

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



Newsletter Summer/Autumn 2013

Registered Charity Number 111 2326

Legal Aid Crisis

Since April 1st 2013 when the Legal Aid Act came into force, TAT has seen a marked reduction in calls to their legal adviceline.

Having talked to a few callers, we are concerned that this may be because people think that legal aid is not available any longer.

FFT and TAT would like to reassure people that legal aid is still available for advice and representation in the following areas

- 1 Evictions from unauthorised encampments
- 2 Evictions from rented sites
- 3 Court planning cases e.g. injunctions, high court appeals, judicial review of stop notices etc
- 4 Homelessness
- 5 Anti-social behaviour and harassment
- 6 Serious disrepair on rented sites
- 7 Cases where the challenge may be by way of judicial review i.e. challenging an unlawful action or decision of a local or public authority.



The **TAT** operates a self-funded national telephone advice line for Gypsies and Travellers in England and Wales. The line is available on **0121 685 8677** and is available Monday to Friday 9 am to 5pm.

For the latest legal news be sure to check out **Garden Court Chambers'** new blog www.gclaw.wordpress.com. Marc Willers has recently written an informative post on changes to temporary stop notice regulations and the impact they will have on Gypsies and Travellers.

FFT work in Prisons

FFT have been working to support Gypsies and Travellers in Sussex Prisons. We have just been awarded funding to support monthly Travellers' groups in Ford and Lewes prisons.

At a best practice and learning seminar held with Prison and Probation teams last year, the difference that a Traveller rep can make to the wellbeing of Travellers inside and the promotion of good race relations was emphasised. Setting up Traveller groups so prisoners have a space to chat and raise issues relating to discrimination helps members of the community to support each other. This is important as the experience of being a Traveller in prison can be especially isolating.



◀ Larry talks about his experience mentoring Travellers in prison at Prison and Probation Training day Autumn 2012

ARE YOU A TRAVELLER IN PRISON?

If you are a Traveller in prison or have been in prison we would like to hear from you. What is your experience of being a Traveller in prison and being part of a Traveller group?

Contact; Sarah Herlem at Friends Families and Travellers, Community Base, 113 Queens Road, Brighton, East Sussex, BN1 3XG.



AS A TRAVELLERS'S REP IN PRISON

At the first prison Billy was a Traveller rep in his Traveller group were promised all sorts of events to celebrate their culture for Traveller History month in June only to be told that there was no money left for the activities. After Billy moved to HMP Ford he wrote to FFT to share a more positive experience

"HMP Ford was a different matter – as soon as I got there a Travellers' rep came to see me, I started going to the monthly meeting with a lady from HMP Ford called Aleta who was so nice and she had time for all us Travellers at Ford. She even helped me

with education every Thursday afternoon. The classroom was small and there was 3-4 of us in the classroom which helped me out – I struggle in a big classroom. Aleta asked me one day if I wanted to go to FFT in Brighton, I said yes and felt over the moon! Me and two other Travellers along with Aleta went to FFT, I was asked loads of things about being a Traveller in prison, I really enjoyed the day. Sarah from FFT made us feel really welcome through the day. I'm due to go on a Travellers' meeting tomorrow. I'm going to put my name forward for being a rep in this prison. I just want to help other Travellers in prison because I know how hard it is in prison for us."

LEAVE A LEGACY

By donating to FFT in your will you can make a difference to future generations by helping FFT continue their important work seeking to end racism and discrimination against Gypsies and Travellers, and to protect the right to pursue a nomadic way of life.

As a registered charity, a gift to FFT in your will is exempt from Inheritance Tax and is deducted from the value of your estate before taxation. Not only is this an extremely tax efficient way to give to charity, it can also reduce any inheritance tax bill on your death and the burden of tax on your loved ones.

Contact us for more information and talk to your solicitor.

INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING WITH FFT?

We're looking for a volunteer to help answer the national helpline. Our national helpline is the only one of its kind – supporting Gypsies and Travellers across the UK with a variety of issues, including evictions, finding a pitch or housing, accessing healthcare or education, homelessness and discrimination.

This is an exciting opportunity to provide support to members of the travelling communities. We are looking with a volunteer with some experience in advice provision and who can offer a regular commitment. We would be also interested in application from those who have experience of using social media within an organisation. We welcome applications from members of the travelling community.

If you are interested please email a CV or a letter explaining your experience etc, to abbie@gypsy-traveller.org.



Crystal's Vardo

Crystal's Vardo went on tour in June as part of Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month. The show went down a storm with audiences at the Hackney Empire, the Rose Theatre Kingston, Camden Irish Centre and Surrey Rural Life Centre. After the shows children had a chance to meet the cast and pose for pictures with the vardo.

The play is aimed at children and families and written to raise awareness of Gypsy and Traveller history and culture in schools. For more details on Crystal's Vardo, please visit the FFT website.



SNIPPETS

Membership to FFT is now free! For details of how to join, visit our website www.gypsy-traveller.org

Congratulations to Marya who will be travelling to Helsinki in September to represent the UK at the Fourth International Conference of Roma Women, organised by the Council of Europe and the Finnish government.

FFT had a great time at Glastonbury in June chatting to festival-goers about our work and signing up new members.

The Heritage Lottery funded oral history project is progressing well. So far ten people have kindly agreed to share their stories along with photographs and documents. Below is a photo taken when FFT Volunteer Michele Polirer went to talk to Lily Smith about her travelling background.





Friends Families and Travellers

Friends, Families & Travellers is a nationally recognised voluntary organisation which serves the whole spectrum of the Traveller community, both traditional and new, settled or on the road. **FFT** runs a national helpline covering evictions, harassment, planning, employment, benefits, education, health, civilrights, discrimination and legal representation. **FFT** is also active in community support, research, monitoring, mediation and policy development at local and national levels.

Join us by signing up at www.gypsy-traveller.org/about-fft/join-us/ or fill out the form below.

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

NAME

ADDRESS

POSTCODE

SIGNATURE

EMAIL ADDRESS

I do not wish to join FFT but wish to make a donation
Please state if you wish to remain anonymous.

I do not wish to join FFT, but would like to receive newsletters

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

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

Like us on Facebook



National Contacts

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

Traveller Advice Team (TAT)
07768 316755 24hr

Community Legal Advice
Mon-Fri 0121 685 8677
Emergency 07768 316755

Family Rights Group
0800 731 1696

Squatters Advisory Service
020 7359 8814

The Traveller Law Reform Project
www.travellerslaw.org.uk

Travellers Aid Trust
www.travellersaidtrust.org

The Gypsy Council
01708 868986

UK Association of Gypsy Women
Tel. 01325 788281
Mob. 07880 637591
UKAGW@Ymail.com
RFUKAGW@live.co.uk

Shelter (homeless)
0808 800 4444

Pavee Point
00 353 1 878 0255

Children's Society
South-West 01761 411771

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

National Association of Boat Owners
01749 677195

Equality & Human Rights Commission
020 9390000

Education Otherwise
enquiries@educationotherwise.org

The Travellers' School Charity
07717 055378

Roma Support Group
020 7511 5721

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