

Friends, Families and Travellers



Annual Report 2007 - 2008

Charity Number 1112326

Friends, Families & Travellers

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Introduction to FFT

Friends, Families and Travellers (FFT) was established during the passage through Parliament of the 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act and has emerged as a lead organisation seeking to address the problems facing the Gypsy and Traveller communities.

Starting as an informal support group working primarily with New Travellers, FFT soon began working with Gypsies and Irish Travellers and within a few years had grown into a formal organisation providing advice and information along with a wide range of other services to Gypsies and Travellers nationwide.

Very early on in its history, FFT developed a working relationship with the Public Law Project and provided crucial ground work for two landmark legal challenges which resulted in local authorities being required to make basic welfare enquiries before being able to carry out evictions.

FFT's mission statement is to work towards a more equitable society where everyone has the right to travel and to stop without fear of persecution because of their lifestyle.

FFT's ongoing work in this field gained recognition when the organisation was shortlisted for the Human Rights Award in 1999. Taking this work forward, FFT is one of four partners within the Traveller Law Reform Project, along with the Gypsy Council, the Irish Traveller Movement and the London Gypsy and Traveller Unit.

Today 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).

FFT is a membership organisation run by a Management Committee, which in 2007/8 was made up of eight Trustees, four of whom were Travellers and three of whom were lawyers specialising in Traveller issues.



Report of the Chair - Liz Watkins



I am pleased to introduce our 2007/8 Annual Report which outlines the work that we have been doing at national, regional and local levels to try to redress the serious inequalities that are still part and parcel of the life of Gypsies and Travellers.

Our aim as an organisation is to seek to end racism and discrimination against Gypsies and Travellers, whatever their ethnicity, culture or background, whether settled or mobile, and to protect the right to pursue a nomadic way of life.

2007-8 has been a hugely successful year for FFT. We have grown as an organisation, with several funding successes and subsequent new staff and projects. This success has continued into the first part of 2008-09 and we have filled our current premises to capacity. We now want to expand our local projects and services into other regions of the country, particularly the South West and the East of England, where we have identified unmet needs for services. We continue to build capacity in other organisations and in the Gypsy and Traveller communities, as well as seeking funding to develop a broader geographical cover.

We have some extremely successful project models, developed by Gypsies and Travellers for Gypsies and Travellers, (for example our health outreach work and the "Training the Teachers" project, details of which appear elsewhere in this report), and feel strongly that the statutory agencies should replicate these nationally, particularly as health and education outcomes for the travelling communities are still far behind those of the settled communities.

The Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs assessment process has moved forward throughout this period, and Steve Staines (an original founder of FFT) has worked extremely hard to keep track of this process and feed into policy development, raising concerns for example about the questionable methodologies some councils have used to assess needs. In some cases



there has been woefully inadequate consultation with Gypsies and Travellers and there is growing concern that once councils have provided some sites, a much stricter enforcement regime will be put in place so that moving around will no longer be tolerated. As an organisation we believe that people should have the right to follow a nomadic lifestyle and we will resist any attempts to eradicate or outlaw nomadism.

The value of the planning work that Steve Staines has done cannot be underestimated and we are dismayed that the government has not seen fit to resource this work so as to ensure that the strategic planning process is undertaken in the best possible way with full consultation with the communities themselves. It remains to be seen what sanctions will be taken against those councils who do not do the job properly or who drag their feet over site provision. We will continue to try to secure funding and resources to ensure that this crucial work can continue.

I feel acutely aware that however much we grow, expand and capacity-build, we will never be able to meet all the needs of Gypsies and Travellers or highlight all the injustices and inequalities that are faced on a day to day basis by our clients, their friends and families. It is shameful to Europe, our country and society as a whole that these small minorities are still so discriminated against. That is, I think, what drives us all to try, in our way, to improve things.

Do take a few minutes to read this annual report which will give you a flavour of what our fabulous staff and volunteers have undertaken in 2007-08 and what we hope to do in the future.

Sadly, as we moved into 2008-09 we lost another valued FFT volunteer, Bobby Kellie, who died suddenly and unexpectedly in June this year. Bobby was dedicated to helping Gypsies and Travellers through her work as a solicitor in the Traveller Advice Team of the Community Law Partnership in Birmingham. It is a clear illustration of her dedication that she was also a volunteer Trustee for FFT, giving up her precious time to travel, often long distances, to attend Trustee Board meetings. She had a great sense of fairness, and always contributed to our decision making and management in a considered way. We will miss her greatly.



Report of the Director - Chris Whitwell



2007-8 has been a year of growth and development for FFT with a range of new projects and services being developed and implemented. As an organisation working at national, regional and local levels we have sought to balance the campaigning and policy work that we do with the casework and local outreach services so that our work at the strategic level is always informed by what is happening on the ground.

Our work is based on three main pillars - casework, capacity building and campaigning - and we afford equal importance to each. Through our casework we can make a real and lasting difference to the lives of the individuals and families that we help but we recognise that, as a relatively small organisation, we can only meet a small part of the need and so we also work to build the capacity of mainstream organisations in the voluntary and statutory sectors to provide appropriate and culturally sensitive services to Gypsies and Travellers.

The more casework and capacity building we do however, the more we realise how much needs to change in order to redress the disgraceful and shameful inequalities and discrimination faced by Gypsies and Travellers as part of their everyday experience. We continue to campaign in our own right and with partner organisations to try to bring about a more equal and just society where Gypsies and Travellers are respected and valued as an integral part of our community.

The past twelve months have seen a plethora of new Government initiatives, programmes and proposals aimed at increasing individual choice and the ability of people to have more power over the decisions that affect their lives. Such approaches are to be welcomed in principle but there is a drawback. Programmes aimed at empowerment or widening choice and participation can tend to assist those people who are already halfway up the so called 'ladder of empowerment' rather than those chronically



Report of the Director - Chris Whitwell

excluded groups who are still struggling to get their foot onto the first rung. As a result these latter groups can become comparatively even more disempowered, even more marginalised, with even fewer choices and with even worse life outcomes. We will continue to fight to ensure that the interests of the travelling communities are not forgotten in the rolling out of these social policy reforms.

I hope that you enjoy reading, in the following pages, about the various projects and services that Friends, Families and Travellers is delivering. We could not maintain this level of growth and activity without the support of our members and our various funders, all of whom are acknowledged elsewhere in this report. Above all I would like to say what an enormous privilege it is for me to work with such a dedicated and talented team of staff and Trustees who, despite the mountain still to be climbed, are bringing about real and positive changes to the lives of the people within the travelling communities.

Our Trustees

Our Trustees during 2007/8 were -

Liz Watkins (Chair)
Neil Ansell (Vice Chair)
Justine Compton (Honorary Treasurer)
Roberta (Bobby) Kellie
Tony Thompson
Rob Torkington
Mark Willers
Franqui Wolf (until July 2007)
Judy Pointing (co-opted March 2008)

Our Director, Chris Whitwell, is also Company Secretary.



Bobbie Kellie

All Trustees and staff at FFT were saddened by the sudden and unexpected death in June 2008 of our valued Trustee, supporter and friend, Bobby Kellie. Bobby was a solicitor with the Traveller Advice Team of the Community Law Partnership in Birmingham who dedicated her life to helping members of the travelling communities. She was noted among her colleagues for her constantly friendly and cheerful approach within the office, despite the enormous demands and pressures of the job, and it is a tribute to the esteem in which she was held that the Community Law Partnership office was closed for the afternoon of Bobby's funeral so that all her colleagues could attend and pay their respects. As a Trustee of FFT Bobby always made the long journey from her home in Dudley to Trustee Board meetings in London or in Brighton and her contributions to the discussions were unfailingly thoughtful, considered and to the point. She is a great loss to our organisation and we will all miss her.



What We Do

We are the only national charity that works on behalf of all Gypsies and Travellers regardless of ethnicity, culture or background.

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 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



What We Do

issues that affect the lives of the travelling communities.



Working with local individuals and groups from the travelling communities we respond to the policies and proposals of local and regional planning bodies and provide expert evidence to Examinations in Public of regional site provision/allocation strategies.

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.



The Advice and Information Unit

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

There are no accurate figures for Gypsies and Travellers in the UK, but various sources, e.g. the Council of Europe, have estimated the number at around 300,000 comprising 200,000 housed and 100,000 in caravans.

The only other official estimate available is the bi-annual count of Gypsy caravans carried out by local authorities in England and published twice a year by Communities and Local Government. These counts are thought to be notoriously unreliable and to consistently under-represent the true figures.

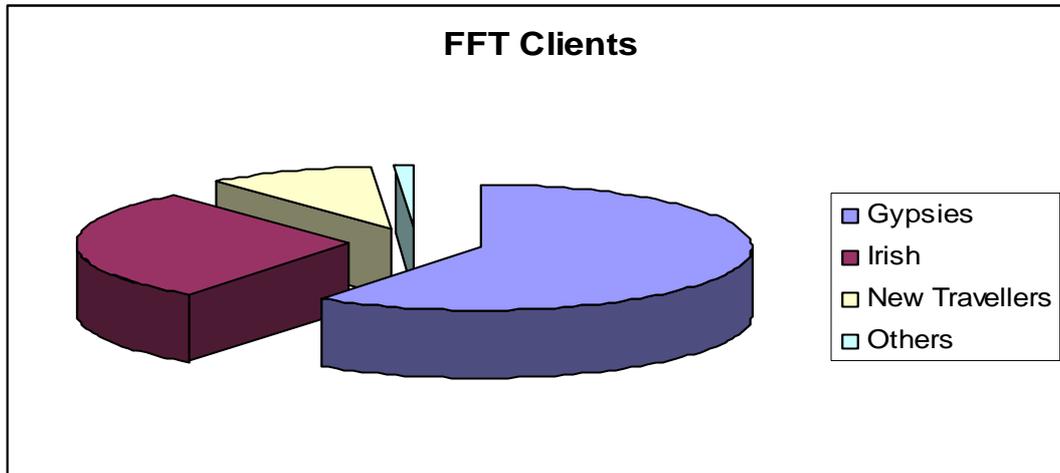
Over the past year or so all local authorities have been required to carry out Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments to enable the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers to be taken into account in the formulation of local development plans. The accuracy and robustness of these assessments has also been called in question by local groups from the travelling communities and in many cases the work has been carried out with little or no proper input from the travelling communities themselves.

Nationally best estimates would suggest that there is a need for around 4,500 new pitches - a small figure in comparison with the 3 million new bricks and mortar houses required over the next decade but hugely significant in terms of the human misery that results from lack of sites.

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 travelling communities and all regions of the country.



The Advice and Information Unit



During 2007/8 our caseworkers dealt with a wide variety of cases from all across mainland UK, including Wales and Scotland. Approximately 60% of all our casework was with Gypsies, 29% was with Irish Travellers and 10% was with New Travellers, and 1% with other travelling groups. This represents an increase over the previous year in terms of the amount of work done on behalf of 'traditional' Travellers (Gypsies and Irish Travellers) compared with the percentage done on behalf of New Travellers.

The categories of casework that we provided covered a wide range of issues and problems although, unsurprisingly, many revolved around eviction, housing and planning issues.

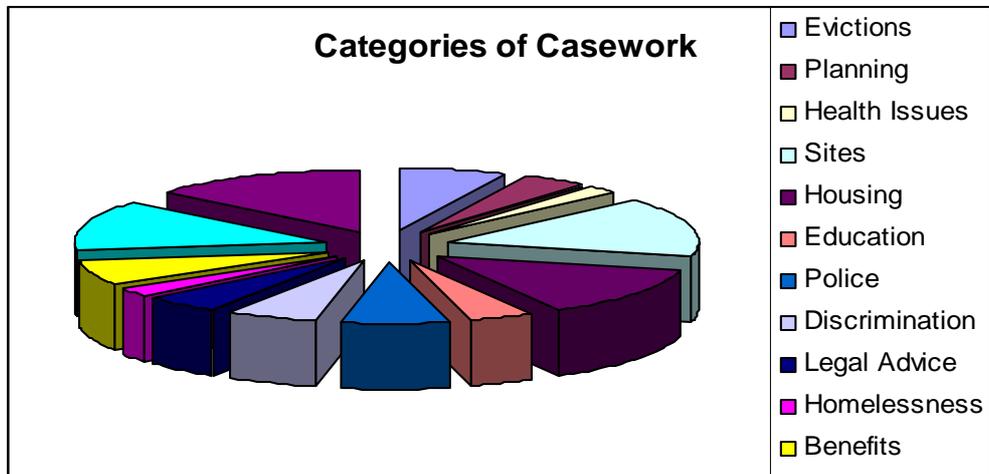
The full breakdown is as follows -

- 7% were about evictions
- 4% were about planning
- 2% were about health issues
- 16% were about sites
- 13% were about housing
- 4% were about education
- 7% were about the police



The Advice and Information Unit

- 6% were about discrimination
- 5% were seeking legal advice
- 2% were about homelessness
- 7% were about benefits
- 13% were about grants
- 14% other



Often clients present with multiple issues and sometimes these can overlap, making categorisation difficult. However FFT will continue to seek to improve and refine its processes for data collection whilst ensuring that strict client confidentiality remains at the forefront of the work that we do.

Emma Nuttall
Traveller Advice and Policy Manager



Case Studies

Here is a selection of some of the cases we dealt with in 2007/8.

A

This case relates to residents on a Gypsy site in the South East who were unhappy about the management of their site. FFT started regular meetings between site residents and the local authority which resulted in the local authority appointing a dedicated site manager and applying for a government Gypsy Sites Refurbishment Grant to improve the site.

B



One of our Irish Traveller clients in the South West reported an issue of discrimination. The council-run site she is living on was experiencing problems receiving orders from a delivery company. An employee of the company told the Irish Traveller that the company would not deliver to the address as it was a Traveller site. After FFT made some enquiries with the company they denied the allegation made against them but deliveries to the

site soon commenced. The issue was reported to the Equalities and Human Rights Commission.

C

A group of New Travellers were parked on private land in the East of England. They had made an agreement with the landowner to stay for a short while so they could complete repairs to their vehicles. Unexpectedly the police arrived at the site with a section 61 notice. FFT worked alongside the local Gypsy Liaison Officer to revoke the section 61 notice. The private landowner had not given the Travellers notice to leave which must be done before a section 61 can be considered by the police. The agreement between the landowner and the Travellers was reinstated and they were able to stay on the land.



Case Studies

D

A young Gypsy living in the South East was having problems with her Incapacity Benefit. She had missed a couple of medical appointments due to being constantly evicted and the Benefits Office stopped her benefit. FFT launched an appeal to get the benefit reinstated and the tribunal came out in her favour and recognised that she was undergoing difficult times and the benefit was restored and backdated.

Policy

A key element of our work during the past year has been to contribute to national policy development and to lobby for change. For example, we have campaigned vigorously to gain security of tenure for Gypsies and Travellers on local authority owned sites following a landmark ruling in the European Courts. This issue is being addressed in the 2008 Housing and Regeneration Bill which, under Clause 301, brings local authority Gypsy and Traveller sites under the Mobile Homes Act 1983 (from which they were previously exempt).

Over the past year we have lobbied local authorities and central government to re-open sites or pitches on sites that are currently closed and thus not available for the Traveller community's use. We see this as unacceptable, given the high numbers of Travellers in need of a pitch. We have also lobbied local authorities to bring forward sites, in accordance with government guidance which recommends this where there is a need (as there is in most places). We will continue to work with partner organisations and in our own right to try to achieve fairness and equality for all Gypsies and Travellers.

Emma Nuttall

Traveller Advice and Policy Manager



Planning

This year has seen a continuation of responses to consultations with local authorities on planning documents. Over 200 local authorities have responded in total.

FFT is one of the few organisations able to make formal responses about Gypsy and Traveller accommodation issues to local authorities.

The Planning Officer has contributed, via the Traveller Law Reform Project, to the development of national policy and has supplied information to the All Party Parliamentary Group on Gypsy and Traveller Law Reform as well as working with a range of organisations on planning issues.

In March, FFT made a significant and valuable contribution to the debate over accommodation assessment and allocation during the 3 day Examination in Public (EiP) of the Regional Spatial Strategy for Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation. The Panel's Report, published in the summer of 2008, showed the importance of having a voice for Gypsies and Travellers in complicated technical debates. Partly as a result of FFT's representations, the Planning Inspectorate Report was critical of the system of assessment of accommodation needs and has made a number of useful recommendations which FFT hopes will lead on to a national review of the accommodation needs methodology.

Similar EiPs of the East and SE Region Regional Spatial Strategies are scheduled for autumn 2008 and 2009, however the ability of FFT to participate fully is under threat: further funding has not been secured for Planning and despite requests to Government, no support for this vital work has been forthcoming.

Steve Staines
Planning Officer



Staff



Chris Whitwell, BSc, MA.
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, BA.
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 8 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 07. Her background includes working with marginalised communities both in England and abroad.

Sarah Mann, BSc
Traveller Advice Project Officer

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

**Zoe Matthews RMN, BA (Hons) MA.
Health Improvement 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 eight 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.

**Sally Burnett.
Health Advisor**

Sally has been working for FFT for about 2 years and prior to that was working as a full time health visitor. Sally is also a qualified midwife.



**Gemma Challenger
Well-being Support Worker**

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

Staff



Tammy Furey, BA, MSc.
Community Education and Capacity Building Project Manager
Tammy joined FFT in 2001 as Project Manager of the CyberPilots. She also designs FFT's website (www.Gypsy-Traveller.org), the CyberPilot website (www.Gypsy-Traveller.org/cyberpilots), and FFT's newsletter.

Clare Bingham, MA.
Young Person's Co-ordinator
MA in Applied Anthropology, Youth and Community Work at Goldsmith University. Clare's background is working with young homeless people including street homeless and sexual health outreach worker and later as a youth worker.



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.

Steve Staines, Bsc, Msc, Dip Ed.
Planning Officer
Steve worked with others to create FFT Support Group in the run up to the 1994 Criminal Justice Bill and was National Coordinator for some years.

Join Our Organisation



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 at admin@gypsy-traveller.org.

Partnership Working

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. Progress on site provision remains desperately slow and we need to keep up the pressure on the Government and on local authorities to ensure that the fine words that are spoken and promises made get translated into positive action on the ground.



Partnership Working

We are committed to working in partnership, and will continue to participate fully in the Traveller Law Reform Project in partnership with the Gypsy Council, the Irish Traveller Movement, and the London Gypsy and Traveller Unit. We will continue to link closely with the Travellers Advice Team to whom we refer cases that require a specialist legal input. We will also work collaboratively with the many other groups that are doing vital work all around the country such as the Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group, the South West Alliance of Nomads, the Roma Support group and the newly emerging Southern Network of Gypsies and Irish Travellers. There are links to these and to around 50 other such organisations on our website at www.gypsy-traveller.org.

Traveller Advice Project



The Traveller Advice Project funded by the Big Lottery aims help mainstream agencies in the South East improve their capacity to provide appropriate and culturally sensitive services to Gypsies & Travellers.

Following on from the first year of the project, the national database of organisations that provide targeted services to Gypsies and Travellers is now on our website and updated regularly.

During the year we ran several training seminars for voluntary and statutory agencies in Kent, East Sussex, West Sussex, Oxfordshire and Wokingham & Reading. We also delivered a Health & Social Care Regional Seminar and a bespoke training session for the British Red Cross. We offered half day sessions centred around Gypsy & Traveller speakers complemented by case studies from agencies working with Gypsies and Travellers. Over the last 18 months we have trained delegates from over 100 organisations in the



Traveller Advice Project

South East including Citizens Advice Bureaux, Police, Housing Associations, CAFCASS, Age Concern, 27 Local Authorities, Shelter, NHS Trusts, Fire & Rescue Services, British Red Cross, Race Equality Councils, National Childbirth Trust, HM Prisons, RPTI, Refuges, MIND and YMCA.

Delegates gained an understanding of Gypsy & Traveller culture, the barriers to Gypsies & Travellers accessing mainstream services and learned how they could help to overcome social exclusion. We also make sure people had a good lunch and went home feeling they could make a difference. Several delegates have gone on to develop significant new work with Gypsies and Travellers, notably East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service who ran outreach days, and the Purple Bus Youth Project who visited sites in West Sussex.



Information stand at Romany Roots

"It was a pleasure to be involved in something so professional and something that had so much input from Travellers"
(quote from attendee)



Sarah Mann
Project Officer

Sussex Travellers Health Project

The Sussex Traveller Health Project was launched in 2003, originally with funding from Volunteering England. 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.

We have built on the experience of this project to develop a new approach towards helping travelling families to overcome the barriers they face in accessing health and social care services that most of us take for granted.

It is through our outreach work that we have been able to engage with some individuals and families who have largely been 'invisible' to the services that should be there to help and support them. Our team works to bridge those people 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 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 extent of marginalisation, social exclusion and deprivation that we have uncovered in the course of our work will shock many people. The health outcomes are poorer than with any other minority group.

The 'Health Status of Travellers' report published in 2004 sets out the appalling statistics, which speak for themselves - life expectancy within Gypsy and Traveller communities 10 - 12 years shorter than the rest of the population, Gypsy and Traveller mothers twenty times more likely



Sussex Travellers Health Project

to experience the death of a child, an alarmingly high incidence of still births and miscarriages and so on.

The health team at FFT works to support Gypsies and Travellers in and around Sussex as well as campaigning and lobbying for improved health provision for Gypsies and Travellers at a national level. We use our experience of local work to inform Government departments and Race Equality groups of the issues that we find.

I now manage a team of seven people (post April 2008). However, during 2007/8 the team consisted of:

Sally Burnett, a health visitor who works as a Specialist Traveller Health Advisor in Brighton and Hove as well as researching for a doctorate in Resilience Therapy with Gypsies and Travellers. Sally will also be leading on a piece of research work with FFT, Brighton and Hove City Teaching PCT and the University of Brighton around A&E and Urgent Care services which we hope will inform future services for Gypsies and Travellers.

Avril Fuller, who is herself a Gypsy woman, working to inform Gypsies and Travellers of the services provided by Adult Social Care in East Sussex and to access Gypsies and Travellers into Adult Social Care and other support services provided by ASC, where it is needed.

Gemma Challenger is a new Traveller who works as a Well-Being Support Worker. This involves working with people from the travelling community to access mental health services, from getting a G.P. through the assessment process and into the specific mental health services, both statutory and voluntary. Gemma provides information on the process involved in accessing mental health services to people with little or no experience or knowledge of the services. In addition to this Gemma helps people source more information on their conditions and works with them to develop their own self help



Sussex Travellers Health Project

strategies, for example diet or relaxation techniques.

Clare Bingham is another key member of the Team who works with Gypsy and Traveller children and young people. A qualified youth worker Clare has worked in an innovative way to build the confidence of young people in the travelling communities. A particular success during 2007/8 was the CRE funded 'Training the Teachers' project (see Page 26-27).

We also look forward to working with Rethink during 2008/9, when we will manage one of the BME Community Development Worker posts as part of the new Delivering Race Equality Programmes which will provide 500 new workers to access BME people, including Gypsies and Travellers.

We support self-help groups in both East and West Sussex and we will continue to operate on a basis that tries to equip individuals, families and communities to become empowered to meet their own health needs.

We believe that we have developed a model of working in Sussex that should be rolled out to other areas and to other regions and we will continue to seek ways of enabling this innovative approach to be adopted in other places. I would love to see a robust National Traveller Health Strategy to ensure that Gypsies and Travellers receive the health care that they are entitled too and that we see a reduction in the health inequalities that currently exist.

Zoe Matthews

Health Improvement Manager



Mental Health and Well-being

We now have a Well-being Support Worker providing support to Travelling communities across Sussex. The post came about in response to Travellers and Gypsies reporting high levels of mental health problems when accessing the Health Project. There are many specific issues which affect the mental health of Gypsy and Traveller communities with stress, anxiety and depression being directly linked to the discrimination, prejudice and racism many people regularly face. Lack of site provision, frequent evictions, lack of access to GPs and the unsuitable nature of bricks and mortar housing also have a negative affect on people's mental health, with high infant mortality, low life expectancy and high suicide rates amongst the highest of any ethnic minority group in the UK.

As a Well-being Support Worker Gemma helps people from the travelling community with the entire process of accessing mental health services, from getting a G.P. through the assessment process and into the specific mental health services, both statutory and voluntary. Gemma provides information on the process involved in accessing mental health services to people with little or no experience or knowledge of the services. In addition to this people are helped to source more information on their conditions and work with them to develop their own self help strategies, for example diet or relaxation techniques.

Gemma has found anxiety, depression and panic attacks, and to a lesser extent post-traumatic stress disorder, to be the most common mental health conditions. There is a huge mistrust and fear of services and high levels of stigma attached to the term 'mental health' and anything associated with it (such as counselling). In many Gypsy and Traveller communities 'mental health' tends to be associated with psychosis rather than more common conditions such as depression, stress and anxiety this acts as a major barrier preventing people from accessing the mental health services that they need.



Training the Teachers



The "Training the Teachers" project identified the need for structured culture awareness training for teachers and youth workers. Cultural awareness training gives young Travellers the opportunity to share their experiences, to challenge stereotypes and misconceptions, but also for them to be able to inform adults that work with young people what they feel they should know about their culture. The aim was to provide young people led training to mainstream organisations. It was crucial that the young Travellers felt confident and supported to be able to express what they feel adults need to know.

The project, through a series of summer youth sessions, funded by the Youth Opportunities Fund, worked with 40 Gypsy Traveller Young People aged between 12-18 years.

In November 2007, the Project Manager ran a ten week Cultural Identity and Arts Programme for twenty young Travellers in Hastings. The sessions were structured and involved guest Gypsy Traveller artists who explored the positive side of Gypsy Traveller culture. The programme made a film about young Travellers' experiences called the Wheel of Misfortune. Topics covered by include: Verbal bullying; images of Gypsies in the media and in art; young people talking about their love of the lifestyle; lack of sites; access to education; evictions and housing. The end film was designed to be used as a cultural awareness training resource.



Training the Teachers



A young Traveller with an Eviction notice for the following morning, from the video "Wheel of Misfortune"

7 cultural awareness sessions were given to over 75 participants by nine young Gypsy Travellers. The cultural awareness training was offered, primarily to teachers and schools. However, the sessions were opened up to groups of professionals that have contact with young Travellers. These professionals included:

- Young Carers' project workers
- Drug advice agencies
- Health Visitors
- Work workers
- Youth participation workers
- Connexions staff
- Youth inclusion workers
- Detached mobile youth workers

A rap song, made by the young Travellers with Gentina Rose, explores the aspects of being a young Traveller:

*"Its funny, you heard these people,
They think that we're so bad,
I'd like for you to live a day
in a Gypsy caravan,
These girls are so pretty
A smile they don't hold
A life of pain and torture
And secrets they don't told*

*Why must you judge me, so
why do I cry
These hating unbelievers
prefer to live a lie
So let me educate you on a
little thing or two"*

"I really liked the relaxed and un-confrontational approach of the speakers, thank you!"

"Very informative answered some questions in great depth".

(Feedback from sessions)

This training was directing delivered by Young Gypsy Travellers, supported by Friends, Families and Travellers' youth worker and Gypsy Traveller mentors. The Project was managed by Clare Bingham, with Gypsy Traveller youth worker Marya Sadouni. The project was funded by the 'Getting Results' project, by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (formally Council for Racial Equality).

Clare Bingham
Project Manager



Income and Expenditure Account:

For the period ended 31st March 2008.

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2008 £	Total 2007 £
Incoming Resources					
Incoming resources from generated funds:					
Grants	2	82,648	179,566	262,214	194,280
Donations		605	-	605	383
Bank Interest		4,674	-	4,674	1,437
Incoming resources from charitable activities					
Fees, subscriptions and publication sales		<u>9,819</u>	<u>1,388</u>	<u>11,207</u>	<u>5,755</u>
Total Incoming Resources		<u>97,746</u>	<u>180,954</u>	<u>278,701</u>	<u>201,855</u>
Resources Expended					
Charitable activities	3	90,210	164,137	254,347	172,891
Governance costs	3	<u>2,474</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,474</u>	<u>2,620</u>
Total Resources Expended		<u>92,684</u>	<u>164,137</u>	<u>256,821</u>	<u>175,511</u>
Net Incoming Resources before transfers	4	5,062	16,817	21,879	26,344
Fund Balances brought forward		<u>39,390</u>	<u>22,951</u>	<u>62,341</u>	<u>35,997</u>
Fund Balances carried forward		<u>44,452</u>	<u>39,768</u>	<u>84,220</u>	<u>62,341</u>

The full report and financial statements are available on request from:

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



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 indebted to -



The Travellers Aid Trust who continue to support us with a substantial contribution towards our core costs.



The Big Lottery who fund our Regional Traveller Advice Project.

East Sussex County Council and Sompriti who are joined in with us as partners in our Social Care outreach work, funded by Invest to Save Round 8.

Brighton and Hove City
Teaching Primary Care Trust



Brighton & Hove City Primary Care Trust
which funds our health outreach work.



COMMISSION FOR RACIAL EQUALITY

The Commission for Racial Equality (now part of the Equality and Human Rights Commission) which funded our successful 'Training the Teachers' project.



The Allen Lane Foundation and Garden Court Chambers who contribute towards funding our planning work.



Lloyds TSB Foundation who fund our outreach work in West Sussex.

The Woodward Charitable Trust who contribute towards the funding of our casework.

The Dion Committee of the Irish Government which funds our work on behalf of Irish Travellers.

Lankelly Chase which funds our mental health outreach work.



BBC Children In Need which funds our work with young Gypsies and Travellers.