

Matthew Pennycook MP - Minister for Housing and Planning

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Dear Minister,

Social and Affordable Homes Programme – the inclusion of Gypsy and Traveller sites

We write as organisations working with Gypsy and Traveller communities, to seek clarity and assurance on the new Social and Affordable Homes Programme (SAHP). We note from your ministerial statement of 2 July 2025 that a full prospectus is due in the autumn, but we are seeking assurance ahead of this being published that Gypsy and Traveller sites are included in the types of homes for which registered social landlords can apply for funding.

Gypsies and Travellers are integral to Britain's population, heritage and social fabric, and the Government have a [positive legal obligation](#) to facilitate the Gypsy and Traveller way of life. However, historic and current failures in the [planning system](#) have led to the chronic undersupply of residential sites and stopping places for Gypsy and Traveller communities.

Providing well-designed and managed sites for Gypsies and Travellers supports happy and healthy communities, and addresses wider determinants of health, education, and employment. While it was encouraging to see positive planning changes announced in December 2024, more must be done to reduce barriers and to support the creation of socially provided Gypsy and Traveller sites. The availability of funding is crucial to this.

We were pleased to see Gypsy and Traveller sites included in the types of homes eligible for funding under previous Affordable Homes Programmes, but it is not yet clear

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whether Gypsy and Traveller sites are included in the new Social and Affordable Homes Programme. We would therefore be grateful for your assurance regarding the next round of funding and answers to the following questions on the scope and intended delivery of the SAHP from 2026 onwards.

1. Will the scope of SAHP 2026-36 funding include Gypsy and Traveller sites and/or pitches?
2. Will the applicability of Gypsy and Traveller sites and/or pitches for funding from 2026 onwards remain the same as per the section on Traveller Pitches in the [Capital Funding Guide for 2021-26](#), and if not, please outline any changes?
3. What criteria will prospective applicants need to fulfil to be eligible to apply for this funding?
4. What steps are being taken (e.g., engagement/consultation with the communities) to ensure that Gypsies' and Travellers' needs are properly considered?

While we are keen to see the inclusion of Gypsy and Traveller sites in wider funding programmes, previous ring-fenced Gypsy and Traveller site funding programmes have provided a clear route to accessing capital funding to support the delivery of sites. We would be interested to hear when the Government is planning the next such funding round.

We look forward to your response.

Yours faithfully,

Sarah Mann, *Chief Executive Officer*, **Friends, Families and Travellers**

Josie O Driscoll, *Chief Executive Officer*, **GATE Herts**

Elizabeth Billington, *Chair/Chief Executive Officer*, **Kushti Bok Dorset**

Violet Cannon, *Chief Executive Officer*, **York Travellers Trust**

Revd. Canon Dr. Nichola Chater, *Chair*, **Gypsy, Roma & Traveller Friendly Churches**

Yvonne MacNamara, *Chief Executive Officer*, **The Traveller Movement**

Ellie Rogers, *Chief Executive Officer*, **Leeds Gypsy and Traveller Exchange**