



**Friends Families and Travellers**

## Annual Report 2012 - 2013





## **Friends Families and Travellers**

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>2 - 3</b>
<b>REPORT OF THE CHAIR</b>	<b>4 - 5</b>
<b>OUR TRUSTEES</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR</b>	<b>6 - 7</b>
<b>THE ADVICE AND INFORMATION UNIT</b>	<b>8 - 13</b>
<b>STAFF</b>	<b>14 - 17</b>
<b>STAFF CHANGES</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>JOIN OUR ORGANISATION</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>PARTNERSHIP WORKING</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>REACHING COMMUNITIES</b>	<b>21 - 22</b>
<b>TRAINING AND LEARNING</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION PROJECT</b>	<b>24 - 25</b>
<b>ORAL HISTORY</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE</b>	<b>27 - 30</b>
<b>YOUTH WORK</b>	<b>31 - 32</b>
<b>INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>WITH GRATEFUL THANKS</b>	<b>34 - 35</b>

## Introduction to FFT

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Friends, Families and Travellers (FFT) was established during the passage through Parliament of the 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act and has become a leading national organisation seeking to address and bring an end to the inequalities faced by Gypsy and Traveller communities.

FFT began life as an informal support group working primarily with New Travellers but since those early days has evolved into a formal organisation providing advice, advocacy, information and other services to all Gypsies and Travellers regardless of ethnicity, culture or background.

Very early in its history, FFT developed a working relationship with the Public Law Project and provided crucial groundwork for two landmark legal challenges that led to local authorities being required to undertake basic welfare inquiries before carrying out evictions. FFT's work in this field gained recognition when the organisation was short-listed for the Human Rights Award in 1999.

FFT became a registered charity (no 1112326) in 2005.

Today, FFT is a membership organisation run by a Trustee Board, which in 2012/13 was made up of eight Trustees, three of whom were Travellers and two of whom were lawyers specialising in Traveller issues.

We provide casework, advice and information to Gypsies and Travellers directly, either by phone or by outreach work to sites. We also provide advice on issues concerning the travelling communities to third party organisations.

We offer advice and advocacy for individual Gypsies and Travellers, families and communities.

We provide training and awareness raising seminars to mainstream agencies within the

FFT is the only national charity (registered charity no. 1112326) which works on behalf of all Gypsies and Travellers regardless of ethnicity, culture or background. FFT is also a non-profit making company limited by guarantee (no. 3597515).

## Introduction to FFT

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*Continuation...*

We carry out research, in partnership with academic institutions, to build and promote greater knowledge and understanding of the issues that affect the lives of the travelling communities.

voluntary and statutory sectors to help them to deliver appropriate and culturally sensitive services to Gypsies and Travellers.

We disseminate and share knowledge and information about good practice for working with Gypsies and Travellers to a wide range of inquirers, including students, voluntary and statutory agencies and the media.

We provide community support, health and wellbeing outreach services to Gypsies and Travellers, helping individuals and families to access into the mainstream agencies best suited to meet their needs.

We facilitate and mentor local self support groups to empower individuals, families and communities to fulfil their potential and to take greater control over their own lives. We also work to support and build the capacity of other local grassroots Gypsy and Traveller groups and organisations.

We work with young Gypsies and Travellers to help them to overcome the barriers to inclusion that they experience and to participate more fully within mainstream society.

We supply expert witness statements on site provision and other Gypsy and Traveller needs at planning inquiries to assist Gypsies and Travellers to secure their own sites or to influence decisions to evict from unauthorised sites.

We participate within wider equality and diversity groups and fora to ensure that the interests of Gypsies and Travellers are not overlooked within plans and strategies aimed at developing a more just and equal society.

We work in our own right and in partnership with other Gypsy and Traveller organisations to campaign for legal reform so that the rights and needs of the travelling communities are fully and adequately addressed.

## Report of the Chair - Judy Pointing

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2012 has been another extremely busy year with many achievements, not least of which has been maintaining a fairly healthy financial position as we go into 2013.

FFT has been well supported by a large number of funders during the year and we are most grateful to them all for enabling us to continue our work.

Whilst accepting that we will continue to be reliant on grant income we have made determined efforts to increase our earned income in a variety of ways. We sought to maximise the potential for securing public service delivery contracts by liaising with service commissioners and by developing bidding partnerships. We have further developed our training offer and also sought to maximise our potential for web-based sales. I am pleased to report that we have been successful in significantly increasing our earned income as a result.

We have also made efforts to build up our supporters network through Facebook and Twitter and by the end of the year nearly 2,000 people 'liked' us on Facebook (it's since topped 2,000!). We have increased the number of volunteers who volunteer with us and it is pleasing that another volunteer (Rachel Wemyss) has recently become a member of staff.

Two key objectives during the year were promoting closer co-operation between the various Gypsy and Traveller organisations and promoting an equality agenda by influencing policy at the local, regional, national and even international levels.

FFT's knowledge of the issues Gypsies and Travellers experience in their daily lives, obtained through our advice and information work and other grassroots initiatives, enables us to speak with authority when seeking to influence policy makers at all levels.

## Report of the Chair - Judy Pointing

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*Continuation...*

At the international level, Trustee Marc Willers was elected during the year to the Fundamental Rights Platform in Vienna, enabling FFT to liaise with other European Gypsy and Traveller support organisations.

FFT is represented on a large number of bodies working across a wide range of issues at the local, regional and national levels. To pick out a couple of examples, FFT is represented on the Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Group, which is liaising with the Minister and Department of Communities and Local Government. FFT also participated in a Citizens Advice Task Group which looked at the way Bureaux can provide more accessible services to Gypsies and Travellers, and Race Equality UK (the new Race Equality Coalition), which has very actively campaigned against any erosion of the Equality Act as a result of the review of the Public Sector Equality Duty. FFT's Health team has been proactive in pushing a health inclusion agenda at numerous health fora at all levels.

I thank my fellow Trustees, who regularly demonstrate their commitment by travelling from as far afield as Scotland to attend Board meetings. We were sorry to lose trustee Charlotte Jackson during the year and thank her for her valuable input; hopefully she will be able to rejoin us at some point.

Most importantly, I would like to pay tribute to all the staff for their tremendous hard work, their professionalism and dedication, and who we thank for FFT's many successes and achievements during the year.

## Our Trustees

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Our Trustees during 2012/13 were -

Judy Pointing (Chair)  
Neil Ansell (Vice Chair)  
Justine Compton (Honorary Treasurer)  
Marc Willers  
Tony Thompson  
Rob Torkington  
Greg Yates  
Charlotte Jackson (Until October 2012)  
Our Director, Chris Whitwell, is also Company Secretary.

## Report of the Director - Chris Whitwell

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Once again it is a pleasure for me to introduce our Annual Report and I hope you will take a little time to read in the following pages about the wide range of work that we are doing to try to end the racism and discrimination against Gypsies and Travellers that is still so prevalent within our society.

Whilst it has been truly depressing to see the devastating impact of the economic downturn on many organisations in the voluntary sector, FFT has been fortunate enough to maintain a wide range of its projects and programmes and still balance its books over the last two year period. In 2011/12 we had an income over expenditure surplus of around £17k and in 2012/13 an almost matching deficit, a remarkable outcome that I could not have predicted two years ago.

This does not mean that the year has been without its challenges. Once again our crucial national casework service, which helps so many individuals, families and communities every year, has proved extraordinarily difficult to fund despite it being the absolute core of everything that we do. We could not speak with the authentic and authoritative voice that we bring to bear at national policy level if our knowledge of trends and issues were not thoroughly grounded in the experience and insights that we gain through our grass roots casework. As is so often the case it is easier to get funding for one off projects that may be seen as 'new' and 'innovative' rather than the basic core work upon which all else is built.

The year also saw some key changes in our staffing. Rebekah (Bek) Dilley left the organisation after nearly four years of successful work with us on our Lottery funded Reaching Communities project and later in the year Jazka Atterbury who, like Rebekah, had been with us since 2008 left for pastures new. Finally, our Young Persons Coordinator, Clare Bingham, who started with FFT back in 2005, left to start a new life in Italy. Whilst it is always sad to have to say goodbye to such able and dedicated members of

## Report of the Director - Chris Whitwell

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*Continuation...*

staff, change within an organisation always opens up new options and opportunities both for the people who remain and for new members of staff coming into the organisation. Several members of our staff are taking on different roles and relishing the new challenges that they bring.

We have been delighted through the course of the year to welcome a large number of new volunteers to FFT, many of them working with Liz MacPherson on the National Heritage Lottery funded Oral History project, but others providing general administrative and other support.



One of the landmarks in a busy year that gave me particular personal pleasure was the first performance, during Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month, of 'Crystal's Vardo'. This is a play for 7 - 12 year olds written, produced and directed by my colleague, Suzanna King and it addresses, in an informative and engaging way, the issue of bullying of Gypsy and Traveller children in schools. The play follows the history and

migration of the Gypsy peoples from their roots in northern India in the 12th Century up to present day Britain. Writing the play was a labour of love for Suzanna, our Finance Officer, and it has received excellent reviews wherever it has been performed. During 2012/13 there were six performances and it looks as though by the end of 2013/14 there will have been four times as many. This is a project that I expect to snowball and I hope that the play will eventually be performed in schools up and down the country.

Although I say this in every Annual Report I cannot repeat often enough what a privilege it is for me to work with such a talented, effective and committed group of staff, volunteers and Trustees and despite the policy challenges that we face, we look forward to the coming year with optimism and determination that we will be a real force for positive and lasting change in society.

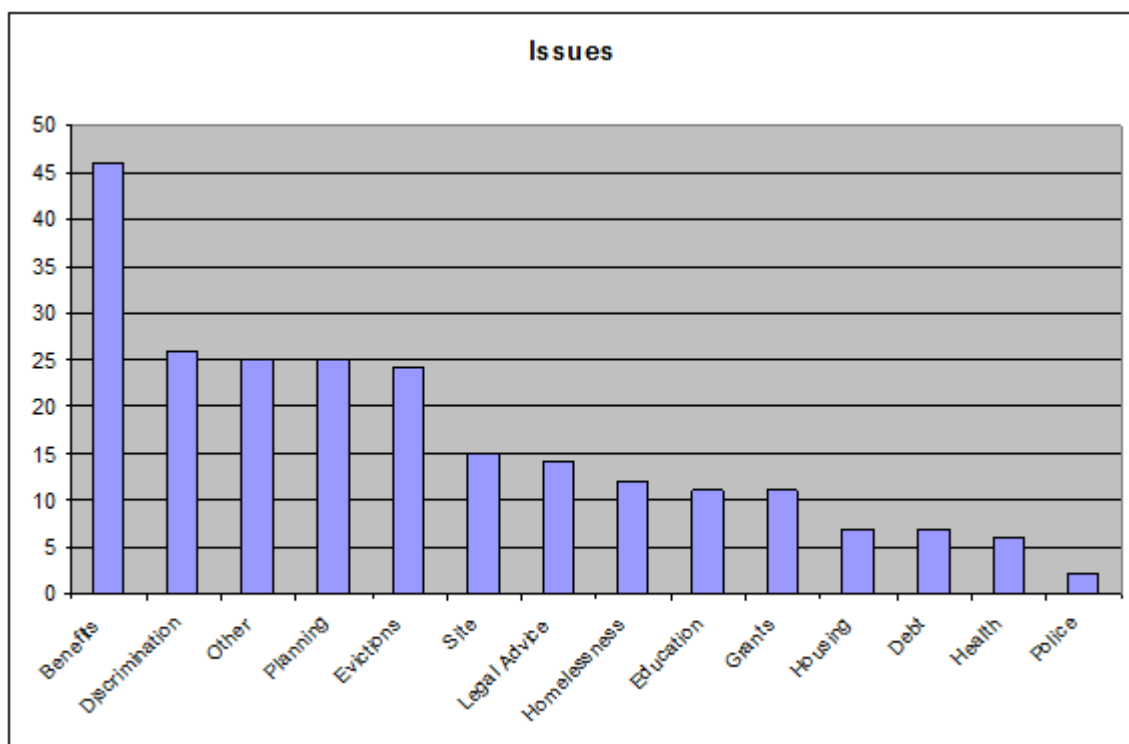


## The Advice and Information Unit

*A high quality front line service for Gypsies and Travellers throughout the UK*

The Advice and Information Unit continues to provide support, advice and advocacy to Gypsies and Travellers through our casework helpline which directly informs our social policy and campaigning work at national level.

In 2012/13 the helpline took on 231 cases made up as follows -



- 46 cases on benefits
- 26 cases on discrimination
- 25 cases on planning
- 24 cases on eviction
- 15 cases relating to local authority sites
- 14 cases giving legal advice
- 12 cases on homelessness
- 11 cases on education
- 11 cases on grants
- 7 cases related to housing
- 7 cases on debt
- 6 cases on health
- 2 cases about the police
- 25 'other' cases

## The Advice and Information Unit

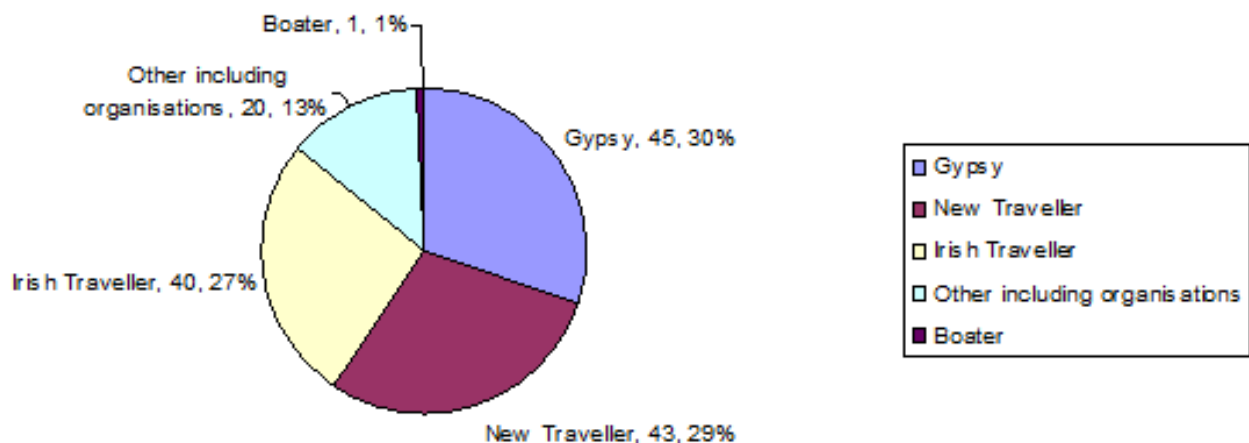
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This breakdown shows that the number of benefit cases we have dealt with has nearly trebled from the previous reporting year (2011-2012) and this is likely to have been influenced by the new Welfare Reform Act. Through the support our national caseworker gave to our clients last year we were able to make savings of over £38k on their behalf, both in backdated payments and the future benefits payments for the year. These are the outcomes we know about but we suspect that there were many more savings for clients which we were unable to ascertain. We anticipate that many more of our more vulnerable clients will be contacting us with welfare benefits issues in the coming years as the major changes take effect.

Worryingly we have seen the number of discrimination cases almost double from last year. Although tackling discrimination against Gypsies and Travellers is a huge issue we are pleased that more members of the community are coming forward to make a stand against racism and discrimination. A high percentage of our cases also relate to planning and evictions.

Of the cases we dealt with there was a fairly even three way split between Gypsies, Irish Travellers and New Travellers. We have also advised a number of service providers regarding the support that they provide for Gypsies and Travellers.

### Types of Traveller:



## The Advice and Information Unit

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### *Continuation...*

Almost half of the work (48%) we have done with Gypsies and Travellers has been with those who are officially homeless (including those on unauthorised encampments), showing that the advice line is reaching some of the most vulnerable members of the travelling communities. We have also worked with housed Gypsies and Travellers and those living on authorised sites, both local authority and private sites. The breakdown of the 'housing' status of the Gypsies and Travellers we have supported during 2012-2013 is as follows -

- 76 on an unauthorised site
- 40 in bricks and mortar
- 31 were on a local authority site
- 27 were homeless
- 26 were on a private site
- 22 other

We have worked with Gypsies and Travellers across England and also 4 cases in Wales. The majority of our cases are in the South East as that is where we are based, but we continue to encourage and deal with new cases from anywhere across the UK.

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### *Case Studies*

*Here is just a flavour of some of the cases with which we dealt in 2012/13 -*

#### Case Study One

FFT helped an Irish Traveller man from the Midlands who rang to report direct discrimination due to his ethnicity. The man who had conducted business buying and selling cars for over 20 years was told he was not welcome at a car auction house because he was an Irish Traveller. FFT contacted the auction house explaining the law and advocating on behalf of the client – this resulted in an unreserved apology and the management immediately withdrew the bar.

## The Advice and Information Unit

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*Continuation...*

### Case Study Two

FFT helped a housed Traveller with serious health issues access the correct benefits. The client, with FFT support, was able to claim Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance. He received backdated benefits totalling £6,500. He is now in receipt of the correct benefits which otherwise he would not have received. This has brought him out of extreme hardship and enabled him, with FFT support to pay off debts and manage his monthly budgets which has greatly improved the quality of his life.

### Case Study Three

An Irish Traveller contacted us because she was living on the roadside with her children all of whom were suffering from constant evictions and lack of stability through not having an authorised site. Two children had serious health problems requiring hospital appointments and operations. We are supporting the family to find a pitch on a local authority site where they will be able to maintain their doctor and hospital appointments and have access to amenities such as water and electricity. This will greatly improve the welfare of the children.

### Case Study Four

A Traveller contacted our national helpline for support with his family. He had no authorised pitch so was living on the roadside and was suffering from both physical and mental health issues. His caravan was falling apart and he was no longer able to tow it safely or to heat it sufficiently to keep his two children warm. We assisted him in his application for social housing so that the family had more security and amenities. The father had applied for a Community Care grant to help pay for the furniture needed for his new home. Unfortunately the application was turned down and our subsequent appeal refused but eventually we achieved a successful result at a tribunal which meant the family were able to buy beds and a cooker for their new home.

### Case Study Five

A Romany Gypsy man and his family were supported by FFT when they felt that they had been discriminated against by the Police due to their ethnicity. The family had been unsuccessful with a planning appeal regarding their own land where they were encamped. FFT was able to support the family with the complaints process and act as a conduit. The family was satisfied with the procedure and there were positive outcomes. The client stated that in future that he would feel more confident in approaching the Police with any further matters.

## The Advice and Information Unit

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### *Continuation...*

FFT continues to support clients across the country with planning matters. FFT has supplied expert witness statements and has advocated for clients with planning departments. With FFT's help many of our clients have been awarded planning permission. One notable case was a Romany Gypsy woman in the south East of England who was awarded full permanent planning permission on her land in an Area of Natural Beauty. The client is now able to live happily and peacefully on her land with her daughter.

FFT has worked on many eviction cases across the country and continues to advocate on behalf of clients. We have notably supported clients in court alongside the Community Law Partnership and have won Travellers extra time on encampments. FFT continues to work to improve the lives of clients who are encamped on unauthorised pieces of land, negotiating with the local authority to provide clients with toilets, water and other basic facilities.

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### *Policy and Planning*

The issues that arise through our national casework directly inform our local and national policy work, and helps us work towards our aim to bring about positive societal change.

It has been a difficult year for Gypsies and Travellers in terms of the legislative and policy framework. There have been numerous Government consultations on policy issues and many of the proposals are likely to have an adverse impact on the travelling communities. The consultations included the following -

- Review of the Public Sector Equality Duty, which could water down the ability of individuals and organisations to hold public bodies to account.
- Changes to Temporary Stop Notices to give local authorities more powers to remove Gypsies and Travellers from their own land.

## The Advice and Information Unit

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### Policy and Planning

*Continuation...*

- Repeal of Section 444(6) of the Education Act
- Review of Planning Practice Guidance and Streamlining the Planning Application Process.

We have taken part in these consultations in the hope that the Government (or other relevant body) will take on board some of our points and reduce the harmful effects of their proposals on the travelling communities.

FFT has participated in the Sussex Police Gypsy and Traveller Advisory Group, where Gypsies and Travellers and representative groups meet with Police Gypsy Liaison Officers from across Sussex to discuss Police policies and actions affecting Gypsies and Travellers.

FFT has learned more about the Welfare Reform Act and how this will affect Gypsies and Travellers. The Welfare benefits system is set to dramatically change with the implementation of the Universal Credit. We are yet to discover the full impact of the changes but our initial concerns relate to the benefit cap, the changes to self-employment and Tax Credits, and the fact that any changes to someone's benefits need to be logged on the internet, presenting a barrier for people who have low literacy and no computer skills. We are also concerned for Gypsies and Travellers without a postal address, as if they are using a c/o address for their benefit letters they may be late responding to mail and could run the risk of losing all benefits if they do not respond to mail quickly enough.

## Staff

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**Chris Whitwell,  
Director of Friends, Families and  
Travellers**

Chris was appointed Director in March 2006. He was previously working with FFT on a consultancy basis having held senior positions in the public and voluntary sectors.

**Emma Nuttall,  
Advice and Policy Manager (Job Share)**  
Emma initially started working for FFT as a volunteer. She is now the Advice Work Manager and has been working for FFT for over 12 years. Emma has a key role in policy work and represents the organisation in a number of national fora.



**Abbie Kirkby  
Advice and Policy Manager (Job Share)**  
Abbie has been working with FFT as a national caseworker since July 2007. Her background includes working with marginalised communities both in England and abroad.

**Sarah Mann,  
Training and Capacity Building Manager**

Sarah joined FFT in August 2007. Her background is in community and environmental work, managing projects and training in the public and voluntary sectors.



## Staff

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**Zoe Matthews,  
Strategic Health Manager**

Zoe is a trained Psychiatric Nurse with a degree in Anthropology and Sociology and has an MA in Health Promotion, where she specialised in the Health of Gypsies and Travellers. Initially joining as a volunteer, Zoe has now been working with FFT for over twelve years.



**Avril Fuller,  
Young Person's Co-ordinator**

Avril is of Gypsy heritage and started as a volunteer with FFT before becoming a paid member of staff in 2003. Her background is with Traveller Education Services. Avril specialises in working with vulnerable people/learning difficulties/disabilities.

**Marya Sadouni,  
Community Support Worker**

Marya, a Romany Gypsy, joined FFT in 2008, having previously been a volunteer. She worked previously as a carer in the healthcare profession and trained as a Doula nurse.



**Gemma Challenger,  
Well-being Support Worker**

Gemma is a New Traveller and started with FFT in February 2007. Her background is in learning disabilities.



## Staff

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**Clare Bingham,**  
Young Person's Co-ordinator - until  
March 2013

Clare's background is working with young homeless people including street homeless and sexual health outreach worker and later as a youth worker.



**Lisa Bruton,**  
Health Policy Officer

Lisa is a trainee psychotherapist with Brighton PCT. At FFT, she is involved in mental health research and Travellers, and creating a pool of Wellbeing resources for the community.

**Suzanna King,**  
Finance Officer

Suzanna joined FFT in November 2005. Her background is in arts administration, working in Young People's and Children's Theatre.



**Michelle Gavin,**  
Caseworker.

Michelle has been working for FFT as a National Caseworker since Jan 2010. Michelle is of Irish Traveller heritage through marriage. She is a founder member of GAIT (Gypsy and Irish Travellers Association South East) and previously worked as a volunteer caseworker and advocate.

## Staff

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**Liz MacPherson,  
Heritage Lottery Project Officer**  
Liz joined FFT in January 2010. Her background includes teaching at secondary level, and prior to FFT working for two other Sussex based Gypsy and Traveller groups.



**Charmaine Valler,  
Community Engagement worker: Surrey**  
Charmaine a Romany Gypsy joined FFT in 2011. Charmaine has a working background in mental health.



**Sarah Herlem,  
Mental Health and Well-being Outreach Worker**  
Sarah has been a Mental Health and Well-being Outreach Worker for FFT since September 2011. She has a background in counselling and therapeutic group work. She is experienced in working with a wide range of ages and issues including abuse, domestic violence, bereavement and substance misuse.



## Staff News

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During 2012/13 we had three members of staff on maternity leave. Gemma returned to work in June 2012 and Emma and Abbie returned to work on a job share basis at the beginning of December 2012.

Coping with the absence of three key members of staff was not easy but we had been very fortunate to recruit Sarah Herlem as Mental Health and Wellbeing cover for Gemma. Sarah has quickly proved invaluable to the work of the team and following Gemma's return to work we have been able to retain Sarah as a member of the staff team.

We were not in a position to recruit back up resources to cover Emma and Abbie's posts but managed to continue their work through a redistribution of staff resources from elsewhere in the organisation. In particular Sarah Mann did a sterling job of covering Emma Nuttall's work on our EHRC funded project and Michelle Gavin provided excellent cover for Abbie Kirkby in maintaining the national casework service.

## Join Our Organisation

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Membership of FFT is now free and we would like anyone who shares our aims and objectives to sign up as soon as possible.

Membership entitles you to receive our quarterly Newsletter and to attend and vote at our Annual General Meetings. We are always pleased to hear from our members and to talk to them about the work that we are

doing and, importantly, membership of our organisation means that you are helping us in our struggle to bring an end to the racism, marginalisation and social exclusion suffered by the travelling communities.

If you would like to join us simply contact Suzanna on 01273 234777 or email her: [admin@gypsy-traveller.org](mailto:admin@gypsy-traveller.org)

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### *Social Media*

You can also support us and keep up with current issues by joining us on:

[www.facebook.com/  
FriendsFamiliesandTravellers](http://www.facebook.com/FriendsFamiliesandTravellers)



<https://twitter.com/GypsyTravellers>



## Partnership Working

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We believe that, if we are to bring about positive and lasting change, we need to develop and strengthen our partnerships with all those other organisations that are working on behalf of Gypsies and Travellers. These include other national organisations such as the Irish Traveller Movement in Britain as well as regional grass roots groups from all other Regions of the country. There are many groups doing excellent work in all areas of the country but it is important that we all speak together with a coherent and unified voice if we are to bring about the legal and social policy changes that are so urgently required in order to achieve greater equality and justice for Gypsies and Travellers.

FFT is one of the larger organisations working on behalf of Gypsies and Travellers but it does not necessarily seek to take a lead role in its various partnerships but rather to provide consensual support to strengthen the voice of Gypsies and Travellers.

We are also committed to working with and supporting other organisations working in the field of equalities and human rights, in particular other national organisations working in the field of Race Equality and organisations seeking to bring about greater equality and justice for chronically excluded groups. We are a member of the newly emerging BME VCS coalition which is seeking to position Race Equality more centrally within wider equality agendas. We wish to ensure that Gypsy and Traveller issues are not just seen as a self-contained bubble but as part of a wider movement towards securing a fairer, more just and equal society.

## Reaching Communities

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This project made excellent progress over its 5 year lifetime, achieving all targets and outcomes and made a real and positive difference to many people's lives.

The 2 Community Support Workers steadily built confidence and trust with the Travelling Communities in Sussex over the 5 years. From year 3 onwards, the workers were able to work with whole families, supporting several family members at one visit allowing them to focus their time more efficiently. Throughout the project they worked as part of a Sussex wide outreach team, creating an important synergy between their work and the specialist members of the team.

### Case Study

A Romany Gypsy woman, who we had previously helped to settle in housing after fleeing domestic violence, was looking to find paid work for the first time. She had poor literacy but felt comfortable travelling to work in her local area. She found a vacancy at a local hotel for chambermaid work. Our worker supported her to fill out an application form and to attend an interview, which she had never done before. She has been working for several months now and greatly increased her confidence and self-worth. She has since encouraged her sister-in-law to gain a job at the same hotel.

The demand on workers for help accessing services was high from year 2 onwards - much more than could be met. Careful input and planning was needed to manage complex and stressful casework demands to allow longer term planning on events and training to succeed.

We assisted over 1200 people to access a service they may not have otherwise received. We have empowered many clients to be more confident about accessing help from mainstream agencies. Many of the clients with whom we have worked have been able to return directly to those agencies to which we have facilitated initial access without needing any further support from us.

We have also been instrumental in bringing about changes in the way that organisations within East and West Sussex deliver their services so that they have become more accessible to Gypsies and Travellers. Cultural awareness training with local agencies made partnership working more effective and community planned events involving mainstream agencies have been varied and well attended throughout the project

In the later years of the project we were much more successful in accessing people into work or

## Reaching Communities

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*Continuation...*

### Case Study

Mrs L is an older Irish Traveller woman with a large family who lives on the road without a plot to stop on. None of the family can read or write. Mrs L was very depressed, she had severe asthma which was poorly controlled as she could not read the instructions. She also had heart problems, high blood pressure and double incontinence.

Mrs L always put the needs of her family first and was a very private person who was embarrassed to tell of her problems. Our

Outreach Worker spent time listening. Mrs L asked her to come with her to the GP and to help her tell the Doctor what was wrong. Our worker also supported her to hospital consultations and worked with the pharmacist to prepare pill boxes with day and night symbols to help Mrs L take her medication at the right times.

volunteering. This definitely built on the crisis-resolving work done previously with clients who may have been helped to access health or accommodation and were then ready to move on into greater engagement. The events and activities have also played their part in building socialisation and confidence including cultural pride, allowing people to raise their expectations.

We recognise that engagement is a journey and over 5 years we have been able to support many people a long way along the journey. Some starting from terrible situations of homelessness, domestic violence or poor health and desperate financial straits. Whilst we have achieved the goals we set ourselves within this project, we also recognise that many Gypsies and Travellers are still at the start of that journey as they have no legal place to stop and there is still a long way to go.

The successes of this project have their roots in the staff team of and the ways of working (outreach and non-literacy dependent working) and the support of the wider team. The challenges were due in large part to the extreme exclusion experienced by many of the members of the Travelling Communities and the need for basic needs around accommodation and health to be met before people felt confident to become community champions. This underlines the need for long term engagement with excluded communities in which we were fortunate to be supported by a 5 year project from the Big Lottery.

## Training and Learning

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Over this year we delivered training to a wide variety of organisations. Training was delivered by Sarah Mann, Charmaine Valler and Michelle Gavin:

- We delivered training to Carers Support in Chichester, City Clean at Brighton & Hove City Council and the Community Safety team at Brighton and Hove City Council.
- We were privileged to support the South East Coast Ambulance Service Gypsy & Traveller Champions with training and are working with them going forward.
- We also worked with a number of housing agencies including Sutton Council, Saxon Weald Housing Association and Aster Housing Association in Wiltshire.
- We delivered cultural awareness training to all the staff of the Sussex & Surrey Probation Services over a series of sessions in October and November.

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### *Reaching Communities, Supporting Change*



Larry Harvey:  
Fire Services Seminar

We were also fortunate to be funded to provide a programme of learning seminars by the Big Lottery Reaching Communities Supporting Change Fund. The seminars drew on our experiences gained through the Reaching Communities project and brought together staff and Gypsy and Traveller service users to share their learning and perspectives with others. Jazka Atterbury organised the seminars and drafted learning

papers afterwards, assisted by volunteer Rachel Wemyss. The seminars were: Fire Services; Domestic Violence; and Prisons. Several FFT staff, including Sarah Herlem, Marya Sadouni, Avril Fuller and Sarah Mann spoke at the seminars as well as Bernie O'Rourke from Solace WA, staff from Fire Services, Prison Workers, RISE and Survivors Network as well as Gypsy and Traveller speakers from Ford Prison.



## Equality and Human Rights Commission Project

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This 3 Phase project built strength in groups being able to empower themselves and addressed hate crime at a strategic level.

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### Groups

The groups established arising from issues identified in casework have been very successful in empowering groups of Gypsies and Travellers to build support networks and acquire new skills - isolation often being a key barrier to empowerment. All of the 12 groups engaged more with mainstream service providers through the action of the groups. The site resident groups were able to achieve more responsive repairs and improvements in their sites and increase the numbers of services (such as Early Years' service) at their sites. This engagement built Gypsies & Travellers' awareness of mainstream services and developed their confidence in articulating their needs. The services have benefited from raising their awareness of wider Gypsy & Traveller needs.



Gypsy and Traveller Site Residents Groups

The follow up meeting on residents' groups and preparing the best practice section of our website was an excellent opportunity to share our and others experience of the value of Residents' Associations. We have developed our understanding of the

barriers and the factors which contribute to the success of residents' groups. The new Resident's Groups website page is proving a popular learning tool and is regularly used.

# Equality and Human Rights Commission Project

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## *Racially motivated hate crime and Domestic Violence*

Overall, the project allowed us to make a great deal of progress in developing awareness of racially motivated hate crime against Gypsies and Travellers. We have evidence around the level of hate crime experienced by our clients (21%). This, together with our case studies and experience from previous projects enabled us to address this better with our clients and other agencies. We learned that clients are not always aware of the hate crime element of their case or consider it “just what happens” and accept it as part of their lives.

Through the project, we made good contacts with local crime and disorder partnerships but found their interest in Gypsy and Traveller hate crime rather variable. A significant amount of coaching with agencies helped to raise the level of awareness of hate crime and better working with Gypsies and Travellers, however more remains to be done to translate this into better reporting of hate crime by Gypsies and Travellers.

We have also developed awareness for ourselves and other on Domestic Violence within the Travelling Communities. The work on DV has been supported by an excellent response from DV agencies willing to engage and exchange learning and training. We recognise the need to resource and plan for work to engage the Travelling communities over DV and project plans are being developed for this work. We have been able to build Gypsy & Traveller issues into local DV Plans (for example in Brighton and Hove), laying the basis for better resourcing.

Although progress is slow, awareness is developing at both at national level through the Independent Hate Crime Steering Group and regionally through Hate Crime working groups, in Domestic Violence plans and through direct coaching with agencies.

## Oral History Project

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Michelle Polirer  
and Lily

In August 2012 we were delighted to begin our first Heritage Lottery Funded Project to collect oral histories with Gypsies and Travellers in Sussex.

Our project officer, Liz MacPherson, has recruited and trained

volunteers from the Gypsy and Traveller communities and the settled communities in oral history recording including ethics and technical recording equipment management. Over the last few months the volunteers have begun visiting and recording histories from families around Sussex, including seeing some wonderful family photos.



The project will provide an audio record for the Sussex Records Offices as well as a travelling exhibition to be seen and heard in local libraries and museums. Liz is also arranging to film at least one of the interviews. The project aims to record at least 20 oral histories, which will go some way to filling the gaps in the records of Gypsy lives and contributions to the life of Sussex.

The project has had great support from the Gypsies and Travellers in Sussex and from local historians who are keen learn about the lives of Travellers in Sussex.

Volunteers include Rachel Smith, Emma Bray, Julia Westgate, Michelle Polirer (see photo above), Chris Penfold Brown ( Advisor), Jane Weston, Pepi Bazlinton, Tamsin Koronka, Georgie Hempson and Jessie Clifford who has also taken photographs for the project.

## Health and Social Care

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The NHS has seen many changes over the last year. These changes will have an effect on who makes decisions about NHS services, how these services are commissioned, and the way that money is spent. A lot of the work that we have been doing at a national policy level has been to ensure that the needs of Gypsies and Travellers are not overlooked in the emerging structures.

At national level we have been working with colleagues at The Irish Traveller Movement in Britain and Leeds Gypsy and Traveller Exchange to ensure that national initiatives, such as Inclusion Health involve Gypsies and Travellers. The Inclusion Health Agenda, chaired by Professor Steve Field is working to address the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalised groups of people in our society and this could have a positive impact on the outcomes for Gypsies and Travellers. This agenda appears to have the full backing of ministers and could be a vital link in the chain to health improvements. We have worked to produce guidance for future Clinical Commissioning Groups with the Department of Health and the Royal College of GP's on Inclusion Health.

At local level, local authorities have been preparing to take on a bigger role, assuming responsibility for budgets for public health. Health and Wellbeing Boards will have duties to encourage integrated working between commissioners of services across health, social care, public health and children's services, involving democratically elected representatives of local people. FFT has worked hard to engage Gypsies and Travellers into this process and has been hosting a Health Consultation Group to ensure the participation and engagement of Gypsies and Travellers.

Whilst this has been a challenging period stretching us to full capacity, it has also been an opportunity to ensure that the organisations will have the information that they require next year when the changes take place. We are continuing

## Health and Social Care

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### *Continuation...*

our work supporting local Joint Strategic Needs Assessment teams to undertake health need assessments on Gypsies and Travellers, so that the Health and Wellbeing Boards have the data at hand when they come to commission health and social care services. We have also been working with the emerging Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) to ensure that they also have the resources they will need for inclusive commissioning.

We have been doing work with the national Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) team, who want to make counseling and wellbeing support more available. We know that few Gypsies and Travellers access talking therapies, partly because there is wariness within the community about mental health therapies, and also because the services themselves can be rigid in their delivery. We are involved in a pilot project in Mid Sussex where we deliver cultural awareness training to IAPT staff, and also run focus groups with community members to find out what they might need from a counseling service.

We are also at the first stages of trialing Personal Health Budgets (PHBs) for Gypsies and Travellers, which would mean members of the community could have access to budgets to use on health services best fitted for their needs. If people need personal assistants, often people prefer having someone from their community, and Personal Health Budgets can also be used to pay qualified Gypsies and Travellers, to provide care for other members of the community.

FFT has been working with the South East Coastal Ambulance Service to ensure that its staff is sensitive and responsive to the needs of Gypsies and Travellers. Our work with SECAMB has led to them setting up a special interest group for employees to become champions for Gypsies and Travellers. This work alone has led to current employees feeling supported enough to declare their ethnicity as Travellers.

The original Sussex Traveller Health Project

## Health and Social Care

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### *Continuation...*

started in 2003 and was designed from its outset to be fully inclusive. The project aimed to engage Gypsy and Traveller women to identify their own health needs and then to support and work with these women, to address some of the issues that they had chosen as their priorities. Ten years later we are still a client led service, working with individuals and families to bridge them into services and support them during this process.

FFT has worked with several clients on the National Health Trainers programme, led by Avril Fuller who has supported volunteers through the programme offered by Brighton and Hove City emerging CCG. A number of Gypsies and Travellers have been through training modules on health and wellbeing in order that they can disseminate and support their friends and colleagues.

We have also continued to support Gypsies and Travellers into Mental Health and Wellbeing Services with outreach from Sarah Herlem and Gemma Challenger.

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### *National Gypsy & Traveller Health Inclusion*

We are continuing our work supporting local JSNA teams to undertake health need assessments Gypsies and Travellers, so that the Health and Wellbeing Boards have the data at hand when they come to commission health and social care services. Brighton and Hove have completed theirs, the Kent Health Needs Assessment (HNA) is being finalised, and Wiltshire are just about to embark on theirs.

We are continuing our work with the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs). In East Sussex, this has meant working with the Engagement Lead to find out from the community what they would like from their primary care services. The Brighton and Hove CCG has just commissioned a specialist health outreach worker post for Travellers, which our experienced colleague Michelle Gavin is taking up.

## Health and Social Care

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### National Gypsy & Traveller Health Inclusion

*Continuation...*

We have been doing work with the national Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) team, who want to make counselling and wellbeing support to be more available. We know that not many Gypsies and Travellers access talking therapies, partly because there is wariness within the community about mental health therapies, and also because the services themselves can be rigid in their delivery. We are involved in a pilot project in Mid Sussex where we deliver cultural awareness training to IAPT staff, and also run focus groups with community members to find out what they might need from a counselling service.

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## Youth Work

### Healthy eating

The Teenage girls' group tried taster exercises, planned and practiced healthy meals, explored fad and balanced diets, practiced shopping choices. Later they joined a local gym together, designed and produced healthy recipe food cards, applied for funding and completed a funded sports leadership award.

### Exercise

The football project developed football skills and the boys were keen to form a team before they caught measles and were evicted. The summer holiday and winter Mondays activity programmes were mostly active including ice-skating, soft-play, rowing, roller-blading and swimming.

During the year, our youth worker engaged with 208 Gypsy & Traveller children and young people at Gypsy and Traveller sites and roadsides and in housing across Sussex.

We gave informal counselling and one to one support to 148 young people and gave casework advocacy to access: CAHMS (4) , benefits (14) racial discrimination challenges (6), housing & homelessness (14), education and training access (31), sexual health 7 relationships (12) healthy lifestyle (9) and children's disability services (7) employment (15) and individual grant applications (23).

With young people we designed and ran groups and activities:

- teenage girls' group who planned and cooked healthy food, made recipe cards, tried fun exercise activities and gained a sports award
- Boy's farm animal care project, visiting farms and an animal sanctuary and starting a BTEC qualification
- Girl's music project recording traditional Irish songs and making a CD
- Summer football group for homeless young Travellers with a professional coach
- Summer activities for young people with severe disabilities
- Winter Monday activities group
- Sewing group making bags, tutus and skirts and visiting a Design College.
- CV and job support sessions
- Summer holiday programmes requested by young people. Children and young people met others from the scattered sites and took part in ice-skating, go-karting and outdoor activity centre visits.

Young people are coming to groups and activities after building confidence (often during casework) with parents to allow them to leave their sites and join group activities. Young people are meeting each other and interacting with staff and other users at activity locations. For those that are home educated this may be for the first time



## Youth Work

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### *Continuation...*

and most have no social contacts outside of their family.

Many of the young people are carers of younger siblings or poorly parents. Most have low self-esteem and no aspirations beyond their family role. The casework and group activities offer the young people the freedom to explore activities, the ability to be outside of the home and respite from caring responsibilities.

We have seen increased aspirations, particularly in the teenage girl group, sewing group and farm group and in casework where 18 young people asked for support accessing education & training and 15 asked for support with writing CVs and job applications. We hear increased positive discussions in groups and feedback from groups on enjoyment and requests for future activities. 4 older young people have become volunteers, supporting younger groups.

Our casework also supported 8 families of young people who had been living at the roadside get access to housing where they felt that housing better met their family needs, despite losing their extended family support by settling. Around 900 Travellers travelled through Sussex during last summer. Many families were given support to access GP and dental care for children but we are aware many more missed out on this basic health care and many are not immunised which led to a measles outbreak, cutting short activities.

Our Young People's post is funded by Children in Need.

Activities were funded by Youth Music, Sported, The Irish Youth Foundation and Sussex Community Foundation.

# Income and Expenditure Account:

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2013

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2013 £	Total 2012 £
<b>Incoming Resources</b>					
Incoming resources from generated funds:					
Grants	2	34,900	329,347	364,247	424,826
Donations		501	-	501	913
Bank Interest		250	-	250	267
Incoming resources from charitable activities					
Fees, subscriptions and publication sales		42,968	-	42,968	27,758
<b>Total Incoming Resources</b>		<b>78,619</b>	<b>329,347</b>	<b>407,966</b>	<b>453,764</b>
<b>Resources Expended</b>					
Charitable activities	3	60,764	361,124	421,888	433,730
Governance costs	3	3,141	-	3,141	3,070
<b>Total Resources Expended</b>		<b>63,905</b>	<b>361,124</b>	<b>425,029</b>	<b>436,800</b>
<b>Net (Outgoing) / Incoming Resources before transfers</b>	4	<b>14,714</b>	<b>(31,777)</b>	<b>(17,063)</b>	<b>16,964</b>
<b>Transfers</b>		<b>(40,913)</b>	<b>40,913</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net (Outgoing) / Incoming Resources after transfers</b>		<b>(26,199)</b>	<b>9,136</b>	<b>(17,063)</b>	<b>16,964</b>
<b>Fund Balances brought forward</b>		<b>165,676</b>	<b>5,451</b>	<b>171,127</b>	<b>154,163</b>
<b>Fund Balances carried forward</b>	10	<b>139,477</b>	<b>14,587</b>	<b>154,064</b>	<b>171,127</b>

All amounts relate to continuing activities.

There have been no recognised gains or losses other than the result for the financial year and all surpluses or deficits have been accounted for on an historical cost basis.

## ...With grateful thanks to our funders and partners:

We could not achieve the many projects and services which we deliver without the help of our funders on whom we rely in order to survive as an organisation.

We are especially indebted to –



The Big Lottery who funded our Reaching Communities project aimed at building the capacity of Gypsy and Traveller individuals and communities throughout Sussex.

**LOTTERY FUNDED**

The Heritage Lottery Fund funded the Oral History Project



**LOTTERY FUNDED**

The Equality and Human Rights Commission who funded our capacity building and community development work in the South East.

Brighton & Hove City NHS who fund our health outreach work in the city.

**Brighton and Hove City**   
Teaching Primary Care Trust

Lankelly Chase Foundation who fund our Mental Health and Wellbeing work.



Lloyds TSB Foundation who fund our engagement work in Surrey



**Lloyds TSB Foundation**  
for England and Wales

The Irish Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade: Emmigrant Support Programme who fund part of our work on behalf of Irish Travellers.

The Tudor Trust, who provide us with much needed core funding.

the  
**Tudortrust**

## ...With grateful thanks to our funders and partners:

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*Continuation...*



**Children in Need**

BBC Children in Need who fund our work with children and young people.

The Department of Health who fund our Strategic health work to ensure that Gypsies and Travellers are included in the new structures, policies and procedures of the NHS.

The AB Charitable Trust who provided valuable funding towards our casework.



Garden Court Chambers and Matrix Chambers for supporting our work.

**matrix**  
chambers

Finally we would like to thank FFT members, partners and colleagues in scores of other organisations who have given us help, encouragement and support over the year and without whom we could not have made nearly as much progress on behalf of the communities that we serve.