



## Annual Report 2011- 2012



# Friends, Families & Travellers

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## Introduction to FFT

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FFT is a membership organisation run by a Trustee Board, which in 2011/12 was made up of ten Trustees, five of whom were Travellers and two of whom were lawyers specialising in Traveller issues.

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).



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 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 grass roots Gypsy and Traveller groups and

# Introduction to FFT

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*Continuation...*

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 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.

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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Reviewing the last 12 months, overall it has been a challenging but very successful and productive year.

FFT has been supported by a wide range of funders during the year and we are most grateful to them for their support. In an increasingly difficult funding climate for the voluntary sector generally, great credit is due to the staff who have continued to successfully raise funds for the work of FFT. I think it also demonstrates a high level of confidence in the organisation and the quality of the work it delivers.

There have been a number of staff changes during the year, with 3 members of staff on maternity leave. They all delivered bouncing babies and plan to return to work in due course. Sarah Herlem joined us to cover some of the maternity leave and is making a fine contribution. We were sorry to say goodbye to Bek Dilley, who did some excellent work for FFT, and we wish her well for the future.

We also said goodbye to two trustees and welcomed a new one during the year. We were very sorry to lose Liz Watkins, who was a long-standing supporter of FFT and a trustee for several years. We miss her experience and wise counsel. Charmaine Valler resigned her position as a trustee in order to take up a post with FFT, so we have managed to keep her on board. We were also pleased to welcome Charlotte Jackson, who is an excellent addition to the trustee board.

At each board meeting, I continue to be amazed and proud of the breadth and quality of the work delivered by our staff team. Although the work is often difficult and stressful, it is consistently delivered to a very high standard with passion and commitment, and a determination to tackle the inequalities faced by Gypsies and Travellers. Nowhere is it more true that the success of an organisation lies in its staff. On behalf of the trustees I would like to express our immense gratitude for all their efforts.

We are looking at new ways of communicating and involving people in our work and now have an FFT Facebook page with around 1,000 members (April 2012).

Visit us:  
[facebook.com/  
FriendsFamilies  
andTravellers](https://www.facebook.com/FriendsFamiliesandTravellers)

## Our Trustees

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Our Trustees during 2011/12 were -

Judy Pointing (Chair)  
Neil Ansell (Vice Chair)  
Justine Compton (Honorary Treasurer)  
Marc Willers  
Liz Watkins (Until January 2012)  
Tony Thompson  
Rob Torkington  
Greg Yates  
Charmaine Valler (Until September 2011)  
Charlotte Jackson

Our Director, Chris Whitwell, is also Company Secretary.

## Report of the Director - Chris Whitwell

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The past year was one of mixed fortunes, set as it was against the backdrop of a serious economic downturn and its inevitable negative impact on the voluntary sector. FFT weathered the economic storm fairly well but despite the enormous help that we were able to give to people on an individual, family and community level, we made little progress towards ending the racism and discrimination that persists against Gypsies and Travellers within society at large. The enactment of the Localism Act and the dismantling of regional planning structures poses additional challenges which must be met if the enduring shortfall of Gypsy and Traveller sites is finally to be met.

“It never ceases to surprise me why we, as a so-called ‘tolerant’ society, should find it so difficult to make the necessary provision for Gypsies and Travellers to have an authorised site on which to place their home”

It never ceases to surprise me why we, as a so-called ‘tolerant’ society, should find it so difficult to make the necessary provision for Gypsies and Travellers to have an authorised site on which to place their home. The national shortfall of 5,000 - 6,000 pitches is a drop in the ocean compared with the number of bricks and mortar homes that will be needed over the next decade and to waste time and resources pushing Travellers from one place they shouldn’t be to another place they shouldn’t be makes absolutely no sense in either economic or human terms. It may even be that if we were to over-provide pitches by exceeding the immediate assessed need it would free up bricks and mortar housing from occupation by those Gypsies and Travellers that have been forced against their will into such accommodation through lack of any viable alternative. This would be a low impact and sustainable way of adding to our available stock of bricks and mortar housing.

In order to meet the challenges ahead there are three basic things that need to happen. Firstly, Government ministers and their civil servants need to engage properly with Gypsies and Travellers and those working on their behalf when drawing up policies that affect their lives. Secondly, all those organisations that work on behalf of the travelling communities need to speak with a coherent and a united voice so that

## Report of the Director - Chris Whitwell

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*Continuation...*

the messages that Government hears are clear and unambiguous. And finally, Gypsies and Travellers themselves need to be equipped with the opportunities, knowledge and confidence to become an integral part of the machinery of Government, local government and other statutory services so that it is no longer a question of 'us' making decisions about 'them' but Gypsies and Travellers being seen and respected as part of the wider community.

Over the past year we have been working with colleagues in other organisations to try to achieve these outcomes and to get the inequalities faced by Gypsies and Travellers firmly onto the agenda of Government, local Government and all other public bodies that have a responsibility to address the needs of the travelling communities. Helping to shape the policy agenda of Government and other public bodies has been a key priority for us in 2011/12 and will remain so throughout 2012/3.

In the pages of this Annual Report you will be able to read of the wide variety of different projects and programmes that we have delivered over the past year and there are some touching case studies demonstrating how we have been able to change people's lives for the better. None of these outcomes could have been achieved without the energy, commitment and sheer dogged persistence of my colleagues who never cease to impress me by the breadth of their knowledge, their abilities and their determination to achieve positive results.

An organisation is only ever as good as those who work within it, be they paid staff, Trustees or volunteers and I am proud to be part of this amazing team of people.



# The Advice and Information Unit

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

FFT offers advice, information and casework to all Gypsies and Travellers who seek our help and we monitor the profile of our client base to ensure that the service is reaching all sections of the communities and all regions of the country. Since 2009 figures have indicated an increase in the amount of casework we are doing on behalf of New Travellers, who have risen from 14% to 23%. The issues faced by this group predominantly revolve around evictions and homelessness.

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## **Case Studies**

These are just a few of the many cases that we have dealt with over the past year, but which give a flavour of the serious issues faced by our clients and the help that we are able to offer:

- An Irish Traveller woman we work with in South Cambridgeshire who had fled domestic violence and was placed in housing several years ago had been trying to access permanent site accommodation on a local authority site. She had been unsuccessful each time a pitch became available. FFT scrutinised the allocations process and took the grievances to the Local ombudsman. Although it was deemed that the authority had acted in accordance with policy a later letter from the local authority suggested that the reason for her not being able to access the site was due to her ethnicity as an Irish Traveller- on a site where all residents were Gypsies. We subsequently took further instruction and worked alongside a solicitor. A barrister felt that the Council may have breached their Public Sector Equality Duty regard to 'fostering good relations' between persons of a particular racial characteristic and those not of the same racial characteristic or to tackling prejudice and promoting understanding- there is now a judicial review pending for this matter.

## The Advice and Information Unit

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*Continuation...*

- A Romany Gypsy family were supported by FFT when they felt that they had been discriminated by the Police due to their ethnicity. FFT supported the family to make a complaint to the professional standards body. The family had previously tried to place complaints to the Police but were not given clear and accurate information by the authorities. With FFT support the family had their grievances robustly investigated and subsequently received an apology in respect of one of the issues.

- A young New Traveller approached FFT when she found that her living caravan was no longer fit for purpose and needed repairs to make it sound and waterproof for the inclement weather. FFT were able to work with the Traveller and successfully apply for a grant. She now has a watertight safe home.

- We advised several Gypsies and Travellers who were living on local authority sites regards the new mobile homes Act. We helped people renegotiate express terms particularly where they were less advantageous than their former agreements. Many Travellers from across the country were advised on this matter.

- FFT has been active in negotiating with Local authorities and Police regarding unauthorised encampments. A recent encampment of around 20 Travellers in West Sussex was threatened with an imminent eviction. There were also a lot of children living on the encampment. An FFT representative was able accompany some of the Travellers and supply a witness statement at court. Alongside a solicitor at the Travellers Advice Team we were able to negotiate a prolonged stay for the Travellers.

## The Advice and Information Unit

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*Continuation...*

- We have helped several Travellers living on unauthorised encampments to gain access to the Dogs Trust's Vet Card Scheme, which gives free and subsidised vet treatment to dogs whose owners are homeless.
  
- FFT continue to support clients across the country with planning matters, supplying witness statements and advocating on their behalf with planning departments. Many planning applications are being sought at present particularly in light of the amount of temporary permissions coming to an end- the change in Government and the Localism Act.
  
- FFT helped a highly mobile Traveller with his claim for Employment Support allowance and also accompanied him to an ATOS medical assessment. The assessment subsequently led to FFT being able to help with a Disability Allowance application which was also successful. This Traveller is now in receipt of the benefits which otherwise he would not have received. This has greatly improved the quality of his life.
  
- We were able to help a Romany woman and her son from Surrey access local authority housing when the private rented accommodation which they had been living in was sold. This particularly vulnerable family were threatened with homelessness and found it impossible to access the services provided by the local authority. After much negotiation and supplying expert evidence of needs the local authority offered the family a home. This family has now been linked in with all the correct services and lives happily in the Surrey area.

## The Advice and Information Unit

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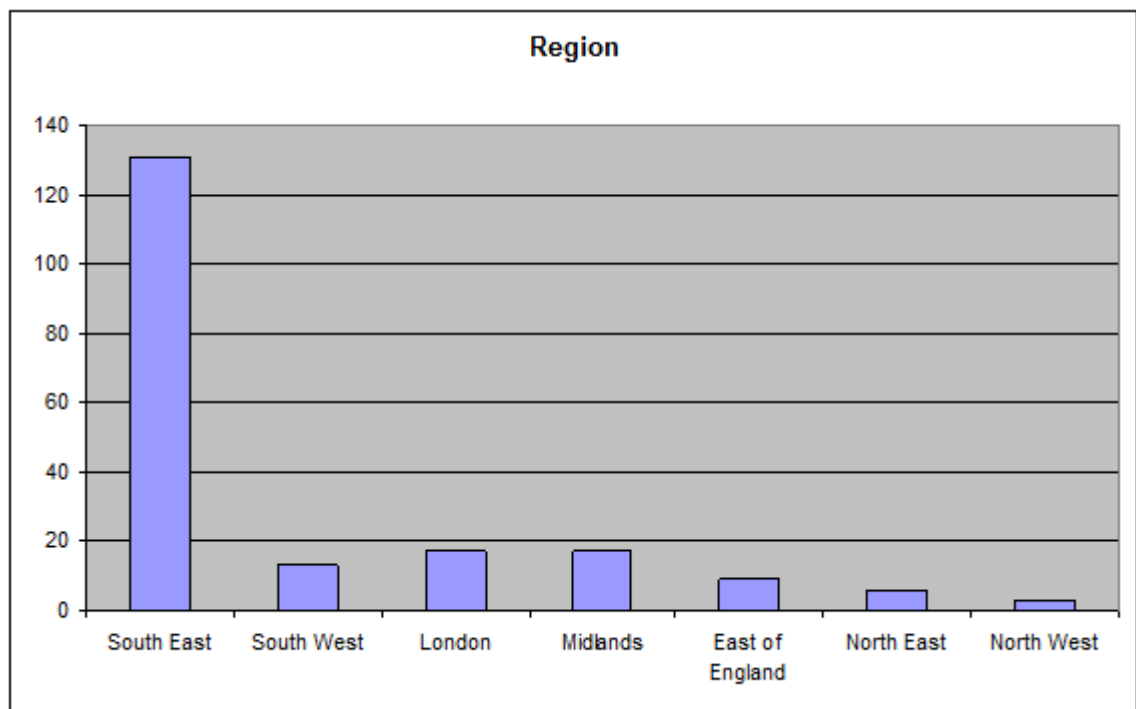
*Continuation...*

- FFT negotiated on behalf of several Romany Gypsy families and Irish Travellers in respect of placement of gravestones and memorials at Parish Churches. In one instance FFT involvement stopped the hearing of an ecclesiastical court which would have cost the family in excess of £4,000. Although this particular Romany family was successful in their application to Faculty many more are not and FFT recognises that there is an emerging trend which needs addressing. FFT is currently writing an informative advice sheet which will be placed on the FFT website.

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### Case Work Statistics

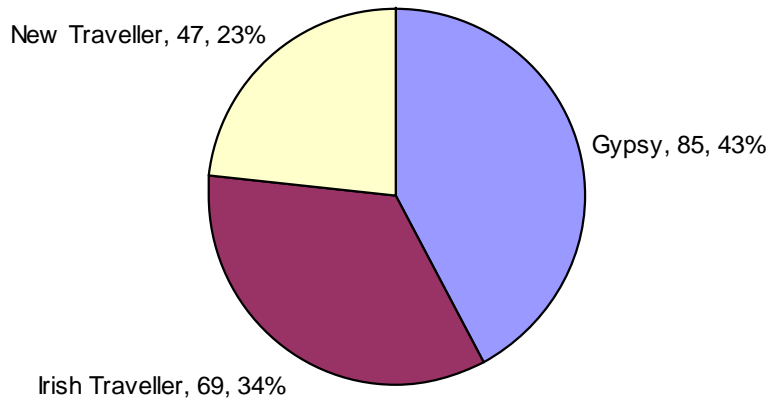
During 2011/12 our caseworkers dealt with a wide variety of cases from all across mainland UK, including Wales and Scotland.



## The Advice and Information Unit

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*Continuation...*



Approximately 43% of all our casework was with Gypsies, 34% with Irish Travellers and 23% was with New Travellers.

The categories of casework that we provided covered a wide range of issues and problems. Planning, sites, homelessness and

evictions remain key areas although increased trends in benefits and discrimination is noted.

The breakdown does not include the work carried out by FFT outreach workers in the Sussex area which runs into hundreds more cases.

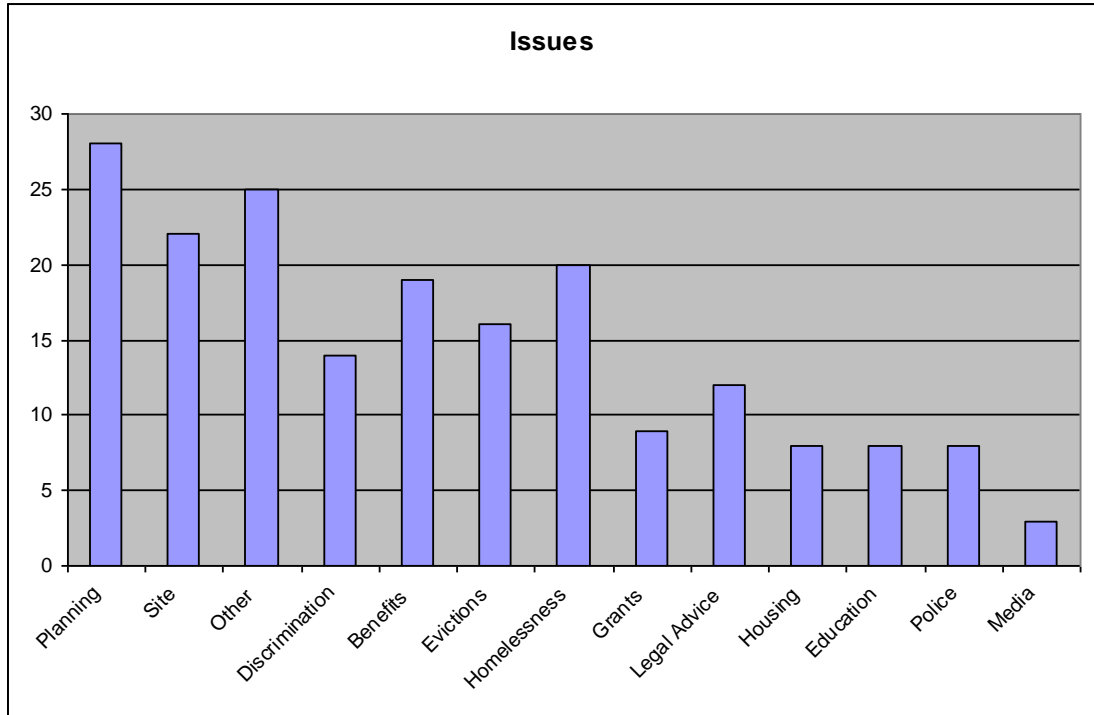
The full breakdown for National casework is as follows for 201 cases-

- 28 cases about planning
- 14 cases about discrimination
- 16 cases about evictions
- 20 cases about homelessness
- 8 cases about housing
- 8 cases about the police
- 25 cases about other issues
- 2 cases were about debt
- 22 cases about sites
- 19 cases about benefits
- 9 cases about grants
- 12 cases seeking legal advice
- 8 cases about education
- 5 cases about health
- 3 cases were about the media
- 2 cases were about domestic violence



# The Advice and Information Unit

*Continuation...*



Often our clients present with multiple issues and sometimes these can overlap. FFT now has an improved data collection procedure which allows us to refine our reports whilst ensuring that strict confidentiality remains at the forefront of our work.

## 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**

Emma initially started working for FFT as a volunteer. She is now the Advice Work Manager and has been working for FFT for over 11 years. Emma has a key role in policy work and represents the organisation in a number of national fora.



**Abbie Kirkby  
Caseworker**

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 eleven years.



**Avril Fuller,  
Community Outreach Worker**

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. She also works with FFT on an oral hygiene project: helping members of the community access dental services.



**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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**Rebekah (Bek) Dilley,  
Community Support Worker**

Bek joined FFT in April 2008 as one of our two Community Support Workers. From a Traveller background, Bek has worked in a number of previous posts including managing the security at fairs and festivals and managing the Brighton Pride Parade.

**Clare Bingham,  
Young Person's Co-ordinator**

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.



## Staff

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**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.

**Liz MacPherson,  
Training 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.



**Jazka Atterbury,  
Project Officer**

Jazka joined in 2008 and has Roma Gypsy as part of her heritage. Jazka has 17 years' experience working in community engagement, empowerment and community development and grassroots experience working in youth and community, social housing, learning disability and mental health.

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





## Staff News

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All three mothers and babies are doing well; our Mental Health and Wellbeing Worker, Gemma Challenger gave birth to a baby girl, Freya, in July followed by the birth of Emma Nuttall's son, Alfie, and finally Abbie Kirkby's son Charlie.

During 2011/12 we had three members of staff on maternity leave. Gemma returned to work in June 2012 and Emma and Abbie will be returning to work on a job share basis at the beginning of December 2012.

Coping with the absence of three key members of staff has not been easy but we were 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 we will be seeking to retain her services in the longer term.

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.

During the year we were also pleased to welcome Charmaine Valler to our staff team. We already knew Charmaine as a valuable member of our Trustee Board, a position which she naturally had to resign when appointed to the staff team. The Trustee Board's loss is the staff team's gain and Charmaine is doing excellent work in Surrey to get Gypsies and Travellers engaged in civic and democratic processes.

### Sarah Herlem,

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.



## Our Consultant Experts

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Our Annual Report would not be complete without a word of gratitude to two former members of staff who, although no longer on the payroll carried out valuable specialist work on our behalf during 2011/12.

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### *Steve Staines*

Steve Staines was one of the original founders of FFT back in 1993/94 and has been a tremendous influence on our organisation and on the work of other organisations working to create a level playing field for Gypsies and Travellers.

Steve worked for us for three years as a Planning Officer, following which he was retained by the Traveller Law Reform Project to continue the vital planning work that he had started. As well as providing responses to the individual planning documents of numerous local authorities Steve gave evidence at the Examinations in Public of Regional Spatial Strategies in the South West, the East of England and finally the South East. Through his evidence Steve was able to achieve many important changes to the numbers of pitches assessed as required throughout those regions. Now that the Government has dispensed with Regional Planning, so that all initial decisions will be taken at the local level it will become extremely difficult for Gypsies and Travellers to engage with consultation processes and this is an issue that we have raised with the Minister responsible.

Sadly, Steve has decided to retire after a long and distinguished contribution to the cause of Gypsies and Travellers and he will leave a gap that will be extremely difficult to fill. His work will be hugely missed but we all wish Steve a much earned rest and a long and happy retirement.

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### *Tammy Furey*

Tammy Furey has been a highly valued member of FFT for 10 years. Although, following the birth of her daughter, Megan, she is no longer an employee of Friends, Families and Travellers, she continues to provide valuable services on a consultancy basis. In particular her IT skills are invaluable to us in designing, updating and maintaining our website and her analytic skills are also put to good use in reviewing and evaluating our project outcomes.

## Join Our Organisation

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We are a membership organisation and we welcome new members. Membership runs from 1 April - 31 March each year and individual subscription rates are £10 per annum or £5 unwaged. Organisations may also join for an annual subscription of £25.

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).

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

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



And Twitter:

<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. For example, 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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Our two Community Support Workers Marya and Bek continued to capitalise on the confidence and trust of the travelling Communities in Sussex which they built up in years 1 to 3. The workers work with whole families, supporting several family members at one visit and thus allowing them to focus their time more efficiently. They work as part of a Sussex wide outreach team, continuing the useful synergy between their work and the specialist members of the team.

The demand on workers continues to be high - more than can be met, and careful input and planning has been needed to manage complex and stressful casework demands balanced with events.

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### *Casework*

The two Community Support Workers have had contact with 410 Gypsies and Travellers across Sussex this year, with 252 supported to access mainstream services.

We have had a high demand for support from around 50 homeless families moving around the Brighton area in one or a few groups, being frequently evicted. Many of the referrals still come through word of mouth through extended family such as cousins, aunts and uncles. We know from experience that this is a trusted way of finding information and services.

The range of issues raised by clients continues to be very wide. Health and accommodation issues continue to account for around half of cases. Debt, benefits (often appeals), child protection, mental health and dental services also feature regularly. We have also seen an increase in reporting of domestic violence cases (32 cases), which may be, in part, as a result of the high levels of trust developed by our outreach workers.



## Reaching Communities

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*Continuation...*

Gypsies and Travellers have been supported to access nearly 75 different mainstream agencies.

We have continued to work closely with DV services this year (RISE, Refuge and Women's Aid). In order to protect workers, we have limited the caseload of child protection or DV cases to 2 active cases per worker at any one time, referring further cases to other workers in the Sussex outreach team.

Citizen's Advice Bureaux are a key agency referred to and we have seen a significant increase of referrals to CABx for debt advice in the second half of the year. We have seen several families reporting they are struggling to pay bills, including heat, food and clothes - basic needs, not luxuries.

Casework outcomes and contacts with clients and agencies are recorded in our AIMS database and used to inform our work with agencies.

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### *Case study:*

*A young man living in a caravan but without a licenced site to stop on, suddenly became the carer of his young son following illness of the child's mother. Our worker supported him to get the man and child registered with a GP and dentist, access to benefits, helped him to access the local City Mission and for urgent access to bedding and clothes, supported him to access a horticultural course and child care during study. The man is now studying towards work, has increased his confidence and self-respect and is caring well for his child. The family still do not have an authorised site to stop on, but are managing well and have increased resilience and access to support networks.*

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### **Community Events**

3 thriving grass roots groups of quite different characters have been supported and developed for example:

Workers have supported women to develop a Traditional Crafts Group in response the women's

## Reaching Communities

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### *Continuation...*

wishes to improve and pass on their traditional craft skills in wreath making, primrose baskets and wooden flowers (amongst others) and also to develop business possibilities from their crafts. They have since established a small successful business, continued to develop skills sharing with other women and young people, and have proved a popular draw at events with their demonstrations.

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### ***Training, Volunteering and Employment***

We have had excellent progress with this part of the project this year, as we have been able to help move on clients we were previously supporting with crisis issues into volunteering, training or employment.

10 Gypsies and Travellers have obtained employment this year as a result of the project and 16 into volunteering. These include 5 running small cleaning business, one of whom is now employing other people. Several others self-employed, one in tree surgery, another in scrap metal work, one in removals and another running an ironing business from home. One person has been supported to gain work in a hotel.

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### ***Case Study***

*An older Gypsy woman whose children had grown up and married needed to work outside the home for the first time. She did not feel confident to attend training and had poor literacy. Our worker supported her to set up a self-employed cleaning business in Brighton - a skill area she felt confident in. The business has been very successful and she has increased her confidence and self-worth and been able to keep her home.*

Several Travellers we have previously supported with crisis issues have gone on to enrol in formal skills training with the support of the Outreach Workers, with the aim of becoming self-employed. 2 women are studying for health & beauty qualifications at a further education college in Burgess Hill, with the intention of

## Reaching Communities

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### *Continuation...*

running a mobile beauty business aimed at Travellers on sites. One woman with a child just started school has enrolled for childminding qualifications aiming to become a registered childminder. One young man has enrolled at the local agricultural college to train in horticulture. One man has undertaken building skills training at a further education college in Brighton.

We have been able to run a further media skills & journalism training course, which has been completed by 3 other Travellers (who are also volunteering in the office at FFT) developing their skills in writing and media relations. This has developed cultural and social awareness and self-confidence.

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### *Conclusion*

We continue to have a very high number of people wanting to access services again this year, well beyond the capacity of our workers. This is driving us to push clients on to mainstream service providers which, whilst positive overall, we are aware may create a backlash from the communities if the welcome or service they receive is poor. Many of our clients have complex needs around mental health and as survivors of violence.

We know that we have made the financial position of many of the people we have worked with more stable and bearable and helped many people to resolve serious issues in their lives.

We know 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.

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

## Transition Fund

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The Transition Fund from the Cabinet Office was helpful in developing our resources and improving our sustainability in the following 3 areas:

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### *Commissioning*

Lisa Bruton and Jazka Atterbury worked with service commissioners within Government, local government and the NHS (particularly GP consortia) to develop commissioning processes that take the needs of Gypsies and Travellers fully into account.

Activities included -

- Identifying which types of service delivery contract should be designed to ensure that Gypsies and Travellers can access the services.
- Identifying commissioning processes currently in place.
- Meeting with service commissioners to discuss how commissioning processes can be improved so as to include the provision of effective services for Gypsies and Travellers.

Lisa and Jazka worked extensively with service commissioners; trained in procurement; attended commissioning showcase events; joined 4 third sector networks; produced Equalities Duty flyer for service providers; completed 6 tenders; engaged 7 LA and Clinical Commissioning Groups.

Jazka focused on commissioning and procurement in Sussex. She took part in training in procurement and how the localism bill will affect public sector commissioning, which led to the development of a FFT 'commissioning FAQ' and 'guide to procurement of public sector services'. She and Lisa took part in a number of commissioning showcase events and joined a number of third sector organisation networks and forums throughout Sussex, which has raised FFT's profile as a service provider and opened up a dialogue between FFT and potential partner organisations. They fed back on a number of Local Authority and Clinical Commissioning Group

## Transition Fund

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### *Continuation...*

consultation strategies advising on ways to engage with Gypsies and Travellers.

She designed and developed an Equalities Duty flyer for service providers, which highlights the work of FFT and raises the issue of meeting Equality Duty in service. This is supported by a number of case studies and other promotional materials evidencing FFT work, whilst highlighting the diverse and complex needs of Gypsies and Travellers.

Lisa approached the leads of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessments in all the areas of the South East and consulted on their JSNAs and provided data for them to feed into the JSNA. She organised an event on JSNAs and commissioning services for Gypsies and Travellers for over 35 participants including lead commissioners and Public Health intelligence staff.

Lisa worked in partnership with Baroness Whitaker to put down a Written Question in the House of Commons about including Travellers in the JSNAs and this led to FFT being commissioned by the Department of Health to produce a national guidance that focuses on including Gypsies and Travellers in the JSNA.

She was also able to shape the guidance document being developed for the Clinical Commissioning Groups and ensured the inclusion of "chronically excluded groups" as a population for CCGs to engage with.

She also supported the lead of 2 Clinical Commissioning Groups in areas with high Traveller density, to improve their service capacity by taking on cultural awareness trainings for all their staff, with a view to do further joint work around access to Primary Care for Travellers.

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### **Volunteering**

Over the year we recruited, trained and mentored volunteers from the Gypsy and Traveller

## Transition Fund

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*Continuation...*

community across a range of geographical areas. Liz Macpherson and Michelle Gavin trained in volunteer recruitment & management. Through advertising and outreach, 30 volunteers were recruited, mentored and trained. Liz and Michelle also developed volunteer resources & support materials such as fundraising packs. Volunteers delivered important profile raising events to



commissioners and are continuing with us in various roles.

Volunteers at the book launch of "Travellers Journeys" attended by around 50 people.

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### ***Income Generation and Supporters***

We increased our profile this year by establishing a social media presence primarily aimed at our volunteers and supporters. We now have a Facebook page with over 1,600 followers and more recently a twitter presence with around 200 followers.

Through the year we worked towards a sustainable income for FFT through the development of our income producing products and our membership services.

We developed our paid-for services offer. We restructured our website to enhance services provided online with Paypal and other online giving options. We established an email database to collect and manage contacts as a basis for future marketing. This will enable us to further develop our training offer by marketing a range of products via our website.



## Training

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Over the course of the year we delivered training and presentations to a large variety of organisations, many of whom are now contacting us to help them work better with Gypsies & Travellers. Several FFT staff delivered training, including Avril Fuller, Marya Sadouni, Liz MacPherson, Bek Dilley and Sarah Mann.

We have delivered training to 3 CABx this year. Redhill CAB who were active in setting up training and who also arrange for their local DV service (ESDAS) to be trained with them, prompting some useful cross-service learning. We also trained staff at Worthing and Lancing CABx, which we knew were accessed by many of our clients.

We delivered a several training sessions to Brighton agencies. We started with the City Inclusion Partnership, which included health, fire and public sector officers and members. This was a lively session with attendees challenging each other's assumptions in a supportive way. The session also led to follow up meetings with Brighton & Sussex University Hospital Trust and to longer term consultancy work with South East Coast Ambulance Trust. Following on from this we trained Brighton & Hove City Council (BHCC) Officers and elected Members in 2 separate sessions.

We have also worked with BHCC to include our materials in their e-learning courses to mainstream Gypsy & Traveller awareness within their diversity training. BHCC also commissioned us to provide training to Community Development Workers from the Trust for Developing Communities who requested support for their workers in deprived areas where the proposed development if a permanent Gypsy & Traveller site was being used to stir up anti-Traveller sentiment.

# Training

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## *Continuation...*

We have also provided training to a number of health agencies in Sussex. Through the Local Involvement Network (LINK) we were commissioned to train GPs in Brighton, which we delivered at 2 surgeries based lunchtime learning events and at a GP refresher training attended by GPs from all over Sussex. As a consequence of this we were joined by GP Alice Byram, as a volunteer, and she has worked with us to adapt materials to the professional model used in GP training. We have also been trained in the Equality Delivery System used in the NHS and presented to fellow delegates on our work. In the last quarter of the year we delivered training to health professionals in the West Sussex Well-being hubs and MacMillan staff.

We also delivered a one-off training to pupils at St Bede's school in East Sussex.

The Crown Prosecution Direct provides advice to Police all over the country out of office hours. In Manchester and London we trained over 50 of their solicitors in Gypsy & Traveller awareness, particularly around domestic violence to assist them in advising about charging decisions. The discussions were lively and constructive and, as often happens at our training, one of the CPS lawyers volunteered her Irish Traveller ethnicity.

At nearly all the training we deliver, we find that at least one person volunteers their ethnicity as Romany Gypsy or Irish Traveller or as part of their heritage. Sometimes people come and talk to us during a break or after the training, but others speak about their heritage in group discussions. It is often the first time people have revealed their ethnicity to their colleagues and I feel proud that our training creates an atmosphere where people feel safe to do this.

## Equality and Human Rights Commission

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The EHRC funded capacity building work arising from casework on our national helpline.

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### *Hate crime*

Much progress has been made in developing the awareness of both racially motivated hate crime against Gypsies and Travellers and around the issue of Domestic Violence within the Travelling Communities both at national level through the Independent Hate Crime Steering Group and regionally through Hate Crime working groups and in Domestic Violence plans.

We have developed evidence around the level of hate crime experienced by our clients (21%) and the level and type of Domestic Violence experienced by our clients.

The work on DV has been supported by an excellent response from DV agencies willing to engage and much good training and awareness-raising has taken place. We have recognised the need to resource and plan for work to engage the Travelling communities over DV and project plans are being developed for this work with bids being submitted to the Daphne III programme of European funding.

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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 groups have engaged more with mainstream service providers through the action of the groups. The site resident groups have been able to achieve more responsive repairs and improvements in their sites and increase the numbers of services (such as a playbus) at their sites. The carers group were visited by health and well-being service providers and built relationships with individuals from those services. All these forms of engagement built Gypsies &

## Equality and Human Rights Commission

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*Continuation...*

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.

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### *Case study: Carter's Hill Site Residents Group*

*The residents and group have been supported by FFT volunteer Mel Cox and FFT staff with regular email and personal visits/calls at least weekly until Jan 2012 when Mel left FFT for full-time employment, handing over to Rose Green at Wokingham Borough Council. Carter's Hill residents are now linked in through a multi-agency forum. Residents were particularly pleased to get support for getting dangerous and unpleasant fly-tipping moved from their site entrance.*



The preparation for and the delivery of the Residents Groups Seminar has also been an excellent opportunity to share ours 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 very successful full day seminar was held on 2 February 2011, attended by 46 people with speakers from successful residents groups and their supporters.

# Equality and Human Rights Commission

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*Continuation...*

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## **Domestic Violence**

As with the issue of racially motivated hate crime, we have also developed awareness for ourselves and other agencies around the issue of Domestic Violence within the Travelling Communities. The work on DV has been supported by an excellent response from DV agencies willing to engage and much good training and awareness raising has taken place. We met with a wide range of stakeholders including Police, Women's Aid and Travellers to address the issue of Domestic Violence and Violence Against Women within the travelling communities.

We have also worked with Brighton & Hove City Council's DV Coordinator to ensure that DV services for Gypsies & Travellers were included in both the Council's Traveller Strategy and DV& SV strategy.

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

## Health and Social Care

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Another very busy year as the new NHS structures start to form and the Health and Social Care Bill, finally gains Royal Assent to become the Health and Social Care Act at the end of March 2012.

There have been many public consultations in the lead up to the Health and Social Care Act. The Team has worked tirelessly to promote the needs of Gypsies and Travellers at every opportunity and we are linked in with many national initiatives and partner organisations to ensure that Gypsies and Travellers have their health needs met within the new NHS structures and processes.

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.

To achieve health equality for Gypsies and Travellers however is an uphill struggle and requires on-going provision and support at the grassroots as well as robust and inclusive policy changes. The experience that we have gained over the years of working with the travelling communities has taught us a great deal about what is needed.

The original Sussex Traveller Health Project started in 2003, was designed from its offset 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. Nearly 10 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.

As a result of our outreach work we are able to identify the many barriers that people face in accessing services: These can include a fear of



## Health and Social Care

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*Continuation...*

discrimination; difficulties in accessing primary health care services; poor access to preventative information and services; bureaucratic systems which do not allow for a nomadic existence, whether that be chosen or enforced through frequent evictions; institutional racism and a lack of ethnic monitoring which makes it difficult to prove the 'need' for culturally sensitive and appropriate services.

The 2004, 'Health Status of Travellers in England report' by Sheffield University found that Gypsy and Traveller life expectancy was between 10 and 12 years less than that of the settled population. It has now been accepted by the Department of Health (DH) that this figure is likely to be nearer 20 years less than the life expectancy for the rest of the population. We know that infant mortality is at least three times higher than the national average and that a Gypsy mother is twenty times more likely to experience the death of a child before they reach eighteen years of age. Research on suicide in Ireland has shown that Travellers are three times more likely to commit suicide; we suspect that it may be higher in England but without sufficient monitoring this is hard to quantify.

However, the 2011 National Census change to include Irish Travellers and Romany Gypsies means that we can start to quantify the needs of Travellers, but in order to obtain robust data, there will need to be a sustained piece of work to support and encourage Gypsies and Travellers to declare their ethnic origin. Many Travellers still feel that they may be penalised for revealing this information due to the levels of prejudice and discrimination that they face.

The FFT health team works to support Gypsies and Travellers in and around Sussex, as well as in parts of the South West and East of England, through a DH funded initiative. We also produce user friendly health and social care information, and have now obtained the RSPH quality mark, the Health Information Standard. We also campaign

## Health and Social Care

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*Continuation...*

and lobby for improved health provision for Gypsies and Travellers at a policy level. We use our experience of local work to inform Government departments and Race Equality groups of the issues that we find. 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 PCT. 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.

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### ***Gypsies and Travellers in Local Involvement Networks (LINKs).***

This project has been funded by the DH for three years and has involved FFT working with partner agencies and travelling communities across three regions. FFT either worked with, or facilitated partner organisations, to support Gypsies and Travellers to put together their own Cultural Awareness Training package, which was as much about the process of deciding priorities and setting their own agenda, as well as producing a useful resource for training. FFT then offered LINKs the training package. The training was delivered by Travellers themselves and supported by FFT and partner organisations. It was often the first time that many LINKs members had worked with members of the travelling communities and was an opportunity to ask questions and dispel any myths, and in some cases prejudice. Once people got to know each other it became much easier for Travellers to become involved with the LINKs. In some areas this led to LINKs taking up some of the different issues facing Gypsies and Travellers, such as access to G.Ps and access to Dentistry and Oral Health. This also resulted in a number of reports and recommendations being drafted for dissemination to other LINKs and PCTs. The project finished in March 2012, but has increased the participation of Gypsies and Travellers in the mechanisms of the NHS.

## Health and Social Care

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*Continuation...*

We will be building on this work to develop the National Inclusion Health for Gypsies and Travellers in partnership with Leeds Gypsy and Traveller Exchange. The challenge for us and other Traveller organisations is to ensure that the Joint Strategic Needs Assessments are fully inclusive and identify the needs of Gypsies and Travellers in each locality. Clinical led Consortia will then need to commission appropriate services for Gypsies and Travellers in the light of this. We will need to ensure that JSNA's meet their Equality Duty and work with partners to improve the health of those members of its population who experience the greatest health inequity. Lisa Bruton has worked tirelessly to engage local CCGs and other health stakeholders to pre-empt the new Health Act and pave the way for Gypsy and Traveller Inclusion at a local level, whilst Jazka Atterbury has focused on working with housing and other third sector partners to ensure that the needs of Gypsies and Travellers are acknowledged.

The move to localism, with the theory of the Town hall better knowing the local community than Whitehall, means that the needs of marginalised communities may not be heard as loudly as some other groups who are better able to lobby to their benefit. This has supposedly been offset with a stronger duty to reduce inequalities. We will be watching closely to see if the rhetoric becomes a reality.

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### ***Mental Health and Wellbeing Work***

Gemma Challenger, and Sarah Herlem who joined FFT when Gemma went on maternity leave, have been working to support Gypsies and Travellers across Sussex with mental health and wellbeing issues. This involves working with clients on a one to one basis to support clients struggling with emotional issues. The work involves accessing people into appropriate services, whether that is counselling, assisting with GP appointments or

## Health and Social Care

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*Continuation...*

listening to people who may wish to talk about nerves or feeling very low. Many of our clients have experienced a great deal of bereavement and some individuals have benefitted from counselling for this.

This work is currently funded by Lankelly Chase and East Sussex County Council.

Finally, we are aware that austerity measures have led to many services being cut and sadly many charities are closing down. We believe that this is a particular blow to the BME sector who are being hit disproportionately by the cuts. We are particularly thankful to National voices and The Afiya Trust for working with us to address this issue.

**Zoe Matthews**  
Strategic Health Manager

## Youth Work

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Clare Bingham, our Young People's Coordinator, ran a combination of one to one casework and group-work activities.

We have many young people who have used our service for a long time now. Some young people have chosen to only access activity days, but the majority have accessed one to one casework support at some time since this project commenced. Some young people we engage with on a fairly regular basis, particularly those with complex needs, whereas some young people only contact us when they want advice or support. Any young Gypsy/Traveller in the Sussex area can contact us if they require support and we regularly touch base with people on site visits or during activity days.

Of those we worked with this year, 61% were Romany Gypsies, 32% were of Irish Traveller heritage, 1% were of Scottish Traveller origin and 7% were New Traveller young people. Of these young people nearly 31% are registered disabled or have a profound disability, and nearly 13% are known to be unofficial young carers.

We have been working with the young people and their families in Sussex over several years and we are able to see the difference the project has made to their lives in terms of increased confidence and life opportunities.

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### *Casework*

This year there have been 135 pieces of casework covering a wide range of issues including racist complaints, housing / homelessness and children's services.

Health related casework included occupational services, healthy eating and lifestyle, dentist referrals, specialist paediatric, emotional wellbeing and children's disability teams.

Education related cases included special

## Youth Work

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educational needs advice, or referral to an educational solicitor. Other casework included identification / change of surname, employment support, benefits, child in need and essential items of furniture grants and referrals to Parent Link.

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### *Activities*

Young People identified activities which we delivered over the year, including:

#### **Safe Driving:**

A young drive and vehicle safety course engaged with 44 young Travellers over the year. This need was identified due to the high number of mortalities amongst young men resulting from unsafe and reckless driving. We also supported young people with driving theory skills including literacy. The safe drive project looked at speed control, gear changes, managing obstacle courses and observational skills, concentration and the importance of wearing a seatbelt.

#### **Music Education:**

We ran a music education project with a group of 10 young Irish Travellers aged between 10-18 years and living a nomadic lifestyle with nowhere permanent to stop. Most of the young people who took part in this project have never attended mainstream education so this was their first experience of formal learning.

Exercises around MCing and writing lyrics to illustrate modern day experiences were complemented by the singing of traditional Irish Traveller songs.

#### **Sewing Group:**

We ran a 4 week sewing course for complete beginners and young people who had not previously experienced sewing. We introduced



## Youth Work

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young people to the basics of using a sewing machine and progressed to making items of clothing. Four young people who attended all sessions left with their own designed tutus.

### **Complex Needs Event:**

This was an activity day for young people with multiple complex needs with their carer. 7 young people with special needs and life shortening conditions, enjoyed a day out like their peers including learning about animal welfare and enjoying play areas and physical activity.

### **Circus Skills Workshop:**

A Circus Skills workshop was held with a group of 5 New Travellers by a professional arts company that specialises in working with young people from minority groups. This introductory session was run to encourage young people to join the circus skills group and to be involved with a summer performance for the youth arts festival in the summer.

### **Other Activity Days and Team Building:**

We ran 4 other activity days throughout the year with 50 young people in total including swimming, ice skating, bowling, laser quest, and archery. We typically take out groups of size 12-14 to enable young people to get an opportunity to socialise with other young people and allow them to talk to the caseworker. Feedback shows that new contacts and friendships are formed from these activities.

During the year, we learned that BBC Children in Need had agreed to fund our staff member for 3 more years and we anticipate a similar level of demand from Young People and their families during this time.

**Clare Bingham**  
*Young Person's Co-ordinator*

# Income and Expenditure Account:

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2012

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2012 £	Total 2011 £
<b>Incoming Resources</b>					
Incoming resources from generated funds:					
Grants	2	31,500	393,326	424,826	475,005
Donations		913	-	913	957
Bank Interest		267	-	267	244
Incoming resources from charitable activities					
Fees, subscriptions and publication sales		<u>27,758</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>27,758</u>	<u>23,075</u>
<b>Total Incoming Resources</b>		<b><u>60,438</u></b>	<b><u>393,326</u></b>	<b><u>453,764</u></b>	<b><u>499,281</u></b>
<b>Resources Expended</b>					
Charitable activities	3	28,324	405,406	433,730	506,369
Governance costs	3	<u>3,070</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,070</u>	<u>3,562</u>
<b>Total Resources Expended</b>		<b><u>31,394</u></b>	<b><u>405,406</u></b>	<b><u>436,800</u></b>	<b><u>509,931</u></b>
<b>Net (Outgoing) / Incoming Resources before transfers</b>	4	<b>29,044</b>	<b>(12,080)</b>	<b>16,964</b>	<b>(10,650)</b>
<b>Transfers</b>		<b><u>(16,066)</u></b>	<b><u>16,066</u></b>	<b><u>-</u></b>	<b><u>-</u></b>
<b>Net (Outgoing) / Incoming Resources after transfers</b>		<b>12,978</b>	<b>3,986</b>	<b>16,964</b>	<b>(10,650)</b>
<b>Fund Balances brought forward</b>		<b><u>152,698</u></b>	<b><u>1,465</u></b>	<b><u>154,163</u></b>	<b><u>164,813</u></b>
<b>Fund Balances carried forward</b>	10	<b><u>165,676</u></b>	<b><u>5,451</u></b>	<b><u>171,127</u></b>	<b><u>154,163</u></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.

These pages do not form part of the statutory financial statements which are available on request from:

FFT, Community Base, 113, Queens Road, Brighton, East Sussex, BN1 3XG

## With grateful thanks to our funders and partners:

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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 –

Communities and Local Government who awarded us a total of £304,500 over two years under its 'Tackling Race Inequalities' programme. This has made a huge difference to the scope and reach of our services.



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

**LOTTERY FUNDED**

The Equality and Human Rights Commission who fund 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.



## With grateful thanks to our funders and partners:

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*Continuation...*



The Department of Health who fund our health inclusion work in the South East, South West and the East of England.

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

The Cabinet Office for funding our Transition Fund project to strengthen our longer term sustainability.



Garden Court Chambers for support our work.

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.