**THE SHOWMEN’S GUILD OF**

**GREAT BRITAIN**

**CENTRAL OFFICE**

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**Friday 20th July 2018**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Showmen’s Yards and Winter Quarters**

The Showmen’s Guild of Great Britain works with its 4000 Members across the UK supporting them in their organising and operating funfairs nationwide throughout the year. They control 4067 fairground attractions overall, as Showmen’s Guild members. (*There are also others with fairground attractions in smaller associations and further non-aligned individual operators).*

The Showmen’s Guild also supports its members in their arrangements to gain local and regional Planning Consent for Showmen’s Yards and Winter Quarters that are laid out according to strict agreed criteria.

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 requires that fairground equipment be designed, manufactured, supplied, constructed, operated, maintained and inspected so that it is safe, so far as reasonably practicable. To this end, all rides have – as a matter of practice and agreement within the HSE guidelines – an ADIPS certificate. With rigorous annual testing and certification by specialist independent engineers according to strict procedures approved by HSE and in accordance with the latest HSE Guidance HSG 175.

Many Showmen need to use their yards in order to fulfil this function, as well as having a place to live and run their business from.

*The site at Buckles Lane, South Ockenden RM15 6RG is neither operated nor under the control of the Showmen’s Guild of Great Britain. Whilst there are a number of Showmen there, operating as described above, the majority of the occupants are not members of the Showmen’s Guild.*

The Showmen’s Guild does however run some of its own Yards and Winter Quarters in various other parts of the country that are licensed for Showmen’s use and fall within the Guild’s Rules of operation and conduct.

The Showmen’s Guild, both centrally and via its 10 regional Section offices throughout the UK is in regular dialogue with Local and Regional Planning Authorities to agree the appropriate proportion of Showmen’s Yards and Winter Quarters as living and working accommodation, strictly for use by Show People following their craft, within their Spatial Plans.

These in turn are fed into the process of considering housing development plans that are submitted as well as development plans for Showmen’s accommodation from Showpeople themselves.

**ENDS**

**For further information contact:**

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**Notes for Editors (overleaf):**

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**The Showmen’s Guild of Great Britain:**

* The Showmen’s Guild of Great Britain is the leading Trade Association for the Travelling Fairground Industry, with 2144 operating members (of the 4000 overall membership) in charge of 1277 Adult Rides; 2138 Children’s (*‘Juvenile’*) Rides & Attractions and 652 Inflatable Devices (‘*bouncy castles’* & the like).
* It operates from its Central Office in Staines upon Thames with 10 regional Section offices across the UK.
* Its members operate at funfairs throughout the year from historical Charter Fairs; to Holiday Fairs and at most public outdoor events such as Festivals; Melas; Winter Wonderlands and Carnivals.

**Background to the current Showmen’s Planning legislation:**

* As a result of the Housing act 2004, Local Authorities have to undertake Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments which includes a quantative assessment of the needs of travelling showpeople, who are distinct from other travelling communities.
* With the publishing of the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Circular 04/07: Planning for Travelling Showpeople, the Government emphasises the new planning framework to be taken into account with planning applications dealing with travelling Showpeople’s sites.
* With these changes, The Showmen’s Guild has revised its Model Standard Package that it provides for its members seeking to settle accommodation, so that it provides guidelines to them and to Local; Planning Authorities in considering the needs of travelling showpeople and this specific use of land.

**The Model Standard Package of accommodation:**

* The Model Standard Package of accommodation is used in this process, that has agreed site criteria that includes (for example)
  + screening and landscaping from the wider neighbourhood;
  + the specific layout dividing working areas from residential ones;
  + the type of accommodation allowable;
  + spacing of caravans; storage of equipment;
  + roads, gateways and footpaths;
  + fire Points;
  + electrical instalations;
  + water supply;
  + drainage;
  + refuse disposal;
  + recreation space and
  + flood defences / mitigation.
* The model includes detailed diagrams / plans to be followed and is the agreed process for settling Showpeople’s accommodation.

**Pressure on land and the Showmen’s Guild’s support for its members within the law:**

* Land in many parts of the country in and near cities; but especially in and around London; is at a premium with competing proposed uses and there’s an overall shortage of land for accommodation.
* The Showmen’s Guild with its members is working within the existing planning framework and with individual developers as well as Members developing their own plans, to identify and progress appropriate sites, alongside those which already exist.
* The Showmen’s Guild works within and encourages its members to work within the Mobile Homes Act 2013, as it did within the previous Caravan Acts. This includes an annual census of caravans being undertaken nationally by the Government.

**Leading by example and encouraging best practice:**

* In this way the Showmen’s Guild leads its members by example of Best Practice to act within the law and for positive, sustainable and appropriate developments, specifically for Showmen’s use, within the wider community; whilst campaigning through official channels for fair and reasonable availability of appropriate land for future developments.
* The Showmen’s Guild also works with its members to protect the status and existence of existing Showmen’s Yards and Winter Quarters, against the backdrop of increased pressure on sites for alternative uses in and around several cities nationwide.

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