

Jan - March 2004

Happy New Year!

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#### Special points of interest:

- Roma Nation Day
- TLRC Conference
- Young Friends, Families and Travellers' drawings and poems
- IPPR Moving Forward Report
- Viv's Spares File
- 75 MPs sign the Early Day Motion
- Travellers Aid Trust Website

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April Management Meeting: Saturday 17th April

AGM: 19th June 2004

Editor: Tammy Furey  
Community Website Manager  
Email me on: Webmaster@Gypsy-Traveller.org

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# Friends, Families and Travellers



## TLRC calls for a Moratorium on Evictions

There are now signs that the government has begun to contemplate introducing new policies to address the accommodation needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community but these policies will take time to deliver results in the meantime there is a serious shortage of Traveller sites leading to homelessness, unauthorised encampments and Traveller families faced with a desperate struggle to find a home.

The Traveller Law Reform Coalition (TLRC) believes there should be a moratorium on evictions.

### Evictions – A Moratorium: Statement by the Traveller Law Reform Coalition

#### Important Recent Events

On the 29/1/04 at the launch of the report 'Moving Forward' by the Institute for Public Policy Research Yvette Cooper MP, Under Secretary of State at the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister declared that circular 1/94 would be revised.

On the 20/1/04 Lord Rooker Minister of State at the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister suggested the government was seriously thinking of using the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill to address Traveller accommodation needs.

There have been a series of high profile evictions against Travellers living on their own land in Bulkington and Chelmsford. More are expected. Travellers who move onto land they own see this as a failure of the present policy regime and the only alternative to either joining the cycle of unauthorised camping/constant evictions, or moving into local authority housing and giving up their culture and way of life.

#### The Government should:

- Issue a moratorium on evictions to last until the government can introduce and implement new measures to increase site provision that allows site development to proceed in a structured manner, which is fair to Travellers and the settled community.
- Revise circular 1/94 to make it clear that site locations must be identified.
- Ensure, in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill, that local authorities identify land for Traveller site development, with effective incentives and sanctions.
- Accept the clauses drafted by the Commission for Racial Equality for the Housing Bill, obliging local authorities to provide/facilitate sites.

#### Evictions – A Moratorium

There have recently been a series of distressing evictions. At Chelmsford Travellers were evicted off their land, some were re-accommodated by the local authority into bed and breakfast but legal challenges which argue Travellers have an aversion to bricks and mortar may in future rule out this option for local authorities. Some of the families that were put into such accommodation are reported to have left because they said it was cold and they felt strange and uncomfortable within the accommodation. Some were directed to sites far away from their home in Epsom and Bromley. However, the facilities on the vacant pitches at Epsom were in a poor state of repair and on both sites there were resident



## TLRC calls for a Moratorium on Evictions

event none of the families went to either site. People became homeless on one of the coldest nights of the year, many of the families went out into the night to seek a stopping place.

Amongst those evicted was a female Traveller who was three months pregnant. She went into bed and breakfast accommodation with her young family but was unhappy with this accommodation allegedly because other occupants were said to be drug addicts. Nineteen children from the site in Chelmsford were attending school (fifteen were at primary school and four were at secondary school), these children are no longer attending these schools. The council in Chelmsford is said to have spent an estimated £150,000 on contracting bailiffs to enforce the eviction.

Nationally there is the likelihood of other future evictions and distressing displacements of Travellers, which will have an adverse impact on their welfare and access to services and could lead to inappropriate unauthorised encampments as displaced families seek somewhere to stay.

Once homeless many Travellers are poorly catered for by local authorities. Research by Lord Avebury has revealed that of the authorities with unauthorised encampments, 70% do not even mention Gypsies and Travellers in their homelessness strategies.

The government now recognises the failure of the present planning system for Travellers, as is evidenced by recent statements by Lord Rooker and Yvette Cooper MP, which set out the need for reform. It will take time for new reforms to bring about benefits. We believe the government must consider promoting a moratorium for evictions against sites on land owned by Travellers or where they are not on inappropriate land and are not causing nuisance or obstruction and which do not have serious health and safety objections lodged against them. Furthermore, some Travellers could face imprisonment because of stop orders/enforcement notices placed upon them for developing a site on land they own. Families are desperately seeking a place to live and are not being helped to find appropriate accommodation under the present policy regime. Given

these circumstances the threat of imprisonment is inhumane and should not be resorted to.

A moratorium will only last until the government can introduce and implement new measures to increase site provision that allows site development to proceed in a fair and structured manner. This is a fairer and more efficient alternative to local authorities evicting those residing on land they own or with nowhere to go.

### The Traveller Law Reform Coalition and Evictions

The TLRC under its terms of reference does not engage in organising resistance to evictions, this is a matter for individuals and individual groups. The TLRC focuses on securing policy change and this is achieved through lobbying/dialogue. Evictions and the misery caused to those families affected is a symptom of the lack of a fair and coherent Traveller accommodation policy. We condemn the aggressive behaviour of bailiffs at evictions, which, often raises already acute tensions. However, those seeking to help Travellers should do so in a non violent manner, violence even under provocation undermines the case and prospects of the Traveller community's fight for racial and social justice.

### Lord Avebury Launches TLRC Moratorium in the House of Lords

The call for a moratorium was first raised by Charles Smith Chair of the Gypsy Council and promoted in Parliament by Lord Avebury. In an exchange on the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill Lord Avebury stated:

“There are 3,000 fewer sites in the country than there are Gypsies and Travellers living in caravans. Therefore, there are incentives for Gypsies to buy land, station caravans on it without authority, seek planning permission and, if planning permission is refused—as it is in nine cases out of ten—to go to appeal, and if they fail on appeal to remain on the land thereafter. We have a problem and we have a period of uncertainty, between now and the new system coming into operation, when no one knows

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*Amongst those evicted was a female Traveller who was three months pregnant.*

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## TLRC calls for a Moratorium on Evictions

how it is going to work. I am anxious that Section 178 powers should not be used willfully against Gypsies in the interim period. As the noble Lord, Lord Bassam, may be aware, the Traveller Law Reform Coalition is asking for there to be a moratorium on the removal of Travellers occupying caravans on land that has not been given planning permission, especially in cases where they are not disturbing any public purpose for which the land might otherwise be used.

When the noble Lord says that the department is satisfied that Section 178 gives local authorities all the powers that they need to deal with the unauthorised use of land in this way, I am anxious that the department should enjoin local authorities not to use those powers needlessly when we are, we hope, approaching a solution to the problem of Traveller accommodation, but we have not quite got there. It would be unreasonable and, if I may say so, stupid to continue to harry Gypsies from one place to another when we hope that we are about to arrive at a permanent solution to the problem."

### Growing Momentum For Reform

- On the 14th July, 2003 the Select Committee for the Housing Bill, recommended that the government introduce a statutory duty to provide or facilitate sites for Gypsies and Travellers.
- There is cross party support for reform. An All Party Parliamentary Group for Traveller Law Reform has been established under the chairmanship of Kevin McNamara MP. The Conservative MP David Atkinson has twice introduced a private members' bill, which advocates a statutory duty to provide/facilitate Traveller sites. Over 80 MPs have signed Early Day Motion (79) supporting initiatives to increase site provision.
- The Local Government Association, The National Farmers' Union, Shelter, The Children's Society, The Commission for Racial Equality wish to see the government introduce bold measures to raise the level of site provision.

## Traveller Law Reform Coalition Conference

The Traveller Law Reform Coalition will be holding a conference at the Irish Club in Birmingham on Friday the 7th of May, 2004. This will be an important opportunity to discuss Traveller law reform and for the Gypsy and Traveller community to express its concerns and hopes.

The conference will be a full day event, as well as speeches mainly from members of the Gypsy and Traveller community, there will be lengthy sessions for debate and the event will close with a Traveller music and poetry session. A buffet will be served at lunch time.

\* 100 free tickets will be given to Gypsies and Travellers

\* educationalists, campaigners, social workers, health workers and other such workers will be charged only £40

\* senior local authority representatives, senior police officers and civil servants

will be charged £60

Applications must be emailed to:

travellerconference@yahoo.co.uk

Or you can write to/send cheques to:  
(payable to the Travellers Aid Trust)

Andrew Ryder, Policy Development Worker,  
The TLRC,  
The Old Library Building,  
Willesden Green Library Centre,  
95 High Road,  
Willesden, London,  
NW10 2ST.

Or Tel 07 985 684 921

www.TravellersLaw.org.uk

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*The Traveller Law Reform Coalition will be holding a conference at the Irish Club in Birmingham on Friday the 7th of May, 2004.*

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**NATIONAL CONFERENCE**

# **Pride** NOT PREJUDICE

**Developing Police liaison for Gypsies & Travellers**

**THURSDAY 15th APRIL 2004 / 10am - 4pm**

**Police Headquarters, Butterley Hall, Ripley,  
Derbyshire, close to Junctions 26 / 28 M1**

This conference has been jointly planned by the Police Service and the Gypsy & Traveller Community, in liaison with the Commission for Racial Equality. To include community speakers and Margaret Wood, ACPO Race & Diversity: Gypsy and Traveller Portfolio and Trevor Phillips, Chair of Commission for Racial Equality.

## **Who should attend?**

Community representatives, Police Officers, Trainers, Educators and Agencies who work with Gypsies & Travellers.

**For Further Information and rates, please contact.....**

**John Coxhead, Derbyshire Gypsy & Traveller Liaison,**

**Tel: 01773 572088,**

**[john.coxhead@derbyshire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:john.coxhead@derbyshire.pnn.police.uk)**

**Siobhan Spencer, Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group,**

**Tel: 01629 58330**

This conference is innovative and encourages networking and interaction. Delegates attending are encouraged to forward any networking details in advance to the conference organisers to allow distribution to other participants. An extended break midway through the day will allow delegates to mix and visit a number of stalls and stands from a variety of groups. Delegates are invited to submit any materials for display in the



## 75 MPs sign the Traveller Law Reform Coalition's Early Day Motion

75 MPs have signed our early day motion calling upon the government to address Traveller accommodation needs. Our target is 100+. The list of MPs who have signed is below

McNamara/Kevin  
Atkinson/David  
Harvey/Nick  
Bennett/Andrew F  
Morgan/Julie  
Baker/Norman  
Davey/Valerie  
Stinchcombe/Paul  
Clwyd/Ann  
Farrelly/Paul  
Meale/Alan  
Edwards/Huw  
Iddon/Brian  
Rapson/Syd  
Cryer/Ann  
McDonnell/John  
George/Andrew  
Jones/Lynne  
Lepper/David  
Cohen/Harry  
O'Hara/Edward  
Barnes/Harry  
Tonge/Jenny  
Hancock/Mike  
Davis/Terry  
Cranston/Ross  
Davey/Edward  
Green/Matthew  
Caton/Martin  
Colman/Tony  
Spelman/Caroline  
Hermon/Sylvia  
Williams/Betty  
Singh/Marsha  
Etherington/Bill  
Jones/Nigel  
Gibson/Ian  
Griffiths/Win  
Marris/Rob  
Naysmith/Doug  
Cook/Frank  
Buck/Karen  
Clark/Helen  
Williams/Hywel  
Wood/Mike  
Simpson/Alan

Sawford/Phil  
Austin/John  
Dobbin/Jim  
Berry/Roger  
Campbell/Menzies  
Drown/Julia  
Brake/Tom  
Follett/Barbara  
Sarwar/Mohammad  
Best/Harold  
Wishart/Pete  
Savidge/Malcolm  
Mahon/Alice  
Khabra/Piara S  
Vis/Rudi  
McCafferty/Chris  
Jackson/Glenda  
Breed/Colin  
Betts/Clive  
Connarty/Michael  
Hamilton/David  
Keetch/Paul  
Llwyd/Elfyn  
Harris/Evan  
Tyler/Paul  
Coleman/Iain  
Marsden/Paul  
Chaytor/David  
Campbell/Anne

The Traveller Law Reform Coalition is submitting a new early day motion to Parliament entitled "Traveller Accommodation" (79), tabled by Kevin McNamara MP. For more copies of this letter, please visit

[www.Travellerslaw.org.uk/letter\\_mp.htm](http://www.Travellerslaw.org.uk/letter_mp.htm)

Or, please contact:  
Andrew Ryder,  
Policy Development Worker,  
The Traveller Law Reform Coalition,  
The Old Library Building,  
Willesden Green Library Centre,  
95 High Road, Willsden, London NW10  
2ST

Tel: 07 985 684 921

email: [romanistan@yahoo.com](mailto:romanistan@yahoo.com)  
[www.TravellersLaw.org.uk](http://www.TravellersLaw.org.uk)

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*Have you written to your*

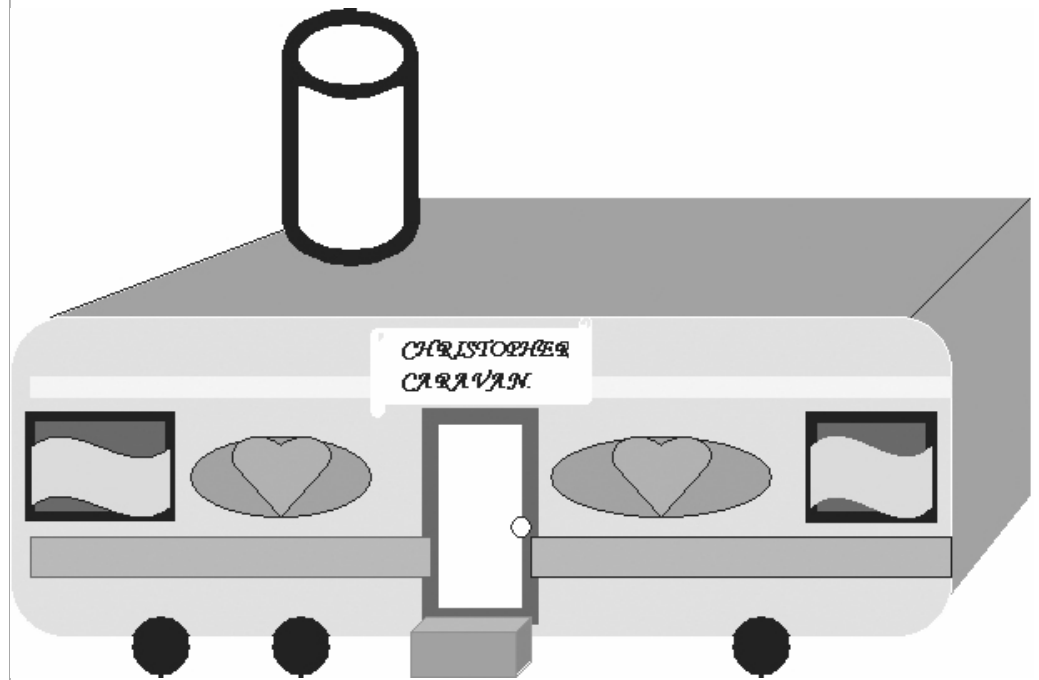
*MP yet?*

*Download the letter at:*

[www.Travellerslaw.org.uk/letter\\_mp.htm](http://www.Travellerslaw.org.uk/letter_mp.htm)

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# Young Friends, Families and Travellers



(above) Christopher's Picture. (below) Amy's horse called Kodak.. For more pictures [www.Gypsy-Traveller.org/cyberpilots/gallery](http://www.Gypsy-Traveller.org/cyberpilots/gallery)



# Young Friends, Families and Travellers

Happy is...

Being with Traveller friends  
Being with all my family  
around me  
Playing in the park  
Having fun at a party  
My heart glows



Sad is...

When my family is not together  
When I am not well  
When I am hurt  
Rowing with my friends  
My heart is black and my body feels  
heavy



By Paris

From <http://www.gypsy-traveller.org/cyberpilots/Projects/paris.htm>

Want your pictures to be on the website or the newsletter?  
Send them into the FFT office,  
or email [webmaster@Gypsy-Traveller.org](mailto:webmaster@Gypsy-Traveller.org)



## Travellers' Aid Trust (TAT) Website Launch

At the beginning of February, the new Travellers Aid Trust (TAT) Website was launched at [www.TravellersAidTrust.org](http://www.TravellersAidTrust.org).

The website explains the background of the Trust, details of the Grant Programme and a downloadable grant application form.

The grant programme is aimed at all members of the Traveller community, traditional or new, settled or living on the road throughout the UK. It is specifically intended to benefit individual Travellers,

but applications from small groups of Travellers will also be considered. For more information please contact:

Susan Alexander  
The Travellers' Aid Trust  
P.O. Box 16  
Llangyndeyrn, Kidwelly, SA17 5YT  
01269 870 621  
[info@travellersaidtrust.org](mailto:info@travellersaidtrust.org)

The next round of funding ends on the 4th of June. Visit [www.TravellersAidTrust.org](http://www.TravellersAidTrust.org) to find out more about.



**The Travellers Aid Trust**

**Travellers Law Reform Coalition**

**Grants Programme**

**Directory of Related Links**

Registered Charity No. 299 463

## The Travellers Aid Trust

### Background

On the 21<sup>st</sup> of January 1988, a group of Travellers, civil liberty campaigners and solicitors came together and formally set up The Travellers Aid Trust as a registered charity. The two main objectives of the charity are:

- The relief of poverty, hardship, sickness and distress among such persons as adopt, whether temporarily or permanently and regardless of race, culture, nationality or ethnic origins, a nomadic style or habit of life (herein after referred to as 'Travellers').
- The advancement of education among the children of Travellers by attendance at school or otherwise.

The origins of The Travellers Aid Trust date back to the mid-80's, when most of the original trustees worked as volunteers with Festival Welfare Services. This involved welfare work with new Travellers at free festivals and the running of an advice line. Much of this work centered on liaising with solicitors and police around access to Stone Henge. The need for these services was made more acute following the behavior of riot police during the now infamous 'Battle of the Beanfield' in June 1985, in which many Travellers were assaulted, their homes destroyed and children taken into care.

Much of the early work carried out by Festival Welfare Services was done with the support of such organisations and groups as the Salisbury Labour Party, the Quakers, the Salisbury

Visit

[www.TravellersAidTrust.org](http://www.TravellersAidTrust.org)

## Roma Nation Day

A rally is being planned outside Parliament on Roma Nation Day, 8 April, in support of the call for a moratorium on evictions made by the Traveller Law Reform Coalition.

Those taking part will meet at the Embankment near Lambeth Palace at 12 noon, it was agreed at the last Gypsy Council meeting.

Flowers will be cast into the Thames on the way over Lambeth Bridge in memory of those who have died in recent racial attacks, including 15-year-old Johnny Delaney.

For more information please call 01206 523528 (mornings)



# IPPR launches “Moving Forward: The Provision of accommodation for Travellers and Gypsies

Housing and planning policies, which ensure authorised sites are provided for the UK's 300,000 Travellers and Gypsies are needed to reduce tensions created by unauthorised encampments, according to the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR).

In research published on the 29<sup>th</sup> January 2004, IPPR says the health and education of the Travelling community remain among the worst in the country and that unauthorised encampments are causing tensions with local communities. However, the report warns that many local authorities are reluctant to provide 'more than their fair share' for fear of attracting Travellers and Gypsies from other areas of the country.

Government figures show there has been an overall loss of 596 authorised pitches over the last seven years: an average of 76 pitches lost a year. Over 150 district councils and London boroughs have unauthorised encampments but no authorised sites of any kind. The number of pitches needed on permanent residential sites is estimated to be no more than 5,000 and is minimal compared with the housing needs of the settled community.

The report, produced in consultation with local authorities, central government departments, the CRE (Commission for Racial Equality), voluntary sector and Travellers and Gypsies themselves, recommends that:

- Permanent residential and transit sites should be classed as housing. Regional development agencies should co-ordinate and lead local authorities in establishing networks of sites across each region
- Local authorities should be required to make provision for sites within their Local Development

Frameworks or risk losing funding for social housing from Regional Housing Boards.

- A specialised national or regional, registered social landlord should be established to help local authorities, private and voluntary bodies to provide appropriate sites.
- This agenda should be driven forward by a high-level unit within the ODPM (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister), led by a senior civil servant, charged with delivery of the necessary number of sites within Local Development Frameworks by 2006/7. A Traveller Task Force, with a significant proportion of Traveller and Gypsy representatives and other stakeholders, should advise the unit.
- Local authorities should include Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers in the Equalities Standard. Local authority Homelessness Strategies should be reviewed to ensure full compliance with the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000).

Trevor Phillips, Chair of the Commission for Racial Equality, said:

"Gypsies and Travellers face inequality and disadvantage in almost every walk of life, but nowhere more clearly than in accommodation. Gypsies and Travellers' accommodation needs should be explicitly addressed in new legislation that is currently being introduced that aims to provide decent homes for all by 2010. Where possible Gypsy and Traveller accommodation should be given the same legal status as 'bricks and mortar housing' and assessed and delivered in the same way."

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‘Moving Forward, The Provision of Accommodation for Travellers and Gypsies’ is available from Central Books on 0845 4589910  
fax: 0845 4589912  
[www.centralbooks.com](http://www.centralbooks.com)

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# Devon Traveller Solidarity Network

## Travellers Oppose Proposal for new Transient Sites in Devon

Devon Travellers are opposing plans by Devon County Council who are proposing two new transient sites in Devon. One on Telegraph Hill near Exeter, and one on the A381 near Totnes. In a new campaign driven by local travellers, concerns are being raised about the unsuitability of plans. These are outlined below along with some alternative proposals.

- The proposed Totnes site is very small, dangerous and noisy. It would be squeezed between a verge and gravel store, a few meters from a very busy main road. When previously occupied by travellers, a resident was killed walking to it from town. There are worries about exhaust fume levels, there is no pedestrian access, or safe place for a bus to stop.
- The Exeter site is currently an established permanent residence where some have settled for years, and would prefer it to continue as a permanent site.
- There has been virtually no consultation with travellers whom it will affect.
- The sites will be managed by a private company who have made heavy handed statements in the press about how they will keep the sites in order, and will charge an unspecified fee and tax for the privilege of getting a place on such a site.
- Many travellers are worried about the negative impact these sites will have on the existing traveller community in Devon (i.e. greater police powers to evict existing sites).
- Some have stated they would not choose to pay to live on such a site with services that they already provide for themselves, i.e.. electricity, washing facilities, toilets.
- The temporary nature of such sites make them utterly unsuitable for most Devon based travellers. Residents could only stop for a maximum of 3 months after which could be forcibly evicted, and possibly moved out of the county. These sites do nothing for local people permanently living in vehicles and caravans who can not afford the extortionate property prices in the area but will not be forced to leave their communities and locality.
- The existing site at Telegraph Hill will be reduced from 50 family units to just 15. There are a severe lack of plots allocated in the plans, i.e. 23 for the whole of Devon, whilst there are hundreds of travellers based in Devon.
- Health and education concerns, that seem to be the justification for the implementation of such sites, are starting to be tackled by the travelling communities themselves. Telegraph Hill being a receiver of grants for various educational projects. Other travellers in the area have just received a grant to set up a travellers first aid kit with herbal remedies, and health library. More help to aid these sorts of projects would offer a real solution to these issues, not the establishment of corporate temporary sites that offer no support, or sense of security, or future.
- Councillor Knight from DCC has admitted enforcement action on its own is a waste of time and money, and that travellers have been a part of Devon's culture for centuries. We say it is time to thrash out the issues and come up with a long term solution that truly benefits both Devon's travelling communities, and the wider community.

### **We are asking the Council to:**

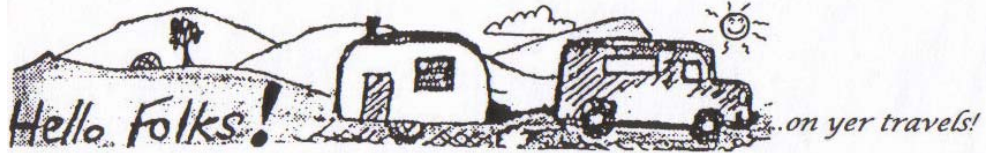
- Withdraw the bid and redraw the plans after consulting with Travellers for input of ideas, views, and practicalities on the realities of life in a Caravan, Vehicle, or Bender on a site, and how these communities could really benefit from such a proposal.
- Implement and ratify a constitution of travellers rights for the county.

## Devon Traveller Solidarity Network

- Change the current policy on unofficial sites to regarding each site by its merits, and cease to block off existing traditional stopping places. The current policy just adds to the problem the council state they are trying to solve.
- Re open traditional stopping places
- Support a conflict resolution process, to relieve tensions between travellers and local communities.
- Recognise that unauthorised sites are not illegal as stated in many of the documents published on this issue.
- Recognise that Vehicle and Caravan dwelling is a much needed solution to the local housing crisis, not the "problem". Under the Agenda 21 international agreement signed by the British Government, and to be ratified by local councils, such sustainable initiatives should be welcomed and encouraged, by favouring planning approval for private sites as a low impact solution to housing.



# Viv's Spares File



Hello Folks!

243757 or 01384 213355

I must wish everyone Happy New Year as I missed the last issue – apart from the A-Z of Scrap yards. I was moving base – so do note the new address at the end of this article. And here's hoping your joys will be many and your troubles few for 2004! Hope you like the 32<sup>nd</sup> edition of the file.

Wide range of bus and truck parts service including Mercedes and transit. Mendip bus and Truck Service Limited, (doing work on the larger vehicle) – Crowne Trading Estate, Shepton Mallet, Somerset, BA4 5QU. 01749 343963. Fax 01749 346 234.

Mercedes – new and used parts for cars and commercials. Spares wanted. Nationwide collection. Next day delivery service. Cars and commercial in stock with warranty. Open seven days a week. 01457 871717

Nelsons Brakes, Camelford, 01840 213711. Supply to order – brakes, seals, hoses, clutch seals – for any vehicle. Copies made to order from original components. Off shelf pre 1980's and later. Bedford, Commas, Etc (thanks Neil).

Mercedes – we stock a large range of high quality used bus, coach, van and truck spares to suit; - 207D, 307D, 208D, 408D, 410D, 507D, 508D, 608D, 609D, 709D, 711D, 811D 814D, Sprinter, Vario 814D, 810D, 812D, 814D, ATEGO 815, 817 and other models also available. We are one of the largest used Merc-Benz dealers in UK. In stock, engines, axles, gearboxes, springs, wheels, cabs, doors, panels, injector pumps, blocks, cranks, heads, prop-shafts, etc.. All parts guaranteed. Erith Commercials: 01322 290921. Fax 01322 290049. World wide exporters.

\* \* \* \*

Please note change of address (see left)  
Contributions always welcome

My two 'vintage' motorhomes are still up for ale. See Issue 6, Oct.-Dec. 2003 for more details, or phone 01239 851719, leave a clear message and I will get back to you (1977 Serpa Motorhome @ £1000 ono and 1979 Bedford CF Glendale @ £1500 ono or both vehicles at the bargain price of £2000 ono!!!)

Also wanted this year, 10 years old diesel motorhome/travelling vehicle/kitted out mini bus. Must have sound history, preferably service record. Low mileage. Ford Transit or similar. Woodburner, or potential space is a necessity. Phone as above. Cash waiting (partly dependent on sale of above vehicles)

The UK's No.1 for Mercedes-Benz engines – Crewe Engines: 01270 526333

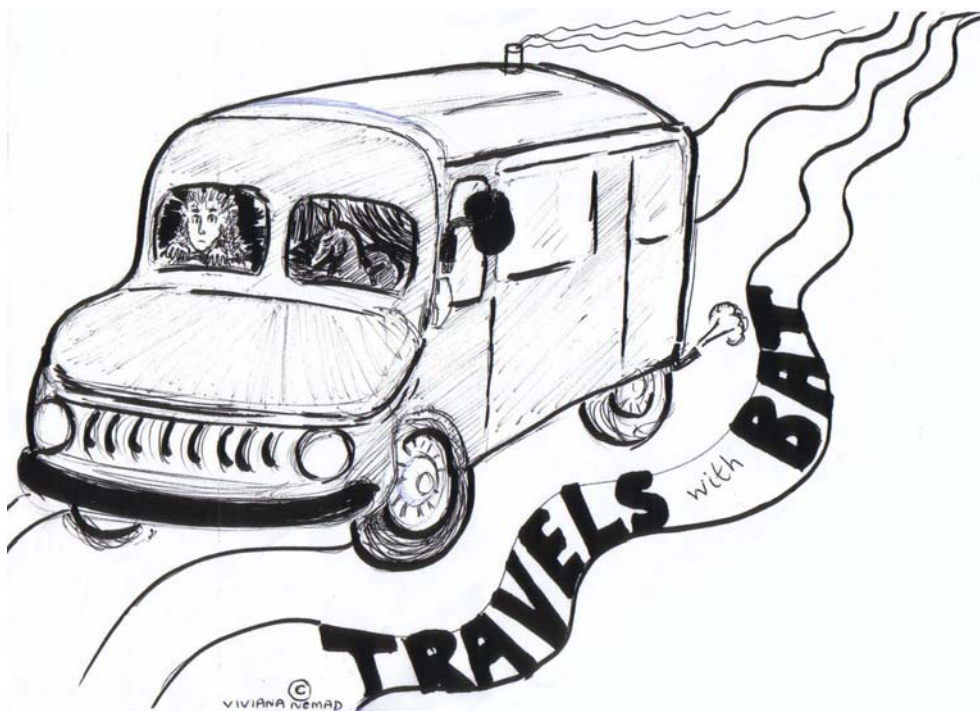
NLC spares. Mercedes, transit, LDV. Large selection of panels, lights, engines, boxes, axles, steering racks, etc... Off the shelf. Top prices paid, damaged vans, MOT fails. Fitting service available. 01384

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*Readers please note:-*

*The new contacts address  
for Viv's File is  
c/o Sunnybank,  
Rhydlewis,  
Llandysul,  
Credigion,  
S.Wales, SA44 5SL.*

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\* \* \* \* \*

“Hello to one and all! My name is Bat and this is my tail. I nose a lot, as you will find out. I have adventures – this way, that way, every which way! She duzzent alus find owt ‘bout wot she goes on; oh no! ‘cos I can go where she cant go! Creepy-crawly into bushes, rabbit holes an’ foxes lairs, tiny caves an’ nests in trees. So we travels about, me an’ her, in the ole green van wot is out home. But sumtimes she goes this-a-way, and I go that-away. Then we meets up again, an’ sumtimes she’s as happy as larry, an’ sumtimes she has one o’ them human wobblers witch means I’ve been away too long an’ “upset her schedule” (wotever that is). Anyhow, it all works owt in the end o’ the day.....an’ off we goes again, on our travels.....



\* \* \* \* \*

April 1997 Glastonbury, Somerset

It has been a long, hard cruel winter – one of the worst I have had for years. Off the road from late November until March, I suffered a bereavement, ill-health, and two attacks upon my home – one by a hit-and-run driver, the other by a brick-wielding red-neck. Through the kindness

of some friends, I found refuge in the driveways of their house, gradually begun to recover, and patched-up the old Bedford van. And.... nothing lasts forever! Spring is here! In the distance, summer beckons with a tantalising finger. I am getting ready for the road. And finally, we are on our way.....

\* \* \* \* \*



Leaving Glastoburger behind, I visit several old friends in Bristol – then begin my journey the following night. The Hale-Bop comet is blazing its long golden tail across a black velvet sky studded with diamond stars. I head for the Malvern Hills, and beyond....

\* \* \* \* \*



## Travels with Bat

1<sup>st</sup> May, Beltane, Goodship Farm, Herefordshire, Rainbow Circle Magic Hat camp.

Hot still days ..... Bat the dog and I walk through countryside of hill and vale after vale and hill pastel greens, threaded by streams, graced by patches of woodland. Tall, broadleaved oaks where sheep and lambs graze. Mild, clear nights, the big fire pit glows deep red on Beltane eve. Our songs and music spark up the flames then drift across the fields and play with the fairies in the woods. Later in the week the nights turn bitterly cold. At the Taurus Full Moon we are pelted with hail and the dogs fight. Winds bluster, hulking grey clouds loom, and sail on for days.....

There is much talk about the International Rainbow gathering in Scotland. Four sites being investigated. Convoys to leave afterwards for Ireland and Greece.

May 1<sup>st</sup> is also election day in Britain. According to the 260 day sacred cycle of the Mayan Calendar - classic system- (which I presently find very interesting), today is a "spectral blue hand day" day. John Major's farewell wave? The reading is "I dissolve in order to know, releasing healing. I seal the store of accomplishment with the spectral tone of liberation. I am guided by the power of accomplishments, doubled".



Double accomplishment badly needed Mr Blair. The Mayans recognised cycles based on vibrations pulsating out from the galactic heart and upon fully formed through characteristics emanating from the galactic mind – which permeate all existence.

"I have four ghostly, muddy paws....an' I

use them to track down Fred fox an his family wot live cunningly an' artfully in the nearby woods. I keep owta the way when the site dog have their scrap on the full moon. Instead, I sit on a dead tree, howl and bay at the big white moon in the frosty sky. Fred an' his family – Freya, Frodo, Fraggles, Fostbite an' Frantic howl and bay beside me – noses skyward – an' we make a weird wailing all night long. For days after there iz talk roundt' Rainbow leggetty circle camp of banshees, wolves and ghoulies in the woods.....

\* \* \* \*

7<sup>th</sup> May

I Leave Goodship Farm to return to Somerset, via the Cotswolds and Avebury, Wiltshire. Aidie and Ian have a lift t the M5 to hitch North, I may see them in June at the Scottish gathering. My route takes me near Stow-on-Wold where the horse fair is happening today – the first Thursday in May – but something is telling me to keep moving. Something is calling me across those hills.....

\* \* \* \*

I always write out my route and wedge it on the dashboard. I plan routes in advance. I avoid motorways and travel by day – if I have time – along he country's ancient trackways; to admire the scenery and visit the ancestral sites. Stone circles, hill forts, barrows and dolmens..... waterfalls, lakes and rivers.....holy wells.....beautiful forests....castles, hamlets and villages.....I could go on and on



• \* \* \*  
•

She does go on and on.....and on. I jus' go! To groblents an' gimlets, hambones an' giblets, grubholes an' hillocks. I wedges my nose t'ground, snuffles quite a lot, digs frantically for hours, an' craps in't bushes. I never plan me route, my nose knows the way. I don't rush....."

## Travels with Bat



\* \* \* \*

When I need to hurry, I use the dreaded motorways – by night. Less traffic – less pollution. My route takes me close to Barbury castle in Wiltshire. This big brooding Hillfort is an excellent vantage pint for views for many miles. On top is a huge carpark, locked at night, a warden’s house, a café and toilets. The Ridgeway passes above and below. This is a powerful energy course and one of Britain’s most ancient trackways. It stretched from outside London to Knapp Hill, Wiltshire, near the village of Alton Barnes, where I will be spending some time later this summer.....

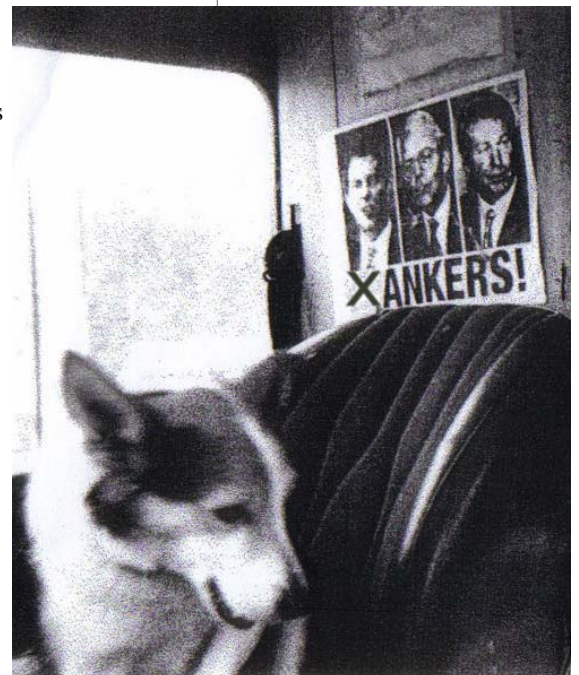
Bat and I go for a walk around Barbury Castle. As we enter the high walled double ramparts, we hear a voice on the wind.....

“The Ancient Tribes are invoking the crop circles....!”  
 “Oh Yeah? Which ancient tribes?”  
 “Those which passed on to higher planes of existence. The circles are messages, passed down to your material plane”.  
 Well you could have blown me down with a blowtorch! “How do you do it?”  
 But no more comes and we walk on, as the sun heads for sunset, and the glowering black clouds gather in the North-East. Being sensitive, I have learnt to listen to

these ‘voices in the wind’ and I have had lots of interesting experiences! A few days later a friend in Glastonbury will tell me that many Native American Tribal folk understand what these crop circle programs mean: that five ancient languages are manifesting into beautiful symbols and patterns all over the world! And not only in crop, but in grass, frozen ponds, and even snow! We walk on around the ramparts – fresh wind, lowering sky, bursts of deep yellow sunshine and more dark clouds skulking into view from the North-East. High up, we are, with fields spread far below – and chains of hills stretching into the distance. The fields are green – except for one of bright yellow rape. In the middle of it is....a crop circle!!!!

More of Bats amazing adventure with “Her” later this year.

© Viviana Nomad



## Office of the Deputy Prime Minister’s Seminars

The policy review into Gypsy Traveller issues started in September and since January the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister have been holding seminars to collect opinions, it is expected that recommendations to the Government will be made in April. From the start the Traveller Law Reform Coalition has been

asking for a Task Force to be set up, with a major input from the Gypsy/Traveller community. There is a huge backlog of work to be done and many areas in which the Government needs to extend its awareness, expert opinion is needed and is to be found amongst the Traveller community itself.



Noticeboard: For Sale, News, Events and more.

## Noticeboard

\*\*\*\*\*

36 year old gay male Traveller, eco warrior, good sense of humour, very poor but working on it! Seeks a similar guy, any age. Tel / text: 0788 770818

\*\*\*\*\*

### **\*Maternity Alliance Gypsy & Traveller project\***

Get in touch with the maternity alliance Helen Burchett on 020 7490 7639 ext 132 or email [hburchett@maternityalliance.org.uk](mailto:hburchett@maternityalliance.org.uk)

\*\*\*\*\*

**TravellerSpace** are an independent project that supports Gypsies and Travellers in Cornwall. We offer on site creative play and art sessions, basic IT training, a lending library of books for children and adults and support in accessing health, education and welfare services.

TravellerSpace was set up in June 2002 by Caroline Dann and Ruth Holden, both former workers with the Children's Society, initially in partnership with the Travellers' School Charity. We are now in the process of applying for charitable status and are also in the middle of a bid to the Community Fund for 3 years core funding. Previous funders include Communities Against Drugs, Health Action Zone, Local Network Fund, Community Learning Fund and the Children's Fund. However, the bulk of our activities have been voluntary.

For the past 18 months we've been working on New Traveller sites doing play and art sessions, IT training and running a lending library. We've also run art and literacy sessions with young Gypsy and Irish Travellers as part of Cornwall Traveller Education's UNITE project and as part of a Gypsy and Irish Travellers' women's group.

Contact us on: TravellerSpace c/o Henjy, Near Hayle, Kernow TR27 6LZ. 01736 711 378/741 151  
[travellerspace@linuxmail.org](mailto:travellerspace@linuxmail.org)

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### **Stow Fair**

The dates for the Stow Fair this year, subject to approval by the Police and local authorities, are as follows:

13th May

21st October

See you there!

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Visit our virtual noticeboard at:  
[www.Gypsy-Traveller.org/ffti/noticeboard.htm](http://www.Gypsy-Traveller.org/ffti/noticeboard.htm)

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## Contacts

### Local FFT Contacts

#### **Brighton:**

Judy Pointing - 01273 698531

#### **Cornwall:**

Sue Burton - 01736 752036

#### **Worcester:**

Sheila Wells, Worcester - 01905 821 302

#### **Lincolnshire:**

Rob Torkington - 07971 542 108

#### **Somerset:**

Tony Thomson - 07779 310 577

#### **Surrey:**

Franqui Wolf, Dorking - 01306 883254

### Other Gypsy and Traveller Organisations

#### **The Traveller Law Reform Coalition,**

Andrew Ryder, Policy Development Worker, The Old Library Building, Willesden Green Library Centre, 95 High Road, Willesden, London NW10 2ST  
Tel 07 985 684 921  
email: romani-stan@yahoo.com  
www.travellerslaw.org.uk

#### **Travellers Aid Trust**

Small Grants to Travellers PO Box 16 Llangyndeyrn Kidwelly SA17 5YT  
email: travellersaid-trust@yahoo.co.uk  
www.travellersaidtrust.org

#### **Travellers Consultancy Service**

Freelance consultancy services in all areas affecting the Gypsy & Traveller Community in the UK  
www.travellerscs.co.uk  
info@travellerscs.co.uk

#### **The Travellers' School Charity**

PO Box 2, Goodwicke, Pembrokeshire, SA64 0ZQ 01437 532 432  
www.travellersschool.plus.com

#### **Educational Advice for Travellers**

Fiona Earle, P.O. Box 36, Grantham, Lincs., NG31 6EW

#### **The Gypsy Council GCWCR**

Charlie Smith / Anne Bagehot - 01708 868986

#### **The Association of Gypsy Women**

Sylvia Dunn - 01268 782792

#### **New Futures Association (NFA)**

c/o 42 Wade Court, Lings, Northampton, NN3 8ND,  
Tel: 07880 753 713  
Email: cal-nfa@hotmail.com or  
mail@newfutures.fsnet.co.uk

#### **BIAS Irish Travellers Project**

The Old Library Building, Willesden Green Library Centre, 95 High Road, Willesden, London NW10 2ST - 0208 459 7638

#### **Irish Travellers Movement in Britain**

The Old Library Building, Willesden Green Library Centre, 95 High Road,

Willesden, London, NW10 2ST - Tel: 020 8830 3079

#### **York Traveller Project**

01904 630526

#### **London Gypsy Traveller Unit**

020 8533 2002

#### **Scottish Gypsy Traveller Association**

- 0131 650 6314

#### **Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group (DGLG)**

Ernest Bailey Community Centre, Office 3, New Street, Matlock, DE4 3FE.  
Tel/Fax 01629 583300

#### **Irish Travellers Movement**

4/5 Eustace Street, Dublin 2, Ireland - 00353 1 679 6577

#### **Advisory Council for the Education of Romany & Other Travellers (ACERT)**

- 01279 418 666

#### **Labour Campaign for Travellers Rights**

0113 248 6746

#### **Europe Roma**

0208 802 7496 - 07812 694 347

#### **Pavee Point**

North Great Charles St, Dublin 1  
00 353 1 878 0255

#### **Robert Barton Trust**

3 Silver Street Glastonbury Somerset, BA6 6BS  
Tel: 01458-833797



### **FFT Contacts**

Contacts can also be found at:  
[www.Gypsy-Traveller.org/contacts.htm](http://www.Gypsy-Traveller.org/contacts.htm)

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*FFT contacts, other Gypsy and Traveller*

*organisations, legal assistance, planning advice and more.....*

*For more contacts, please visit*

*www.Gypsy-*

*Traveller.org/contacts.htm*

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## Contacts continued.....

**The Children's Society**  
Rachel Grant & Debbie  
Harvey - 92b High Street,  
Mid-Somer Norton, Somers-  
set - 01761 411771

**TravellerSpace**  
c/o Henjy, Canonstown,  
Hayle, Kernow. TR27 6LZ.  
01736 711 378  
traveller-  
space@linuxmail.org

**Helen Jones**  
Leeds Gypsy and Traveller  
Exchange  
7 Shafton Lane  
Holbeck  
Leeds LS11 9LY  
01132346556  
07974574889

**Cardiff Gypsy Sites  
Group,**  
114 Clifton Street,  
Roath,  
Cardiff, CF24 1LW

**Save the Children  
(Scotland)**  
Michelle Lloyd - 0131 527  
8200

**PressWise -**  
Mike Jempson  
0117 941 5866

**Groundswell**  
- 0207 737 5500

**National Association of  
Boat Owners**  
01749 677195

**Commission for Racial  
Equality (CRE)**  
020 7828 7022

**Justice?/Schnews**  
- 01273 685913

**Planning Aid - 01963**  
230045

**Education Otherwise -**  
0870 730 0074

**Land Registry Office -**  
01705 768 820

**The National Small  
Woods Association,**  
3 Perkins Beach Dingle,  
Stiperstones, Shropshire,  
SY5 0PF, - 01743  
792644

**Legal Advice and  
Representation**

**Traveller Advice Team  
(TAT) (Community  
Law Partnership)**  
24hr. mobile: 07768  
316755; Advice Line for  
Travellers: 0845 120  
2980; and Landline:  
0121 685 8595

**Public Law Project -**  
020 7467 9800

**Squatters Advisory Ser-  
vice**  
020 7359 8814

**Legal Aid Head Office**  
020 7813 1000

**Chapter 7**  
The Potato Store,  
Flaxdrayton Farm, S.  
Petherton, Somerset. Tel:  
01460 249204.  
Email: chap-  
ter7@tlio.demon.co.uk

### **FFT publications list**

Available from the FFT  
office. Please make  
cheques payable to FFT!

**Confined, Condemned &  
Constrained:** Civil Rights  
& Travellers  
£5 + 50p p&p

**Alternative Planning Pol-  
icy** £1.00

**Agenda 21** : Breakdown of  
the major policy regarding  
Travellers 75 p

**Wealdon / Crowborough:**  
Judicial review report  
£1.20

**Student Information  
Pack:** Info. on law, legal  
status, health, etc £3.00

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*FFT contacts, other Gypsy  
and Traveller  
organisations, legal  
assistance, planning  
advice and more.....  
For more contacts,  
please visit  
[www.Gypsy-  
Traveller.org/contacts.htm](http://www.Gypsy-<br/>Traveller.org/contacts.htm)*

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**Friends, Families & Travellers** was established in response to the passage through Parliament of the 1994 Criminal Justice & Public Order Act.

It has since grown into a nationally recognised voluntary organisation which serves the whole spectrum of the Traveller community, both traditional and new, settled or on the road.

The majority of work promoted by FFT is carried out by an Advice and Information Unit based in Brighton and covers evictions, harassment, planning, employment, benefits, education, health, civil rights, discrimination and legal representation. The Unit is also active in research, monitoring, mediation and policy development at local and national levels.

In 1999, FFT was one of five organisations short listed for the Human Rights Award, part of the United Nations International Day of Human Rights.

FFT became a company (non-profit voluntary organisation) limited by guarantee on the 14th of July 1998, no. 3597515. The company is run by a management committee made up of directors elected by the membership. Management committee meetings are held every six weeks and are open to all members.

**FFT**  
**Community Base**  
**113 Queens Road**  
**Brighton BN1 3XG**

**Tel: 01273 234 777**  
**Fax: 01273 234 778**

**fft@communitybase.org**  
**www.Gypsy-Traveller.org**

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*The Telephone Helpline  
for Travellers: Evictions,  
Site problems and other  
issues on  
0845 120 2980*

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## Telephone Helpline for Travellers

# 0845 120 2980

This advice line is open between

10.00am—1.00pm and 2.00pm—5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

Travellers can speak directly to experienced advisers on questions of eviction, planning matters, issues involving official caravan sites and other matters.

It is run by the Travellers Advice Team at the Community Law Partnership.

**If you believe that all members of society should have the right to travel and to stop  
without constant fear of persecution because of their lifestyle:  
JOIN FRIENDS, FAMILIES AND TRAVELLERS NOW!**

**\*\*\*\*\***

I would like to join Friends, Families and Travellers. I understand that this will enable me to vote at the Annual General Meeting,  
attend Management Committee Meetings and receive copies of the newsletter.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ POSTCODE: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ I enclose my subscription:

Waged-£8.00  Unwaged-£3.00  Family Waged-£12.00  Family Unwaged-£5.00  Organisation-£20.00  / or Donation

I do not wish to join FFT, but please accept a donation towards the work you carry out

Please state if you wish to remain anonymous.

I do not wish to join FFT, but would like to receive newsletters (subscription costs as above)

*Please make cheques payable to FFT and return to: FFT, Community Base, 113 Queens Rd., Brighton BN1 3XG.*