



"How do I get...

# Planning Permission?"

It can be harder for Gypsies and Travellers to get planning permission than it is for other people.

It's partly because, while most people prefer homes of bricks and mortar, many Gypsies and Travellers prefer to live in trailers, caravans, mobile homes or chalets on a site.

This Guide aims to help people from the Travelling community get planning permission for this type of home.

A quarter of all Gypsies and Travellers live on unauthorised sites. (The situation got worse when Councils no longer had to provide sites in 1994.)

The Government knows there is a problem and has given Councils new guidelines on how to improve the situation. The new guidelines, called Circular 01/06, are issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

This Guide applies to England, not Scotland. (The Welsh Assembly is revising its planning guidance.) The Guide won't tell you everything. No-one finds it easy to get planning permission. This is why many people use someone who knows about planning to get planning permission for them. But it should give you an idea about what you have to do.

I want planning permission for hard standing, caravan and a washroom on my land.



It's best to apply for Planning Permission before you set up home on your land.

It's the Planning Officer's job to help you. If the Officer thinks you will have problems, they can make suggestions.

Ask about the Council's policies for the area. Find out how the Council designates your land: is it greenbelt, open countryside or industrial?

**Tip** – Talk to the Planning Officer about your plans.

Ask about any planning history on this site. (Has it been turned down for planning permission before? Why?)

Try to keep a record of who you see, when you spoke to them and what they told you. Ask them to put it in writing.

Get the forms

Get a Planning Permission form from the Planning Office at the Council where your proposed site is. (It's not where you live, but where you want to live which is relevant.)

**Tip** – You can sometimes download Planning Application forms from the website of your local Council. Otherwise call in at their Planning Office.

For a copy of the new planning guidance Circular 01/06 go to [www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1163380](http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1163380)



Supporting Statement

It's a very good idea to provide a Supporting Statement with your completed Planning Permission form.

A Supporting Statement is a letter which says why you need planning permission for this site. It's not essential, but it's useful.

In your Supporting Statement say:

Are you a Gypsy or a Traveller? (The new Circular 01/06 recognises "gypsies and travellers" as "persons of nomadic habit". And it recognises that Gypsies and Travellers often have to stop in one place because of schooling, health or old age.) You need to show you have had "a nomadic habit of life" and that now you need to settle.

Provide details of all the families (names, ages, children and Traveller background) who will live on the site and explain how you are related or travel together.

Explain where you are living now and why you need a site. (Are you living on the roadside, doubling up on an overcrowded site, or do you want to provide for yourselves?)

Have you had problems finding somewhere to live? Has it been difficult having to move around? Have you been evicted from unauthorised sites? (Circular 01/06 recognises "the link between the lack of good quality sites . . . and poor health and education".)

Is this site ideal? Explain how it satisfies the council policy for a Gypsy site: does it have a safe access? Is it reasonably close to shops? Is it well screened by trees and hedges?

(Your site may not tick all the right boxes – don't despair. You need to prove that there are good reasons why permission should be granted anyway. For instance, you may have nowhere else to live; you may need to be in this area because of family connections; this may be the only land you could afford to buy; or you may have been waiting five years for a pitch on a council site and can't wait any longer.)

Can you improve the way the site looks now, for example, with landscaping and trees?

Are you happy to alter your Planning Application to make it more acceptable to the Planning Office?

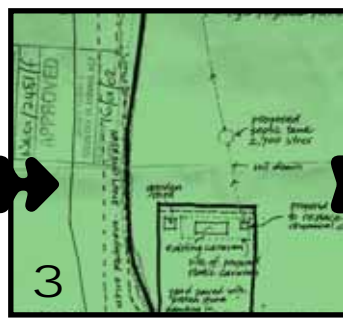
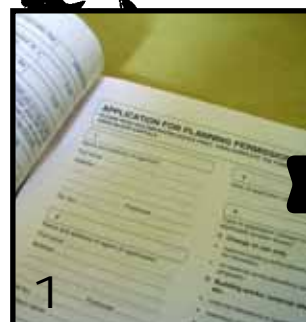
Are there any people – local councillor, site warden where you have lived, school teacher, Traveller Support Group, doctor, health visitor, neighbour – who support your application for Planning Permission? Will they write a letter of support?

Tell the Council all these things in your Supporting Statement.



How do I get Planning Permission?

The council's planning office will want 5 or 6 copies of your completed form and plans. Keep copies for yourself too. You may need them if you have to appeal against a refusal of planning permission. You will need:



The completed Planning Application form.

A site location plan (scale 1:1250 or 1:2500). Outline the application area in red. If you own any adjoining land outline that in blue. Show some of the surrounding area and the direction of north. The site location plan should be drawn from a recent Ordnance Survey map on an A4 sheet (the same size as this Guide). Copies can be bought quite cheaply from a map shop.

A block or layout plan (scale 1:500). This will be a larger version of the site location plan and will show the layout of the buildings, your trailers, septic tank, hard standing and extra landscaping.

If you plan to put up buildings, drawings of the proposed floor plans and elevations (scale 1:50, 1:100 or 1:200), and of any existing floor plans and elevations.

The completed Certificate of Ownership.

The Fees.

A Supporting Statement, or letter explaining why you need Planning Permission.

We've got permission for one trailer on our site. Now I want my daughter's family to join us with their trailer.

You may need to apply for Planning Permission.

If the original Permission restricted the number of vans you could keep on the site or limited who could occupy the site (this is what's called a Personal Condition), you may need to apply for Planning Permission. Speak to the Planning Officer at the Council to find out what information they will require and how much it will cost.

**Tip** – Check you really do need to put in a new Planning Application. You may only need a Change of Condition.