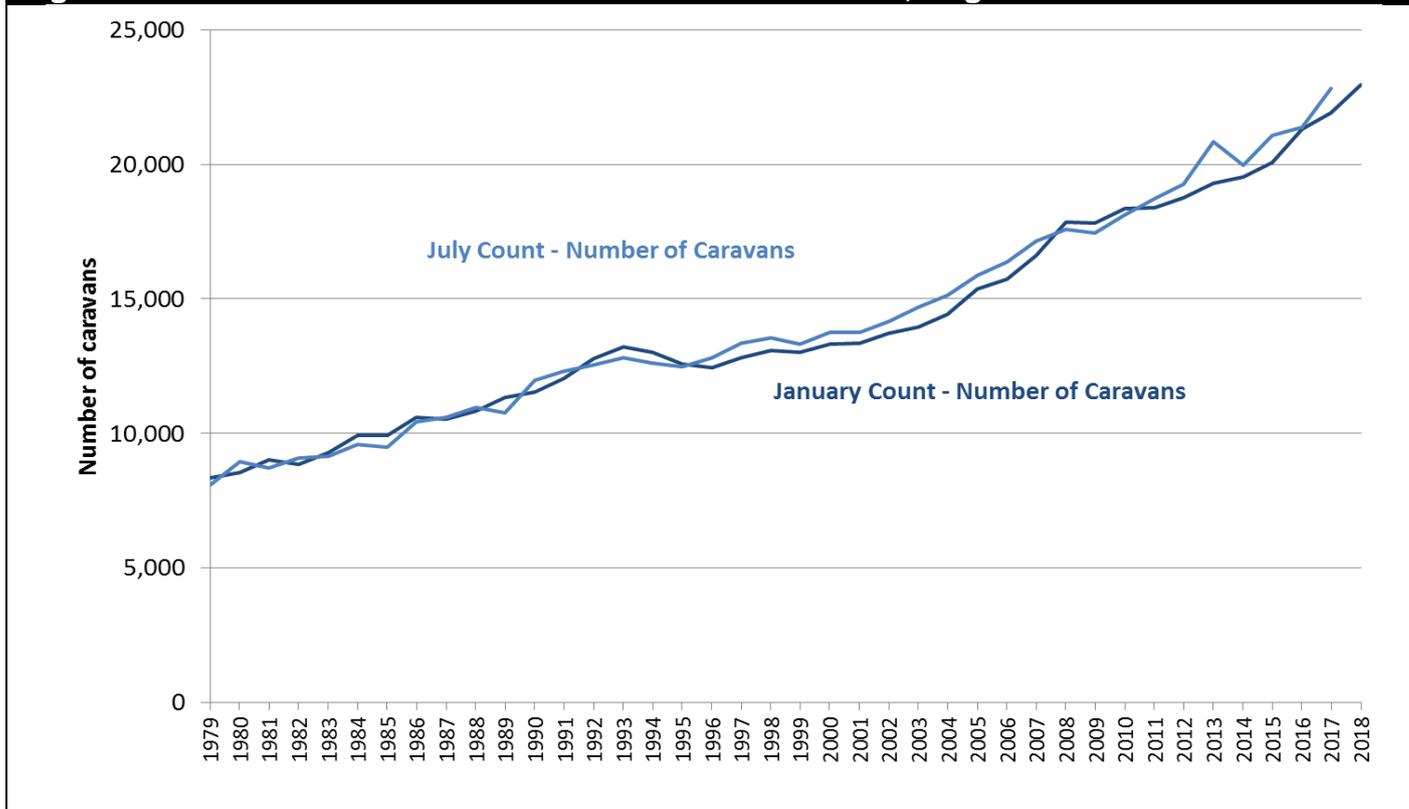
Data Sources

OS Boundary-Line & MHCLG

# 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 8,358 caravans in January 1979 to 22,946 in January 2018. Figure 3 below 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 2018, England**



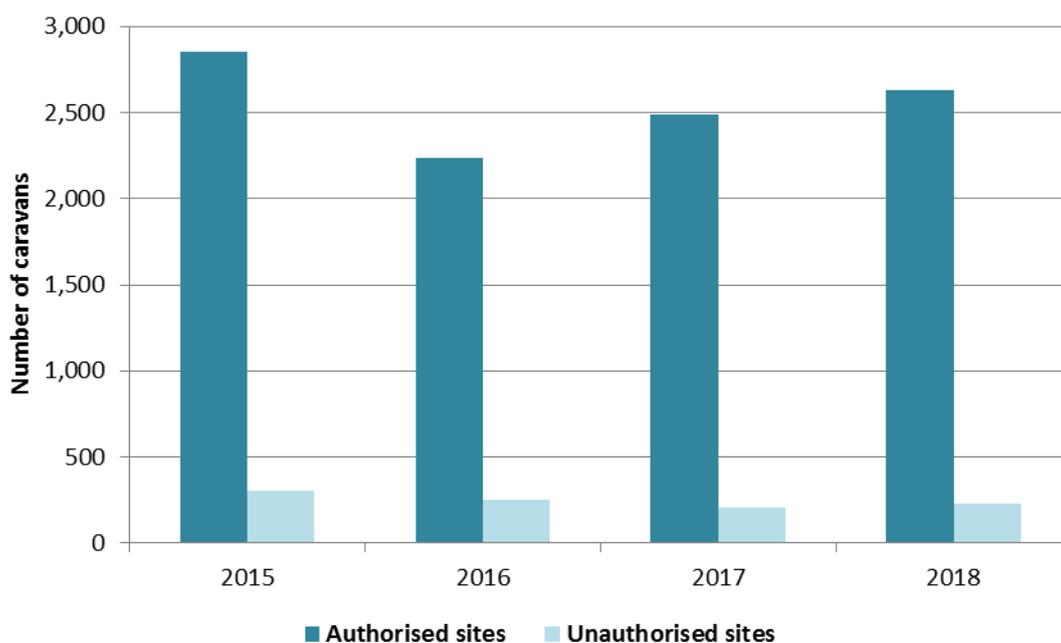
# Travelling Showpeople Caravans

The January 2018 count also included a count of the caravans/moveable dwellings occupied by Travelling Showpeople in each local authority area in England. The results from previous years are published in Live Table 3 as 'experimental statistics'. Further information about experimental statistics is available on the Office for National Statistics website at:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/general-methodology/guide-to-experimental-statistics/index.html>.

The overall number of Travelling Showpeople caravans counted in January 2018 was 2,859, up 6 per cent from 2,701 in January 2017. This remains lower than the 3,159 caravans counted in January 2015. Totals from the most recent four counts are illustrated in Figure 3 below. For full disaggregated data on Travelling Showpeople Caravans see accompanying Live Table 3.

**Figure 3: Number of Travelling Showpeople Caravans, January 2015 to January 2018**



# 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 seven 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, 2017 and 2018 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 (updated as part of the July count)

These tables can be accessed at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/traveller-caravan-count-january-2018>

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

\* 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 a series of online forms. 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 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 which are outlined further below in the section on Data Quality.

MHCLG are improving the process which allows data providers to submit data to the department. The first full statistical data collection went live on the new **DELTA** system in July 2017. The department is working to transition other data collections over as part of a phased approach. The types of data collected by the department will not change, only the method in which data is submitted. The benefits of DELTA include: one system for data submission (replacing varied and disparate contact points across our organisation); better task management and communication through automated notifications. The system also brings greater visibility of data entry forms that are due to be completed. The aim of these changes is to provide an improved and streamlined user experience for data providers. We continue to seek user feedback on the new DELTA system so please do email the team directly on: [housing.statistics@communities.gov.uk](mailto:housing.statistics@communities.gov.uk)

## Data quality

The quality assurance carried out by the department involves checking the data submitted by local authorities for duplicate sites, reviewing figures across different site types and that they sum correctly and checking for unlikely combinations of caravan counts, for example. 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. Some figures are also 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. Where data has been taken from previous years' counts rather than the most recent, this is also indicated in the accompanying live tables.

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. The majority of local authorities do carry out the count and return information to MHCLG. Those that have not done so for this collection are listed below;

*Arun, Boston, Breckland, Chiltern, Chorley, Cornwall, Dudley, Enfield, Epsom and Ewell, Forest of Dean, Halton, Haringey, Harrow, Ipswich, Lancaster, North Norfolk, Nuneaton and Bedworth, Preston, Richmond upon Thames, Runnymede, Southend-on-Sea, Spelthorne, Swindon, Warrington, West Berkshire, West Somerset, Windsor and Maidenhead, York.*

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>

Overall, for this count, 91 per cent of the 326 English local authorities with housing responsibilities responded or submitted at least some figures for the January 2018 count, a similar response rate to that for the July 2017 count. If a local authority did not submit a return for a site for the January 2018 count, figures for the number of caravans on that site from the previous January 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: January 2017, January 2016 and January 2015. If a local authority has not submitted a return for a particular site within this period (i.e. for three consecutive years) then the number of caravans is taken to be zero at this site.

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.

## Revisions policy

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

### **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](mailto: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](mailto: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/ministry-of-housing-communities-and-local-government/about/statistics>

2. The next count of traveller caravans is due to take place on 19 July 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](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:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-housing-communities-and-local-government/about/statistics>

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