Gypsy and Traveller Sites Grant Guidance 2006–2008

(Updated July 2006)
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On 5th May 2006 the responsibilities of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) transferred to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)

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Important!

Checklist:
Your application should be returned by 30 September 2006, and consist of the following:

- Annex A – application form (Word doc)
- Annex B – cost analysis form (Excel doc, which contains a template example as well as the form to be completed)
- Annex C – risk analysis form (Excel doc)

These are downloaded from the DCLG website.

You should also include the following:

- Copies of strategy/policy documents and protocols
- Photographs of site, or proposed location of site
- Site or land condition survey (if required)
- Ordnance survey map of the site or proposed site
- Plans, elevations and sectional drawings of proposed work
- Copy of completed needs assessment, or analysis of need and demand
- Any necessary permissions and agreements, or evidence that processes are well advanced
- Evidence of consultation
- (Refurbishment only) Evidence of 25% funding being in place, or evidence that processes are well advanced

To help you with your bid

Details of the evaluation criteria are annexed to the bidding guidance (Annex D).
Gypsy and Traveller Sites Grant Guidance 2006-2008

Overview

1. The Government has set out a new policy framework for increasing the levels of authorised site provision for Gypsies and Travellers, in order significantly to reduce the current levels of unauthorised camping and avoid the problems that some unauthorised sites can cause. More information on the new policy framework can be found at www.communities.gov.uk/gypsysites.

2. The Gypsy and Traveller Sites Grant forms an important part of the Government’s overall approach by providing capital funding for the development of new provision and the improvement of existing Gypsy and Traveller sites by local authorities or Registered Social Landlords.

3. Ministers are clear that the solution to the current problems of unauthorised camping has to be a balance between effective enforcement and more authorised site provision. Providing an authorised site can significantly reduce the need for costly enforcement action. Well managed authorised sites can provide a sustainable solution for all concerned by reducing tensions between Gypsies and Travellers and the settled community and also the costs to local taxpayers.

4. The Government is keen to encourage innovative solutions for addressing the shortage of accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers. All reasonable proposals will be considered for funding, including those involving use of public funding to facilitate private provision. Further details are provided in this guidance.

The new funding system

5. Funding for local authority Gypsy and Traveller sites has previously been made available through the Gypsy Sites Refurbishment Grant and administered centrally through the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (now the Department for Communities and Local Government).

6. From 2006/07 onwards, funding for both local authorities and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), covering both new sites and refurbishment, will be available from the regional housing pot, which is managed by Regional Housing Boards or equivalents. This brings the funding system more in line with that for social housing.

7. The aim is to mainstream investment in provision for Gypsies and Travellers, encourage better targeting of funding towards areas which have the most pressing need, and also promote more strategic regional delivery of sites and better joint working with local authorities and RSLs.

8. An appropriate package of schemes within each region will be agreed by the Regional Housing Boards (RHBs) or their equivalents, working with the Government Offices to develop an appropriate regional programme in line with emerging priorities. Final funding recommendations will be made by the RHBs and submitted to Ministers for clearance.
9. For consistency, bidding guidance will continue to be drawn up centrally by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) in conjunction with the Government Offices for the Regions and the Housing Corporation. DCLG will also arrange for a detailed analysis of bids by independent consultants to assist Regional Housing Boards in assessing schemes.

10. Nationally, up to £56m is being made available over the next two years. Within this regional allocations have been agreed with Regional Housing Boards, reflecting the scale of the issue within regions and likely demand for funding. The breakdown across regions is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGION</th>
<th>Year 1 2006/07</th>
<th>Year 2 2007/08</th>
<th>Total 2006–08</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South East</td>
<td>5,000,000</td>
<td>5,000,000</td>
<td>10,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Midlands</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
<td>4,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>6,000,000</td>
<td>12,000,000</td>
<td>18,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Midlands</td>
<td>1,998,000</td>
<td>4,218,000</td>
<td>6,216,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yorkshire &amp; Humber</td>
<td>846,000</td>
<td>1,786,000</td>
<td>2,632,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East</td>
<td>187,200</td>
<td>418,000</td>
<td>605,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West</td>
<td>918,000</td>
<td>1,938,000</td>
<td>2,856,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>2,538,000</td>
<td>4,500,000</td>
<td>7,038,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>1,500,000</td>
<td>1,500,000</td>
<td>3,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB: This should not discourage bidders from submitting proposals, or expressions of interest. The funding set out above, including the regional allocations, relates to the 2006–2008 GTSG programme. RHBs will be keen to use this information to inform emerging regional priorities and demand for future funding.
Updated bidding guidance

This guidance has been updated following the completion of the initial bidding round and the announcement of the first tranche of schemes.

Key features of the revised guidance include:

- Important messages for all those wishing to bid (see below)
- A single comprehensive guidance document, including a detailed application form with notes (annex A)
- Standard costings proforma for all proposals (annex B)
- Risk assessment template (annex C)
- Initial comparative cost information for a range of works, based on bids received to date
- Information on the detailed assessment criteria for proposals (annex D)

11. A number of key issues have arisen from the assessment process to date which we wish to draw to the attention of those wishing to develop proposals for funding. These are:

A need for corporate bids – it is important that proposals demonstrate a corporate approach for the local authority or Registered Social Landlord. There should be evidence of joint working across services. For example, between housing and planning officers as well as those responsible for Gypsy and Traveller services. For County Councils the bid should show evidence of joint working at County and district levels.

A need to demonstrate value for money – Historically, Gypsy and Traveller sites have been expensive when compared to traditional bricks and mortar housing. The Government is committed to improving the value for money in relation to Gypsy and Traveller provision and will continue work to help identify key factors contributing to high costs. All proposals will be subject to a rigorous assessment in relation to value for money and bids should be able to demonstrate that all efforts have been made to keep costs to a minimum.

A need for robust maintenance – the Grant for refurbishment is not a substitute for a robust maintenance programme. All bids will be expected to provide evidence of a clear maintenance programme and also what steps are being taken to increase the proportion of planned to responsive maintenance.
Bidding arrangements

12. The initial bidding round closed on 31 January 2006 with an announcement of the initial package of successful schemes on 29 June 2006. Further bids are now invited for the remainder of 2006/07 funding, these schemes can also request funding from 2007/08 at this stage, although that element of the bid would not be assessed in this autumn’s round. We also wish to encourage bids, including outline proposals or expressions of interest, for funding in 2007/08.

13. The arrangements for the second bidding round, for the remainder of Year 1 – 2006/07 funding, are outlined below. This includes submission of expressions of interest for Year 2:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 2006</td>
<td>Bidding guidance issued and bids invited by Government Offices/Regional Housing Boards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2006 – September 2006</td>
<td>Government Offices work with local authorities and RSLs to generate an appropriate package of bids that meets emerging regional and local priorities and needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End September 2006</td>
<td>Closing date for bids to be received by RHBs (for remainder of 2006/07 funding and expressions of interest for 2007/08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2006</td>
<td>Bids analysed by independent consultants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2006</td>
<td>Consultants’ comments on each region’s bids returned to RHBs, who make decision on most appropriate package of bids to receive funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2006</td>
<td>RHB recommendations put to Ministers for clearance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2007</td>
<td>Announcement of successful schemes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End February 2007</td>
<td>Closing date for submission of bids for year 2 (2007/08)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

YEAR 2 (2007/08) PROPOSALS

14. The deadline for submission of fully worked up bids for year 2 (2007/08) is the end of February 2007. The detailed timetable for that round is not yet available but we would expect an announcement of successful schemes around June/July 2007.

15. Proposals submitted for funding in 2007/08 will not be subject to full assessment in this autumn round. Instead these would be subject to a full assessment in 2007 as part of the next bidding round. However, these are important as they would be used by Regional Housing Boards to gauge demand for future funding and inform emerging regional priorities.
Eligible schemes

16. Funding under the Gypsy and Traveller Sites Grant is available to local authorities (including County Councils) and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs). The permissible purposes of RSLs are being amended by secondary legislation to allow them to receive funding for this purpose, and these changes will be in place in time to allow take up of the funding. RSLs need to be aware that their constitutions may require amending in order to be able to take on these new functions and that under Schedule 1, Paras. 9-11 of the Housing Act 1996 this may require the consent of the Housing Corporation.

17. **Applications can be made for the development of new sites, and for refurbishment, including remodelling and extension of existing sites. Sites can be permanent residential sites, permanent but short-stay (transit) sites or alternatively temporary stopping places.**

18. For permanent sites, ownership should remain with the local authority or RSL, and the site should continue to be in use as a Gypsy and Traveller site for at least ten years. However innovative approaches to ownership, management and development with local authorities and RSLs are encouraged and will be considered. For example, proposals to lease a site to other bodies for this purpose, or contract out the management of the site will not rule out consideration of the bid. Consideration will also be given to sites of a short-term nature where there is a sound business case that can demonstrate value for money, for example where a temporary site is established whilst a more permanent solution can be identified.

Innovation

19. We are keen to encourage the development of innovative solutions for accommodation provision for Gypsies and Travellers. Examples could include:

- joint working between local authorities and/or RSLs to develop a network of sites within a given area
- the establishment of temporary sites to meet need while longer-term solutions are developed
- schemes which seek to encourage development of a market for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation where public investment is used to pump-prime private provision, so long as that initial investment is protected or recycled by the local authority or RSL.

20. Applications are also encouraged where they involve bringing previously closed sites back into use (and may be eligible for 100% grant funding depending on the work required to bring the site up to standard). **Bidders are advised to seek further advice on the eligibility and presentation of non-standard bids from the relevant Government Office at an early stage.** Contact details are set out at the end of this bidding guidance.
Eligible costs

21. The funding is a capital grant, and will not be awarded towards ongoing costs of managing and maintaining the site once it is operational. Nor can it be used for any feasibility work prior to bid submission. Grants will not be awarded to cover the cost of work carried out before the close of the bidding round or schemes previously awarded grant (eg to cover increased costs). For refurbishment schemes, this funding must not be used as a substitute for a robust on-going maintenance programme (as it is capital grant and not revenue funding). Where land acquisition costs are included in bids, bidders will be expected to demonstrate that land purchase is the best possible option. Management and professional fees can be included within the bid, up to a level of 10% of the overall bid (not including any land purchase costs).

Per cent funding available

22. For new sites, grant is paid at 100% of estimated project costs up to a fixed sum. All new provision will be eligible for 100% grant, including:

- additional pitches on existing sites
- bringing closed sites back into use (where this involves extensive refurbishment or remodelling work)
- purchase of private sites for public use (where this improves, increases or safeguards provision).

23. For refurbishment, grant is paid at 75% of estimated project costs up to a fixed sum. Bidders will be required to meet the remaining 25% of costs from their own resources, and there must be absolute certainty that this is in place before any grant money can be paid.

24. The estimated costs on which the bid is to be assessed cannot be changed once the bid is submitted, and payments will not be higher than the amount bid for.

Payments to successful schemes, and timescales for carrying out work

25. Schemes will only be successful where they meet the key evaluation criteria, including fit with emerging regional priorities and where there is a sound project plan in place. Where problems arise affecting the delivery timetable, the Regional Housing Board and Government Office should be notified. A copy of the detailed evaluation criteria is annexed to this guidance.

26. If at any stage after receipt of grant the local authority or RSL decides to abandon or significantly change the project for which grant has been awarded, the Regional Housing Board and Government Office should be informed immediately.

27. Payment to local authorities for successful schemes entirely in 2006-07, or the first phase of two-year schemes, will be made as soon as practical following the first announcement of successful schemes made on 29 June 2006. Payment to
RSLs for successful schemes will be made via the Housing Corporation in the usual way. Some schemes may be subject to conditions regarding the payment of grant, for example where planning permission is not in place at the time the grant is announced.

Monitoring arrangements

28. Each local authority or RSL receiving funding will be asked to submit periodic returns summarising progress on the scheme and outcomes in relation to the agreed objectives for the scheme. DCLG is to review the monitoring arrangements for the grant and any changes arising will be notified in due course. The Department for Communities and Local Government is to review the monitoring arrangements for the grant to ensure value for money and quality. Local authorities and RSLs may be asked to submit six monthly reports during the scheme development period and thereafter reports every six months over the first two years of operation of the site.

29. Successful authorities or RSLs may also be asked to assist with any formal evaluation of the scheme commissioned by the Department, or with other assessment or monitoring, for example, where any innovative scheme was funded as a “pilot”.

Completing your bid

30. Schemes must be submitted for assessment using the attached application form at Annex A. There is a single form covering both refurbishment of existing sites and the provision of new sites. The form contains guidance on how to fill it out and thereby strengthening your bid. It is recommended that you follow the advice provided to secure the best chance of success. The forms are on this DCLG website. If you have difficulties down-loading them, they are also available via the regional contacts listed at the end of this guidance or directly from the DCLG Gypsy and Traveller Unit.

31. A separate form must be completed for each scheme applied for. Where there is a programme of works for a single site, please indicate the relative priority of the different elements of the programme. Each site should be subject to one application but the costings for individual elements should be fully set out (using the standard form provided in annex B). A risk register (annex C) should also be completed and returned with the bid. Where works span financial years this should be clearly indicated.

32. Government Office contacts (listed at the end of this guidance) will be able to provide further assistance on developing the bid and details of models of best practice from previous bidding rounds are available.

33. Two copies of the application form plus all supporting documents must be returned to the Regional Housing Board by 5 p.m. on 30 September 2006. Electronic applications cannot be accepted. Contact details are set out at the end of this bidding guidance.
Evaluation criteria

34. **Details of the evaluation criteria are annexed to this bidding guidance (annex D).** A key criterion which will also be used to determine whether a bid receives funding will be the extent to which schemes contribute to addressing emerging regional priorities in respect of Gypsy and Traveller provision. This will be assessed by the Regional Housing Boards who will make recommendations to ministers about which bids should be funded. Where possible, bidders are therefore recommended to discuss how their scheme fits in with developing regional priorities on Gypsy and Traveller accommodation with their Government Office contact at an early stage. For general advice on the preparation of standard bids, bidders should in the first instance approach their Government Office.

35. Before Regional Housing Boards make their final recommendations, bids will be assessed centrally by independent consultants, who will evaluate them against the following key criteria:

- does the scheme meet a clearly assessed need?
- does the scheme offer value for money?
- is the site sustainable?

36. Schemes must also demonstrate that they will be able to deliver to time and budget, and that stakeholders have been consulted. Where elements such as 25% local funding or planning permission are required, evidence must be provided to show that they are either in place or that the process of obtaining them is well advanced. Confirmation that these are in place must be provided before any funding can be paid to these schemes. Other non-standard schemes may also be subject to conditions on the grant award.

37. These independent assessments will then be passed to the Regional Housing Boards to inform their final decisions about a package of schemes to recommend to ministers.
Contact details for DCLG and Government Offices

DCLG
Gypsy and Traveller Unit
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU
Contact: Roni Fraser on 020-7944-8769 or Roni.fraser@communities.gsi.gov.uk

Government Office for the East of England
Eastbrook
Shaftesbury Road
Cambridge CB2 2DF
Contact: Sheila Clarke on 01223 372853 or sheila.clarke@goeast.gsi.gov.uk

Government Office for the East Midlands
The Belgrave Centre
Stanley Place
Talbot Street
Nottingham
NG1 5GG
Contact: Mike Dowdican on 01159 714735 or Mike.dowdican@goem.gsi.gov.uk

Government Office for London
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157-161 Millbank
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Contact: Helen Marks on 020 7217 3510 or helen.marks@gol.gsi.gov.uk

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Government Office for the West Midlands
5 St Phillips Place
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Contact: Marie Weston on 0121 3525474 or marie.weston@gowm.gsi.gov.uk

Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber
6th Floor West
PO Box 213
City House
New Station Street
Leeds
LS1 4US
Contact: F. John Taylor on 0113 283 6427 or F.John.Taylor@goyh.gsi.gov.uk

Contact details for Regional Housing Boards
(or alternatives)

East of England Regional Assembly
Flempton House
Flempton
Bury St. Edmunds
Suffolk
IP28 6EG
Contact: Greg Dodds on 01284 728151
Greg.dodds@eera.gov.uk

Government Office for the East Midlands
The Belgrave Centre
Stanley Place
Talbot Street
Nottingham
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Contact: Jim Grundy on 0115 9712662 or jim.grundy@goem.gsi.gov.uk

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emma.maitland@gonw.gsi.gov.uk

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george.summers@gose.gsi.gov.uk

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Or fiona.massey@gosw.gsi.gov.uk

West Midlands Regional Housing Board Secretariat
Government Office for the West Midlands
5 St Phillips Place
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B3 2PW
Contact: Ian Smith on 0121 3525285 or
Ianr.smith@gowm.gsi.gov.uk

Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber
6th Floor West
PO Box 213
City House
New Station Street
Leeds
LS1 4US
Contact: F. John Taylor on 0113 283 6427 or
F.John.Taylor@goyh.gsi.gov.uk