



Friends, Families and Travellers

Nov 2010-
Jan 2011

Challenging times

On 2nd October we had our Annual General Meeting and were pleased to welcome a small but supportive group of participants, in particular Baroness Janet Whitaker who has proved to be such a strong and effective voice in House of Lords debates about issues affecting Gypsies and Travellers.

But whilst the occasion was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the achievements of the past year and the additional funding that has enabled our organisation to grow to a total of 19 staff, we could not avoid touching upon the serious challenges that lie ahead of us. Many of our funding streams are short term and due to expire by the end of 2010/11 and we will be seeking continuation funding for staff posts against a bleak backdrop of massive cuts to the public purse and the inevitable knock-on effect for Voluntary and Community Sector organisations.

Our expectation is that hundreds, if not thousands, of voluntary sector groups will simply disappear for lack of funding support and that competition in the charity sector for those resources that are available will become even more acute.

We believe that if Government is to achieve its vision for the Big Society, a society where all members of the community can play a role in the decisions that affect their lives, it is vital that those organisations currently engaged in building the capacity of individuals, families and communities to play a fuller part in society should be supported to continue that work. In no area does this resonate more than in the work that we are doing, funded by the Government's Tackling Racial Inequalities programme, to get the Gypsy and Traveller communities more engaged – through electoral registration, through encouraging volunteering and by building the social capital of small grass roots groups and communities.

Unfortunately the Tackling Racial Inequalities programme is set to end by March and, as yet, we do not know what is to replace it. As Chris Whitwell, FFT Director says in the FFT Annual Report (now available on the website at www.gypsy-traveller.org)

working with Gypsies and Travellers is a marathon not a sprint and short term funding programmes carry the real danger of raising the expectations of the community but then being unable to continue the work when the programme ends.

We believe it vital that the inequalities experienced by Gypsies and Travellers should not be seen as an isolated topic but part of the mainstream issue of achieving Race Equality which remains a key objective of central Government. With this in mind we have joined with a number of other organisations working on behalf of Black and Minority Ethnic communities in a new Coalition, giving a coordinated voice for future discussions with Government about their priorities for taking forward the Race Equality Agenda.

As well as October being the month of our Annual General Meeting and for the public spending review

continued on page 4

Stop Press: Coalition re-instates Gypsy Sites Grants - £60 million over 4 years



FFT Team Updates

Jazka and Lisa report on a busy few months working in health and wellbeing across Sussex.

In September we launched the **GP Research Report 'Fair Access for all? Gypsies and Travellers in Sussex, GP Surgeries and barriers to primary healthcare.'**



The report was developed in response to work carried out by the Sussex Outreach Team and the incidence of four complaints being made by Gypsies and Travellers against GP Surgeries in Sussex between November 2009 and July 2010.

The complaints involved clients being refused registration at their local GP Surgery because of living on a Local Authority site, for having no proof of address and for having a common Irish Traveller name. All of which are unlawful reasons to refuse access to the NHS on 'unreasonable grounds' according to the NHS Constitution 2010.

The report has been presented and sent to a number of NHS strategic health teams including NHS Commissioners, Equality and Diversity Teams, Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) and the East

Sussex Patient Advisory Liaison Service.

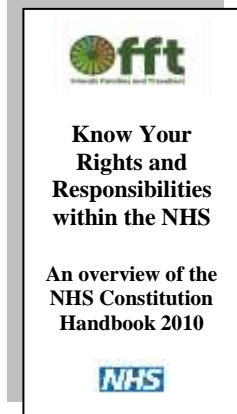
The report has made a huge impact on NHS Strategic Teams understanding of the enduring prejudice Gypsies and Travellers continue to face within the NHS and in particular GP Surgeries.

The report gives a number of recommendations for GP Consortiums to follow including taking up cultural awareness training with FFT or a similar specialist Gypsy and Traveller organisation, and ensuring that all GP Surgeries adhere to the NHS Constitution 2010 and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and are held accountable when failing to do so.

The report also recommends that GP Surgeries promote a family and community approach to healthcare that takes into account the travelling way of life. The report asks for GP Surgeries to work with organisations like FFT to build trust between local communities and GP Surgeries and make a concerted effort to get-to-know their community and find out how Gypsy and Traveller needs are often radically different from those of other community members.

We also produced an **Information Flyer** for Gypsies and Travellers

called '*Know Yours Rights and Responsibilities within the NHS*'.



The flyer gives details of some of the key NHS Constitution Patient Rights and Responsibilities including 'the right to access NHS services and not be refused access on unreasonable grounds', the 'right to choose your GP Practice' and the 'right to be treated with dignity and respect by NHS staff' (NHS Constitution Handbook 2010).

The flyer is designed to give patients the power to challenge prejudice and discrimination from NHS staff by presenting them with Patient Constitutional Rights straight out of the NHS Constitution Handbook, which is a legally binding document.

By giving patients the information they need to challenge prejudice and discrimination we hope to enable individuals and families to take more control of their healthcare.

For more information about Health Development work contact:



Lisa Bruton
lisa@gypsy-traveller.org



Jazka Atterbury
jazka@gypsy-traveller.org

Both the GP Report '*Fair Access for all? Gypsies and Travellers in Sussex, GP Surgeries and barriers to primary healthcare.*' and Information Flyer '*Know Yours Rights and Responsibilities within the NHS*' can be downloaded from the Health Section on the FFT Website, copies are also stored in the FFT library at the office in Brighton.

New Case Work Case Studies

Case 1

An Irish Traveller who was encamped on his own land seeking planning permission contacted us when the landowner of the access road employed a company to bund it off. The Traveller then contacted a solicitor to apply for variation of use of the access road but in the meantime he was unable to remove a caravan from site. We

liaised with the road landowner through their solicitor and with the help of the local police force we negotiated the removal of the barrier to allow the client to take the caravan off site.

Case 2

An Irish Traveller woman approached us to help with finding her accommodation in a different area of the country. She was placed on site waiting lists but in the meantime her

circumstances meant she needed to move as a matter of urgency. We negotiated with a private landlord and secured accommodation for the lady and her children. It is difficult for people on a low income to find a deposit or rent in advance, but the negotiation with the landlord ensured that the woman did not have to pay this as long as we set up a council tenancy support officer to help her maintain the tenancy.

For more information about the national helpline:

www.gypsy-traveller.org

abbie@gypsy-traveller.org

michelle@gypsy-traveller.org

Tel: 01273 234777

Helpline open:

Weekdays 9-5pm

(except Wednesdays)

Friends, Families and Travellers works with the Mediation Services

with the Mediation Services is one strand of the work that FFT committed to under its funding from the Tackling Racial Inequalities Fund. The TRIF Work Plan specified that FFT would 'Work with local bodies promoting race equality to help them work more effectively...'

The purpose of this work is to raise awareness of mediation and its potential for resolving conflict between Gypsies and Travellers and the settled communities. The rationale behind delivering Cultural Awareness training to Mediators is

that it will enable them to develop culturally appropriate models of delivery, which can then be widely disseminated.

Lisa Bruton made initial contact with various Mediation Services and when I came in to post in January, East Croydon; Medway; Hastings and Rother; and New Forest had been identified as wanting to be involved.

I decided that the Cultural Awareness Training would be more powerful if each session could be facilitated with a co-trainer from the Gypsy/Traveller community who had a local connection

in the district where the training was to be delivered. The thinking behind this being that the Mediation Service in question would, by the end of the training, have an embryonic relationship with someone from the Gypsy/Traveller community who was local to the area and therefore in a position to continue working with them in the future.

My three co-trainers were: Bridie Jones MBE, an Irish Traveller, (Medway) Henry Chapman, a Romany Gypsy (Hastings and Rother), and Kenny and Margaret Ayres, Romany Gypsies, (New Forest)

For more information about Training contact:

Liz MacPherson

liz@gypsy-traveller.org

Health Policy

We have been very busy over the last few months responding to various consultations and policy changes since the new Government came to power. This includes the White Paper on Health where our key messages include:

'Nothing about us, without us', the White Paper emphasises patient and public engagement. But how are the interests of hard to reach groups going to be supported? How are G.P's going to engage with Gypsies and Travellers and other so called hard to reach groups, when many

already have a poor track record for doing this? It is essential that specialist provision is made for Gypsies and Travellers until their health is on par with the rest of the population. It will be hard to improve the health status of the many Gypsies and Travellers who experience poor

health, unless we can facilitate their access to services. It is essential that the proposed GP Consortia can demonstrate their inclusion of Gypsies and Travellers and other chronically excluded people.

Zoe Matthews



The Friends, Families and Travellers stall and display went out to Priddy Horse and Sheep fair for the first time this year. This fair is always held on the Wednesday before the 21st August.

According to the history books the Priddy horse and sheep fair moved to the village from Wells in 1348 following the outbreak of the Black Death. Traders have not missed a fair in more than 650 years apart from 2001 and 2007 when the foot and mouth outbreaks made it impossible.

Priddy is normally a quiet village in the Mendip Hills; it has a large village green, two pubs and is popular with cavers. For the duration of the Horse and Sheep

Priddy Horse and Sheep Fair



Fair the village green is home to a large funfair, and traditionally arranged sheep pens where the sheep are auctioned, there are sheep shearing demonstrations and many craft and food stalls. The Queen Victoria pub stays open all day and is a great place for a pint of local cider and a good catch-up.

In former times the horses were also traded on the green, but these days the horse fair has its own

fields on the lane leading out of the village, a stones throw from the pub. Apart from the serious business of horse trading, there was lots of tack for sale, tiny puppies looking for homes, ferret racing, tools, cooking pots, brassware, and many other traditional items. In the field on the other side of the road traders were selling kitchenware, children's clothes, fur-lined capes, and there was a big

contingent from Travellers Times, and a stall selling Reggae C.D's that was doing a roaring trade. The nature of the event means that all sorts of people come to the fair for the day, and so that meant that the FFT stall was visited by a diverse range of visitors. I talked to local Romany Gypsies, local settled residents and a horse-drawn New Traveller of 20 years who lives around the Salisbury area. We also had lots of young Travellers come over for a chat. Most of the visitors to the stall were unaware of FFT's existence and pleased to find out that there is a national charity that works to support all Travellers whatever their ethnic origins. It was a great opportunity to disseminate lots of information about the charity and to pass on newsletters to a new audience.

Liz MacPherson

Challenging times (continued from page 1)

(which had not yet taken place at time of going to press). October 11th also marked the publication of the Equality and Human Rights Commission's Triennial Review on the state of equality in Britain 'How Fair is Britain?'. The full report and the executive summary are available on the EHRC website and the report makes interesting reading. The executive

summary is rather light in its references to Gypsies and Travellers (they only get a mention in the sections dealing with Health and Education) but there is rather more in the main report for anyone willing and able to wade through all 749 pages.

Following the publication of the report, most of the discourse in the media has been around what

might be called 'persistent inequalities' such as the gender pay gap, rather than the gross extremes of inequality experienced by those groups such as Gypsies and Travellers, who are systematically and chronically excluded from many of areas of society that most of us take for granted – access to accommodation (sites), access to health and social care, access to

education, access to democracy and access to justice.

In these challenging times FFT will continue to make the point about the need to tackle chronic exclusion loud and clear in any available public forum. It is sometimes an uphill task and we need the help of all our members and supporters in order to succeed.

Visit FFT's new website

we seek to end racism and discrimination against Gypsies and Travellers, whatever their ethnicity, culture or background, whether settled or mobile, and to protect the right to pursue a nomadic way of life



Your Family · Your Rights · Where you live · Your Work · About FFT · Resources

New Gypsy Traveller Organisation Map

Need to find Gypsy Traveller organisations or services in your area?
Browse our interactive map

001	West Midlands: Lutetium Education Centre for Travelling Children
002	Birmingham: Health Visitors
003	London: Gypsy Travellers
004	Birmingham: City Council
005	Travellers Advice Centre

Travellers Advice Team:
Jill Foster
Rudkin Chambers
151 Corporation Street
Birmingham

0645 120 2950
01769 310755 - emergency only

Additional Information:
Gypsies and Travellers in need of legal advice

Contact Us

FRIENDS, FAMILIES AND TRAVELLERS

We seek to end racism and discrimination against Gypsies and Travellers, whatever their ethnicity, culture or background, whether settled or mobile, and to protect the right to pursue a nomadic way of life. Registered Charity: 111 2326

CONTACT US

FFT
Community Base
113 Queens Road
Brighton
E. Sussex, BN1 3XG
Tel: 01273 234 777
fft@gypsy-traveller.org

What's New?

by ADMIN on 15. AUG, 2010 in UNCATEGORIZED

This website is being updated during October, so please be patient!

READ FULL STORY · COMMENTS OFF

SEARCH

Search...



New Toolkit from FFT

by ADMIN on 01. NOV, 2010 in REPORT

This guide is designed to help Gypsy Travellers come together to form Resident or Community groups. The toolkit is designed so that you can read those pages relevant to you rather than the whole document. • What are Residents groups and why are they useful? • Government Policies • Recognised resident's associations • Setting up [...]

Find us on Facebook

Friends, Families and Travellers
You like this. Unlike

Friends, Families and Travellers Sites in Bristol
Your views as a member of the Gypsy & Traveller community are very important; Gypsy & Traveller caravan sites need to be part of Bristol's future - meeting the needs of a diverse city. Where should they be? who should run or manage them? Do they need to be owned by Gypsies and Traveller families or do th...

FFT would like to invite you to visit FFT's new website at www.gypsy-traveller.org.

FFT has been working to make as many of our resources and expertise available on-line as possible. Our site now includes videos by members of the community. Audio versions of the pages are being worked on.

- Read the latest news stories on the homepage
- Find Gypsy Traveller services in your county with our interactive database and map
- Find out about the work of FFT
- Read FFT's latest policies, reports and leaflets
- Download the Toolkit for local Gypsy Traveller groups
- Find information and resources for young people
- Read archived FFT newsletters
- Buy Gypsy Traveller resources on-line through paypal

If you would like to contribute to the website with articles on aspects of Gypsy Traveller life, or have videos or photographs that you would like to share, please contact tammy@gypsy-traveller.org.



Census to include Traveller tick box for first time in history

The next census, in March 2011, will be of great historical importance for Traveller communities in England and Wales. For the first time, the census questionnaire will allow people to mark their ethnic identity as a Gypsy or Traveller.

About the census

The census - a count of households and people – has taken place every ten years since 1801 (apart from 1941, when it didn't happen because of the war).

One of the reasons it is carried out is to help public sector organisations understand what support and services people need. The results are used, for example, to help plan school places, housing, health facilities, public transport and emergency services.

When the next census takes place on Sunday 27 March 2011, every household will get a questionnaire asking for straightforward information about the people who live there.

Taking part in the census is compulsory: the few who fail to take part could be fined up to £1,000.

Ticked Off – stand up and be counted!

Traveller inclusion

The inclusion of a new tick box for people who want to record their identity as 'Gypsy or Irish Traveller' has come after requests from Travellers and support groups.

While many would say this inclusion is long overdue, the Office for National Statistics (ONS), which organises the census, points out that space for new categories on the questionnaire is strictly limited. Of the 20 or so groups which were considered for separate recognition in the 2011 census, only Travellers and Arabs were added to the list.

Those who called for the inclusion of Travellers strongly believe that identifying people in this way is vital for the needs and problems facing the community to be properly understood and addressed.

According to Eileen Lowther, an Irish Traveller from Leeds: "The only way we can argue for better services is to make sure they can see and hear us. The best way to do that is to tick the Gypsy/Traveller box in the census in March 2011."

Mrs Lowther continues: "We carried out our own small 'census' of 1,071 Travellers in Leeds and found out that our life expectancy, on average, is only 50 years. It was a bad shock but at least now the local health people are

giving us the attention we weren't getting before."

The Office for National Statistics agrees. Helen Bray at ONS explains: "The census is used for planning. It's hard to plan services for Gypsies and Travellers - like schools, accommodation and support - if no-one knows how many people belong to this community. When we asked all of the organisations that use census data which groups they needed more information about, Gypsies and Travellers came near the top of the list. We really need Travellers to fill in their census questionnaires."

Confidentiality

Naturally, some people may feel worried about providing personal information to the ONS. But information that could identify individuals will not be released for a great many years to come. Only the overall numbers to show the needs in particular areas or communities are passed to other government bodies.

Helen Bray says: "We promise to keep your personal information safe and confidential and we have systems and processes in place to make sure that we keep that promise."

Support available

People can complete the census questionnaire in paper form, or online via

www.census.gov.uk. For those living on Traveller sites, questionnaires will be hand-delivered and collected.

A telephone helpline and other support are available for people who may need help or have language, literacy or other difficulties.

Historical record

The team organising the census strongly hopes that Gypsies and Travellers will not only complete the census for their families, but be proud to tick the box that marks their ethnic identity.

This will mean the number of Gypsies and Travellers will be fully recognised for the first time, so the government can plan fair services for the community.

Ticking the Gypsy/Traveller box will also mean that future generations will be able to use census information - not only to look at their own family backgrounds, but to see a clear historical record of Gypsies and Travellers in England and Wales.

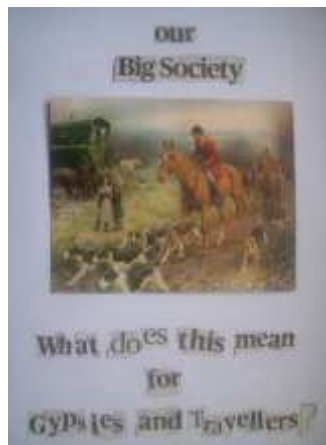
For more information, people can visit www.census.gov.uk

Jake Bowers (This edition's guest contributor)

Noticeboard

Our Big Society? The Future for Gypsies and Travellers

At Milton Country Park,
Cambridge CB24 6AZ on
Friday, 26 November 2010
at 0930am Please email
john@menter.org.uk to join.



Kent Gypsy and Traveller Forum

Kent Gypsy and Traveller
Forum had its first meeting
in September, and will meet
again in the New Year.

Thames Valley Police

Had its first Gypsy and
Traveller Independent
Advisory Group meeting
recently too, and they will
meet again in January next
year.

Shelter Gypsy and Traveller Law course

14-15 December 2010,
London.

Course content includes:
planning law, security of
tenure on official sites,
evictions from unauthorized
encampments and
homelessness law relating
to Gypsies and Travellers.
For information see
www.shelter.org.uk/training

Contribute to a book

FFT have been facilitating a

book. So far all the
materials for the book have
come from Travellers and
Gypsies who live within
Sussex. Romany Gypsies,
Irish Travellers and New
Travellers have all been
involved in the project. The
book is based on a Well-
being project that promotes
the positive aspects of
Traveller culture. So far
within the book we have
poems, stories, recipes,
crafts and activities, photos
and pictures.

If anyone has anything they
would like to contribute to
the book then please
contact. Gemma Challenger
on 0799 051 6627 or
gemma@gypsy-traveller.org

All materials will be copied
and sent back to the owner.

Volunteering with FFT

Volunteering is a great way
to gain experience, learn
new skills, meet new
people, share your
experiences and get your
expenses paid for. If you
are interested in
volunteering for FFT or
would like to find out more
about what volunteering
might involve give us a call
on 01273 234777, e-mail us
at fft@gypsy-traveller.org or
pop into the Brighton office
for a chat.

FFT New Trustees

At the AGM the Trustee
Board was pleased to
welcome two newly elected
Trustees, Charmaine Valler,
a Romany Gypsy who has
been doing brilliant work on
behalf of her community in
Surrey, and Charlotte
Jackson, formerly of
Citizens Advice, who brings
a whole range of
organisational, personnel
and partnership skills to the

Board. And we were all
delighted that our Chair, Liz
Watkins, has decided to
remain a Trustee albeit that
she will be stepping down
from the Chair.



New All Party Parliamentary Group/Traveller Law Reform/Gypsy Roma Travellers

On 7th July 2010 the
Inaugural meeting /AGM of
the All Party Parliamentary
Group-serviced by the
Policy Officer for the
Traveller Law Reform
Project [Lucy Beckett], was
held in the Palace of
Westminster.

The Agenda included the
election of Officers and
discussion of main issues.

Chair-Andrew George MP
Secretary-Lord Eric Avebury
Vice Chair-Baroness Janet
Whitaker
Vice Chair-Caroline Lucas
MP
Vice Chair-Lord Tim
Boswell

The Group agreed to
confirm the Policy Officer –
Lucy Beckett-TLRP as the
'staff' to act as the Group's
secretariat in a personal
and unpaid capacity, to
service the Group, be a
researcher, and provide
briefings for members.
The meeting counts as the
first AGM of the new
Parliament.

The Group elected the
name APPG for Gypsy
Roma Travellers.
Broad themes for future
agenda items were
agreed.

The APPG GRT is
Registered with the Office
of the Parliamentary
Commissioner for
Standards, House of
Commons.

The APPG GRT will be
committed to addressing
the social inclusion of
Gypsy Roma Traveller
communities, improving
community relations, and
tackling accommodation
issues. The APPG GRT is
also committed to forging
cross Party consensus so
that all parliamentarians
can work together to
achieve the aims of the
Group.

Later meetings dates will
be confirmed.

The Sussex Traveller Women's Recipe Book



To purchase this
beautifully illustrated
recipe book for just £6
contact Suzanna@gypsy-traveller.org or visit our
website www.gypsy-traveller.org



National Contacts

For more contacts please phone or visit www.gypsy-traveller.org/contacts.htm

Shelter (homeless)
0808 800 4444

National Romany Rights
Tel. 01202 893228

Traveller Advice Team (TAT)

0845 120 2980
07768 316755 24hr

Pavee Point
00 353 1 878 0255

Children's Society, South-West
01761 411771

Community Legal Advice

0845 345 4 345

Groundswell
Tel: 020 7737 5500
info@groundswell.org.uk

Family Rights Group

0800 731 1696

National Association of Boat Owners
01749 677195

Squatters Advisory Service

020 7359 8814

The Traveller Law Reform Project

www.travellerslaw.org.uk

Equality & Human Rights Commission
020 9390000

Travellers Aid Trust

www.travellersaidtrust.org

Planning Aid
01963 230045

The Gypsy Council

01708 868986

Education Otherwise - enquiries@educationotherwise.org

UK Association of Gypsy Women

Tel. 01325 788281
Mob. 07880 637591
UKAGW@Ymail.com
RFUKAGW@live.co.uk

The Travellers' School Charity
Tel 07717 055378

Roma Support Group
020 7511 5721

Friends, Families and Travellers

Community Base
113 Queens Rd.
Brighton
East Sussex
BN1 3XG

PHONE:
01273 234 777

FAX:
01273 234 778

E-MAIL:
fft@gypsy-traveller.org

Charity no. 111 2326
Company 3597515

Friends, Families & Travellers is a nationally recognised voluntary organisation which serves the whole spectrum of the Traveller community, both traditional and new, settled or on the road.

FFT runs a national helpline covering evictions, harassment, planning, employment, benefits, education, health, civil rights, discrimination and legal representation. FFT is also active in community support, research, monitoring, mediation and policy development at local and national levels.

We're on the Web! Go to: www.Gypsy-Traveller.org for information, useful contacts and more.

**If you believe in a end to racism and discrimination against Gypsies and Travellers:
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: _____

Waged-£10.00 Unwaged-£5.00 Organisation-£25.00 / 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.

All membership information held by FFT is confidential and will not be made available to others without your consent.