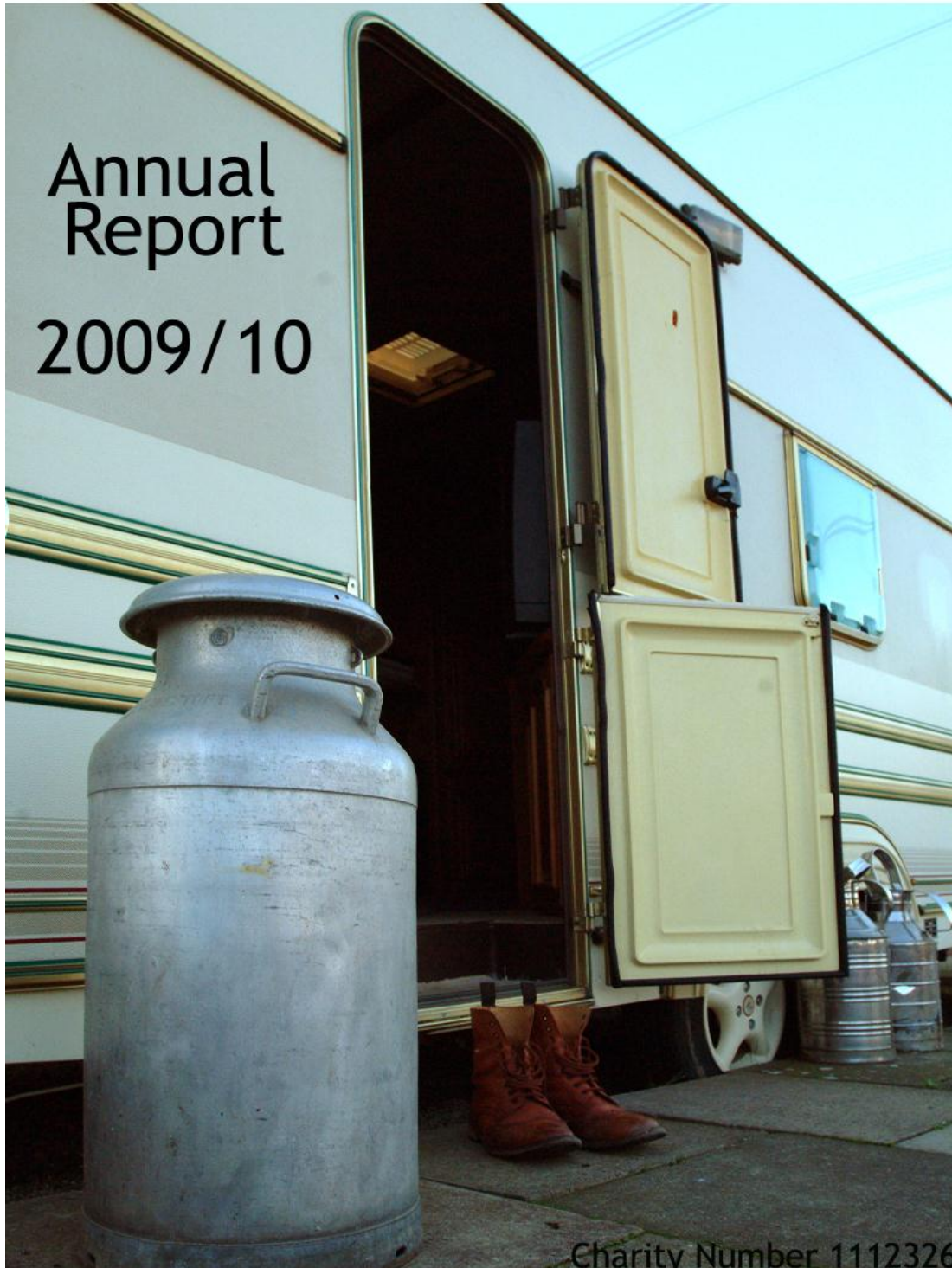




**Friends Families and Travellers**

Annual  
Report  
2009/10



Charity Number 1112326

# Friends, Families & Travellers

---

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>REPORT OF THE CHAIR</b>	<b>3 - 4</b>
<b>REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR</b>	<b>5 - 7</b>
<b>OUR TRUSTEES</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>WHAT WE DO</b>	<b>8 - 9</b>
<b>THE ADVICE AND INFORMATION UNIT</b>	<b>10 - 12</b>
<b>CASE STUDIES</b>	<b>13 - 14</b>
<b>POLICY</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>PLANNING</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>STAFF</b>	<b>17 - 21</b>
<b>OUR CONSULTANT EXPERTS</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>JOIN OUR ORGANISATION</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>PARTNERSHIP WORKING</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING</b>	<b>25 - 27</b>
<b>REACHING COMMUNITIES</b>	<b>28 - 29</b>
<b>SUSSEX TRAVELLERS HEALTH PROJECT</b>	<b>30 - 31</b>
<b>YOUTH WORK</b>	<b>32 - 33</b>
<b>INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>WITH GRATEFUL THANKS</b>	<b>35 - 36</b>

*Cover Photograph by Simon Evans*

## 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.

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

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 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 the partners within the Traveller Law Reform Project, along with 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 2009/10 was made up of eight Trustees, four of whom were Travellers and two of whom were lawyers specialising in Traveller issues.

## Report of the Chair - Liz Watkins

---



2009-10 has been a bumper year in terms of funding successes thanks to the hard work and tenacity of Chris Whitwell, our Director, and his management team, Zoe Matthews, Emma Nuttall and Sarah Mann, as well as other staff who have contributed so effectively to work on funding bids. As a result our paid staff complement has become much larger - by January 2010 a total staff of 19, including nine people from the Travelling communities (four Romany Gypsies, two Irish Travellers and three New Travellers) resulting in three discrete Teams - "Strategic Heath" led by Zoe, "Advice and Policy" led by Emma and "Training and Capacity Building" led by Sarah.

Our staff are exceptional in their dedication and professionalism, but it is hard sometimes to imagine how some of them cope, as at times it can be incredibly stressful dealing with the difficult, complex and often grossly unfair situations of clients and then, for many of the staff, going home at the end of the day to deal with their own similar situations.

The Trustees have huge admiration for all our staff, but the Trustee Board realise that this alone is not enough - we try to be a supportive and compassionate employer and have a range of policies to support staff, including compassionate leave and access to counselling services if they need it. The managers and staff teams are very mutually supportive.

With increased funding we have been able to extend our services and develop in-roads in new areas of work. In 2009 FFT opened new doors on taboo issues such as domestic violence, and extended our mental health related services. Other new areas of work include democratic engagement and looking at techniques for conflict resolution. For a long time FFT has wanted to extend its outreach into other areas of the UK and we were delighted when funding was awarded under the Tackling Racial Inequalities programme, which enabled us to recruit two new community

## Report of the Chair - Liz Watkins

---

*Continuation...*

development workers, one in the South West and one in the East of England.

The range of services delivered and complexity of issues which FFT deals with every day is truly astounding and I hope that this Annual Report will give you a good flavour of what has been achieved during 2009/10.

Today individual, institutional and structural racism and discrimination against Gypsies and Travellers remains a major concern, and FFT continues to challenge the tabloid promotion of racist and ill-informed attitudes that still run like an obscene thread through the whole fabric of our society.

In May 2009 two of our Trustees, Marc Willers and Justine Compton, revised the Traveller related information in the Citizens Advice national electronic information system. All Citizens Advice Bureaux use this system to inform their advice work so that when Gypsies and Travellers approach Citizens Advice Bureaux for help anywhere in the country, they should receive well informed and appropriate advice.

I will not, in this review of 2009/10, comment in detail on events following the May 2010 General Election. Suffice it to say that the current economic situation and various post-election policy announcements mean that serious challenges lie ahead for all of us who seek to bring about equality and social justice for Gypsies and Travellers.

**Liz Watkins**  
Chair



## Report of the Director - Chris Whitwell

---



2009/10 has been an exciting year for FFT with the announcement in July 2009 that we were to be one of 27 organisations to be funded under the then Government's 'Tackling Racial Inequalities' Programme. This was a huge injection of funding for us and enabled us to embark on a really ambitious programme of work, but it has not been without its challenges. Welcome as the funding has been, enabling us to recruit to five additional posts (four of whom are from the travelling communities) the down side is that the funding is very short term and will end in March 2011. Unfortunately, trying to secure equality and social justice for Gypsies and Travellers is a marathon, not a sprint, and we need to try to ensure that the work that we are doing under this Programme has a lasting impact beyond the life of the projects themselves. There is always the danger of raising interest and expectations and not being able to sustain the initiatives that have been started. This can have the result of making communities even more disenchanted and disengaged. We will do our best to ensure that this doesn't happen and that the work that we are currently doing across three Regions under the Programme becomes self-sustaining.

Apart from the Tackling Racial Inequalities programme we have continued to deliver our core services, built on the three pillars of Casework, Capacity Building and Campaigning. Importantly, we have been successful in getting the shocking discrimination and inequalities experienced by Gypsies and Travellers onto the agenda of key agencies at national, regional and local levels.

Through the year we have managed to support and help hundreds of Gypsy and Traveller families across Sussex and, for the first time, have extended our work into two other Regions, the South West and the East of England. Our national casework and advocacy helpline has been as busy as ever and you will see from the detailed report on the Advice and Information Service how we have managed to have a positive impact on the life outcomes of the people that we help.

## Report of the Director - Chris Whitwell

---

*Continuation...*

But there is still a long way to go to secure true equality and social justice for Gypsies and Travellers. So many Government initiatives over the past few years that have sought to give individuals, families and communities greater power over the decisions that affect their lives have simply not touched the lives of the Travelling communities. Such initiatives aimed at 'empowerment' just tend to help those people who already have a little bit of power and leave those who are totally powerless with no effective voice even further behind. We believe that there are groups within our society that are so 'chronically excluded' that targeted work needs to be done in order to identify and address their needs, rather than expecting that these will be met automatically through mainstream 'empowerment' work. This is an issue that we have raised, and will continue to raise, with the Equality and Human Rights Commission and with the new Coalition Government.

Although, in the pages of this Annual Report, you will find a review of the work that we have been doing during 2009/10, it seems unthinkable not to touch upon the early events of 2010/11. The General Election on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2010 saw the formation of the first post-1945 Coalition Government and it ushered in a whole new set of challenges for our organisation and for the Travelling communities. Quite apart from the early decision by the Coalition Government to scrap the £30 million grant to enable local authorities to provide Gypsy/Traveller sites, the whole thrust of the new Government's localism agenda could spell real dangers for excluded minority groups within local communities. Without some sort of strategic overview in place to provide checks and balances it is difficult to see at this stage how local communities are ever going to make the 'unpopular' decisions which are necessary in the wider public interest. The concept of the 'Big Society', free from the shackles of overbearing bureaucracy, is an intriguing and beguiling one, but we prefer to think in terms of an 'Inclusive Society' where all

## Report of the Director - Chris Whitwell

---

*Continuation...*

people are treated with equality and respect, and from which nobody is excluded. No doubt we will have the opportunity to tackle Government on some of these issues in the coming year.

Once again I would like to pay a heartfelt tribute to the work of my colleagues at Friends, Families and Travellers and the support that we receive from our Board of Trustees. It is a privilege to work with such dedicated, committed and talented people and I know that together we will make a difference.

**Chris Whitwell**  
Director FFT

## Our Trustees

---

Our Trustees during 2009/10 were -

Liz Watkins (Chair)  
Neil Ansell (Vice Chair)  
Justine Compton (Honorary Treasurer)  
Marc Willers  
Judy Pointing  
Tony Thompson  
Rob Torkington  
Greg Yates

Our Director, Chris Whitwell, is also Company Secretary.



## 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.

## What We Do

---

### *Continuation...*

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

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 about 200,000 housed and 100,000 in caravans. However, next year, on 27 March 2011, there will be a category for Romany Gypsies/Irish Travellers for the very first time in the Census. Whether this will give us a more accurate picture of true numbers remains to be seen, as many Gypsies and Travellers may not declare their ethnicity on the form.

The latest estimate, from the Equalities and Human Rights Commission research of winter 2009 'Assessing local housing authorities' progress in meeting the accommodation needs of Gypsy and Traveller communities in England' is that about 6,000 additional pitches are needed in England within the next five years. This is more than the same again of the number that currently exist on council sites (4,918 pitches Jan 2010). There is virtually no progress in providing these additional pitches, and the mechanism that might have provided these pitches, the Regional Spatial Strategies, with their targets for local authorities on pitch provision, were revoked by the current government on 6 July 2010.

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. This year has seen a steep increase in the amount of casework we are doing on behalf of Irish Travellers, who have risen from 26% of our clients on our national helpline, to 41%.

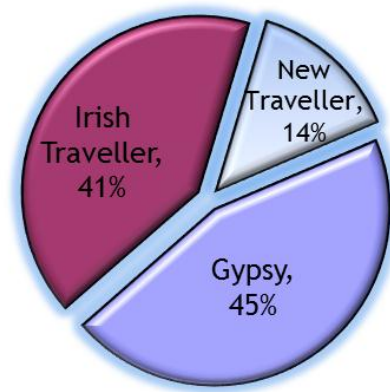
## The Advice and Information Unit

*Continuation...*

We have also seen success this year with two planning appeals for private Gypsy sites in Sussex, which achieved two and a half and three years temporary planning permission in the AONB (Area of Outstanding National Beauty) and the proposed South Downs National Park.

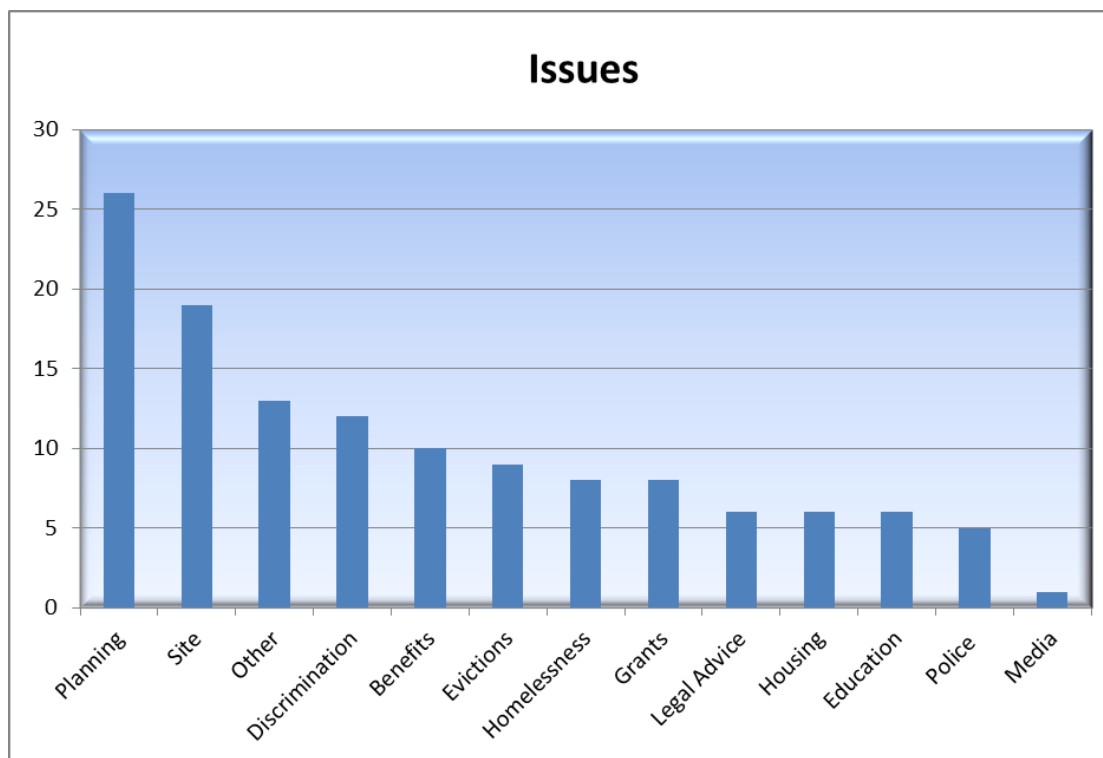
During 2009/10 our caseworkers dealt with a wide variety of cases from all across mainland UK, including Wales and Scotland.

### Type of Traveller by percentage



Approximately 45% of all our casework was with Gypsies, 41% was with Irish Travellers and 14% was with New Travellers.

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



## The Advice and Information Unit

---

*Continuation...*

The full breakdown is as follows for 129 cases -

- 26 cases were about planning
- 19 cases were about sites
- 13 cases were about "other"
- 12 cases were about discrimination
- 10 cases were about benefits
- 9 cases were about evictions
- 8 cases were about grants
- 8 cases were about homelessness
- 6 cases were seeking legal advice
- 6 cases were about housing
- 6 cases were about education
- 5 cases were about the police
- 1 case was about the media

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**

Advice and Policy Manager

## 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.

- A Romany Gypsy family living in council housing was suffering from racial harassment from other council tenants in the area where they lived. There was a catalogue of incidents and the Gypsy family involved felt as though their complaints to the Council were not being taken seriously. We contacted the Housing Officer at the Council reminding them that racism is an extremely serious issue and that Romany Gypsies are protected by the Race Relations Act. The Council wrote a warning to the people responsible for the racism, drawing attention to their policy on racial harassment that was written in their tenancy agreement and the harassment stopped. The family have not had any further problems.



A Traveller site that obtained a 3 year temporary planning permission, with the help of FFT.

- An Irish Traveller family was visiting a family member in hospital in the North East who had just given birth. One of the nurses on the Maternity Ward treated the visiting family with disrespect and even called the hospital security to deal with them but the security guards didn't find any problems with the behaviour of the family. We helped the Travellers submit a complaint to the Patient and Advice Liaison Services who deal with complaints about the NHS. This complaint was then dealt with and the nurse in question was required to meet regularly with management in order to monitor her standard of practice. Hospital managers also decided that the nurse should attend customer and equality/diversity training to improve her practice and the way that she deals with women and families in the future.



## Case Studies

---

### *Continuation...*

- We have helped Travellers on unauthorised encampments get Vet cards from the Dogs Trust's Hope Project. The Veterinary Entitlement Card Scheme provides free and subsidised veterinary treatment to dogs whose owners are homeless (which includes Travellers on unauthorised encampments).
- This case relates to an Irish Traveller woman from London. The woman rented a pitch from a local authority site and a caravan from a hire company. Her rent was recalculated by the local Housing Benefit team and she was left with a shortfall of £95 per week. The woman was in receipt of income support and child benefit and did not have money to meet the shortfall. She had been unsuccessful in her attempts to appeal the matter. We contacted the Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit department and requested a redetermination of the Rent Officer's decision, supplying a letter setting out the reasons why the decision should be reconsidered. This was successful and her rent was reassessed with all monies backdated.
- This case relates to an Irish Traveller woman in the South East. She had secured bricks and mortar accommodation for herself and family after fleeing harassment and violence from her ex-partner. Her ex-partner and members of his family discovered her whereabouts and began harassing her. After subsequent complaints from neighbours regarding noise and behaviour surrounding the property the woman was served an ASBO threatening eviction proceedings for breach of tenancy from the housing association. We supported the client and collated evidence and reports which we presented to the housing association management which resulted in an agreed home move. The lady is now living free from harassment elsewhere in the county.

## Policy

---

This year we held the first ever national conference on domestic violence and the Travelling communities. We had over 200 attendees from all over the country and there was open and frank discussion about this often hidden and taboo subject.

A key element of our work during the past year has been to contribute to national policy development and to lobby for change. We, along with the London Gypsy Traveller Unit and the Irish Traveller Movement, are members of the Traveller Law Reform Project, which aims to bring about positive changes in the laws in relation to the rights and needs of all the Traveller communities, and monitor the implementation of current legislation.

We also provided administrative support to the All Party Parliamentary Group for Gypsy and Traveller Law Reform in this annual report year, which is a parliamentary group committed to raising the social inclusion of Travellers and improving relations between the settled and Traveller community. The group currently has forty two members. Meetings this annual report year have included meeting with the then minister with responsibility for Gypsy and Traveller issues (Shahid Malik) and the Equalities and Human Rights Commission.

We are members of the Ministry of Justice's Independent Hate Crime Advisory Group as Gypsies and Travellers have been identified by the government as a group which is disproportionately affected by hate crime and who have received less attention and intervention in the past, and the aim is to redress this. We are also members of Sussex Police's Independent Gypsy and Traveller Advisory Group, which we helped set up, and which has been a very successful forum to discuss policing of the Travelling community and reductions in actions such as Section 61 evictions by the police, potential tensions round large Gypsy funerals and the burning of fires, markers on Gypsy/Traveller vehicles, stop and searches, and other pertinent issues.

We will continue to work with partner organizations and in our own right to try to achieve fairness and equality for all Gypsies and Travellers.

**Emma Nuttall**

Advice and Policy Manager

# Planning

*Continuation...*

Over the year we have responded to approximately 120 such consultations and frequently represent the only Gypsy/Traveller voice within such consultation processes.

The last year has seen the continuation of routine planning consultations on various stages of development of core strategies. The emphasis has been to try and ensure that policies are as unrestrictive as possible as it likely that, in rural areas, a significant proportion of new sites will be ones put forward by Gypsies and Travellers themselves and assessed through criteria-based policies.

Work was carried out this year on regional planning for the South East, the North West and the West Midlands, together with a contribution to the London Plan, which will undergo its Examination in Public in October.

The work in the **South East** was extensive, involving interviews with Gypsies and Travellers and considerable time at the Examination in Public was taken up by debate about the needs of those in houses and the methods of calculating supply from site turnover data. We contributed to the evidence submitted to the **North West** Examination in Public in Manchester. The **West Midlands**, after a consultation on the Regional Spatial Strategy, decided to abandon the process and has issued a policy statement in lieu of a fully examined regional policy. The remaining regions, **Yorkshire and Humberside and the North East** are silent on regional policy but are likely to produce policy statements as in the West Midlands, although this will of course depend on future national policy development.

The new Coalition Government's proposal to abolish Regional Planning structures and to leave the responsibility for pitch allocation to local authorities is a worrying development. It will require detailed responses to proposed changes to local plans as and when these are brought forward. We believe that this change of direction will lead inevitably to a reduction in the number of planned pitches in many areas. These local changes will require individual challenge using such evidence as is available to show the extent of need in the area.

**Steve Staines**  
Planning

## 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 10 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, BSc**  
**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

---

**Zoe Matthews RMN, BA (Hons) MA.**

**Health Strategy 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 ten 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

---



**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. She is a most welcome addition to the FFT Team contributing lots of creative and innovative ideas about service

**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.



**Lisa Bruton**  
**Mental Health and Well Being Community Development Worker.**

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

---



**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, B.A.(Hons) PGCE**  
**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.



**Candy Sheridan**  
**Eastern Regions Community Development Worker**

Candy also works as the East of England's regional co-ordinator for Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month (GRTHM) and organizes the successful My Big Fat Gypsy Fair in Cambridge.

**Sally Woodbury**  
**South West Regions Community Development Worker**

Sally is a Romany Gypsy who traveled in Australia with her family for most of her childhood. Sally now lives on her own land, with planning permission, with her husband, 2 children and extended family. Sally fights for the rights of her community which *"is a very draining job but when you get your successes it is well worth while."*



## Staff

---



**Siobhan Mc.Sorley BSc.  
Caseworker**

Siobhan is the most recent addition to the FFT Staff team, joining us in February 2010. She has an honours degree in Sociology and Anthropology and a wealth of experience of advice work.

**Henry Chapman  
Community Engagement Worker**

Henry is a Romany Gypsy who volunteered with FFT before joining as a paid employee in November 2009. He is a passionate advocate for his community and is working to bring about greater representation of the Traveller voice within political and democratic structures and processes.



## Our Consultant Experts

---

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, are still an important part of the Friends, Families and Travellers organisation and who carry out specialist work for us from time to time on a consultancy basis.

Steve Staines, who was one of the original founders of FFT, worked for us for three years as Planning Officer, funded by the Allen Lane Foundation and Garden Court Chambers, to whom we are profoundly grateful. Although Steve is no longer funded to work directly for FFT, the Traveller Law Reform Project (of which we are a partner) has been able to retain his services in order to enable the vital planning work that he does to continue. Steve fulfils a unique role in testing and challenging the extent to which local authorities are making proper provision for Gypsies and Travellers within their Development Plans and you can read his comments elsewhere in this Annual Report.

Tammy Furey has been a highly valued member of Friends, Families and Travellers for nine years. Although, following the birth of her daughter, Megan, she is no longer an employee of FFT, she continues to provide valuable services on an ad-hoc consultancy basis, particularly around IT, the rebuilding and maintenance of our website and the production of our Annual Reports and other literature.

## 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](mailto: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.

We are committed to working in partnership, and will continue to participate fully in the Traveller Law Reform Project in partnership with the Irish Traveller Movement in Britain, 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, LeedsGATE, Ormiston Trust, the Gypsy Council, 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](http://www.gypsy-traveller.org).

## Training and Capacity Building

---

We have been working to help mainstream organisations to provide their services better to Gypsies and Travellers. Often this has been through Cultural Awareness training to staff and board members, but we also work to build relationships with key individuals such as diversity officers in large organisations (such as Diabetes UK) to make which has led to changes in their helpline and tailored health promotion.

At the start of the year, our work was funded though the last part of the 3 year Big Lottery funded Traveller Advice Project (TAP) and from November 2009, through the Tackling Race Inequalities Fund from Communities and Local Government. In January 2010 Liz Macpherson joined Sarah Mann on the training team.

In it's final year, the TAP project delivered to 510 people from 185 organisations with an excellent response from closely targeted email marketing. The training was well received with 87% of respondents rating the training as good or very good. We also monitored behavioural change in people who attended our training. The biggest change (57%) was from people intending to engage directly with Gypsies and Travellers to provide their services. 38% said they would educate and influence others within their organisation and 38% have gone on to organise their own training within their organisation. 38% also mentioned they would be working in partnership with other agencies to engage with Gypsies & Travellers.

Across the life of the project, we learnt a lot about our "market" by holding open training sessions, which brought in a wide range of agencies. This gave us opportunities to find out more about agencies, their objectives and how we could help them to provide better services to Gypsies and Travellers.



## Training and Capacity Building

---

*Continuation...*

We also realised the importance of flexibility and of learning from feedback. Work with domestic violence service providers was not a key focus we had envisaged at the start of the project, but the response to training from service providers and community members showed us that this was a key unmet service need and we have been able to develop this work.

We also organised the first ever national conference on Gypsy & Traveller women and domestic violence, in London. This was oversubscribed with 160 delegates attending on the day. From this we have delivered two workshops on Gypsy & Traveller women at the Women's Aid national conference in Leicester, convened a national multi-agency steering group to progress the issue of domestic violence in the Travelling communities and produced a guidance leaflet for Domestic Violence service providers on supporting Gypsies and Travellers living with Domestic Violence.

In the last part of TAP we worked with Thames Valley, Sussex and Kent Police, Lewes Town Forum, Brighton & Hove health visitors, Mental health teams in Sussex, Brighton and Hove City Council (officers and councillors), Voluntary organisations in Brighton, via the Working Together Project's training programme, Oasis DV support charity, South Downs CVS members, Lewes Prison staff and Bournemouth Council.



We worked with Diabetes UK to develop culturally specific CD-Rom and booklet for Gypsies and Travellers and joint attendance with Diabetes UK and Red Cross at Gypsy Fairs. Our capacity building work has also taken the form of contributing articles to magazines targeted at relevant professionals, such as an article and case studies for Women's Aid "Safe" magazine and an article

# Training and Capacity Building

---

*Continuation...*

for the National Farmers' Union Magazine to try to encourage farmers into renting land to Travellers.

We have convened a Gypsy and Traveller Health network of health promotion organisation delivering health promotion in the South East. So far, network members have produced 3 low literacy, culturally relevant promotion material and promotion projects. This piece of work has now moved to the Health Project to roll it out nationally.

From November 2009, the training programme under the Tackling Racial Inequalities Fund has been focussed on 2 areas in particular:

1. We are addressing the issue of Domestic Violence and Violence Against Women within the travelling communities and have set up a national Steering Group to drive forward progress on this issue. The purpose of the Steering Group is both to develop good practices to enable the relevant service providers to deliver more accessible and appropriate services to Gypsy and Traveller women fleeing violence and also to raise the profile of this issue which has long been a taboo subject within the Gypsy and Traveller communities.

2. The other area is to work with Mediation Services and other agencies to address the issue of conflict resolution between the settled and travelling communities, and within the travelling community. This is a relatively unexplored area of mediation work and to date we have delivered four training sessions covering around 14 separate agencies. This has already encouraged follow-on work by mediation agencies in two areas to promote their services through outreach in partnership with local Gypsies and Travellers.

**Sarah Mann**

Training and Capacity Building Manager

## Reaching Communities

---



We have now completed the second year of this 5 year Big Lottery funded project, which now covers both East and West Sussex.

Bek and Marya, our two Community Support Workers have had contact with 409 Gypsies and Travellers across Sussex this year, a similar number to last year. Significantly though, the number of Gypsies and Travellers who received a mainstream advice or support service rose from 72 last year to 277 this year. Over the first 2 years of the project, the Community Support Workers have built trust with Gypsies and Travellers through regular and dedicated outreach. This has enabled clients to open up about their needs and trust the Community Support Workers to support them to access the mainstream services they need but were not accessing.

We are also experiencing a phenomenon whereby clients who were successfully helped to access less sensitive issues such as housing in year 1, have returned to resolve more sensitive health and education issues. Some clients are also asking to be supported to resolve underlying issues (such as lack of skills) once initial crises have been resolved.

Much work has come through word of mouth referral through extended family such as cousins, aunts and uncles. We know from experience that this is a trusted way of finding information and services. We have also found that when one person has successfully accessed a mainstream service (such as CAB, doctor/dentist) other members of the extended family will approach us wanting access to similar services.

The range of issues raised by clients is very wide. The two most frequent issues are general health and accommodation at 25% each. Debt, benefits (often appeals), child protection, mental health and dental services also feature regularly.

## Reaching Communities

---

*Continuation...*

### **Case study**

*Young Gypsy male client with pregnant girlfriend was homeless and had an older child in care (removed from the mother). He was initially supported to access housing and child protection cases for older child. He is now housed and has secured custody of older child and is independently engaging with mainstream services and seeking full time employment. This is six months on from our initial engagement.*

Gypsies and Travellers have been supported to access nearly 100 different mainstream agencies. As well as health and accommodation providers, CAB has been used regularly with good relationships being built with several agencies some of who have accessed training or awareness raising to improve the cultural competence of their service.

Trust has been built for Gypsies and Travellers in particular services which have now gained a reputation within the communities - CAB and some health providers are key examples. The reverse has applied where some agencies have given negative outcomes or poor welcomes. We have also found that some large agencies are not always able to adjust their working practices to outreach successfully.

The project has confirmed to us the benefits of a "whole family" approach to working with Gypsies and Travellers. Our Community Support Workers are part of a wider team which includes health, mental health, social care and work with young people and there is a very high degree of informal cross referral between team colleagues.

We have also had our experience reinforced of the power of referral onwards through the extended family networks within the Gypsy and Traveller communities and the importance of building a reputation and trust over time.

**Sarah Mann**

Training and Capacity Building Manager

## Sussex Travellers Health Project

---

The Sussex Traveller Health Project started 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.

The Health Team now consists of Gemma Challenger, FFT's Mental health and Wellbeing worker, a BME CDW job-share between Jazka Atterbury and Lisa Bruton and a Traveller Health Trainer, Avril Fuller who is also working to involve Gypsies and Travellers in the Local Involvement Networks across three Strategic Health Authorities alongside myself Zoe Matthews, Strategic Health Improvement Manager.

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 marginalization has led to chronic social exclusion, and to greater health inequalities, a recent literature review for the Equality and Human Rights Commission showed that the health inequalities experienced by Gypsies and Travellers appears to be widening rather than narrowing.

The 2004 'Health Status of Travellers in England report' by Sheffield University accepted that life expectancy was between 10 and 12 years less than the settled population. It has now been accepted by the DoH 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

## Sussex Travellers Health Project

---

*Continuation...*

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. Recent 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. The FFT health team 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 policy level. We use our experience of local work to inform Government departments and Race Equality groups of the issues that we find.

**Zoe Matthews**  
Health Strategy Manager

## Gypsy Traveller Access to GPs

---

Gypsies and Travellers can experience prejudice and discrimination from NHS staff, and there seems to be a general misunderstanding of Gypsy/Traveller culture amongst health professionals.

Through outreach work carried out within the Health Promotion Team at FFT it has been recognised that Gypsies and Travellers have real and enduring problems accessing healthcare.

Over the past year Jazka and Lisa, our Mental Health Community Development Workers, have carried out awareness training with statutory bodies, voluntary sector organisations and healthcare teams including Community Mental Health Teams, Approved Mental Health Professionals and Community Cohesion Groups. They are now focusing on raising awareness within GP surgeries and have recently compiled a report on GP healthcare in Sussex. The report gives good and bad examples of access to GP surgeries with anonymous case studies of people's experiences and also makes recommendations to Primary Care Trusts and GP Surgeries on how to ensure Gypsies and Travellers have equal access to healthcare. It also includes Best Practise examples of GP Surgeries and outreach services that work well across Sussex.



## Youth Work

---

Clare works to support young Gypsies and Travellers, to build their confidence and help them access into the normal activities enjoyed by young people in the community. She provides individual support and mentoring but also arranges exciting programmes of group activities during school holiday times as a means of retaining their interest and enthusiasm. Importantly she designs her work programmes around the ideas, needs and wishes of the young people themselves so that they feel valued and respected.

Our Young People's Coordinator, Clare Bingham, works with some of the most deprived and socially excluded young people living in the County. Some are so-called roadsiders living with their parents or guardians on 'unauthorised' sites and thus likely to be moved on at any time. For these young people there is virtually no contact with the outside world; they can be stuck in remote locations far from public transport facilities and totally unable to access the recreational facilities that most young people take for granted. They may only mix with their siblings and be living on sites that have little or no play facilities available to them. Although they may attend school, they may be on restricted timetables and experience the bullying, discrimination and racism against Travellers that still occur in groups of young people.

This year the Clare has worked with over 100 young people. Of these, 63 have regularly attended group activities and have attended every session they have been invited to, 5 have recently begun participating in group activities after one to one support, 9 young people have only been interested in one to one support, 2 young people have been interested in attending but have been unable to due to child care. These results have not altered significantly from the first year of the project. The main progress this year has been developing longer term programmes rather than one off events and the regularity of attendance monitored at these. Maintaining longer term commitment to projects is obviously more challenging than with one off events. We have also seen many new faces this year as other young people have moved out of the area.

2009 saw the introduction and gaining of funding to run our first ever 6 weekly accredited conservation programmes in partnership with the Circle of Life Rediscovery Project. 19 young people participated in this programme which was separated into 2 groups, an older group in East Sussex, 13 up to 25 year olds with special needs (including sensory needs and learning

## Youth Work

---

*Continuation...*

disabilities) and a younger all girls group in West Sussex ages 11 to 15.

Holiday activity programmes have run this year during the Easter, summer and Christmas holidays although unfortunately several were cancelled due to the hazardous weather. Positive activities have included young people participated in fishing, horse riding, rock climbing, bungee trampolining, rowing, a pantomime visit, a farm visit and swimming. Team building exercises which were requested by young people included laser quest, adrenalin sports at an outdoor educational centre with assault courses and high zip wires.

We are immensely grateful to the funding support that we receive from BBC Children in Need and also to West Sussex County Council who have provided a small sum of supplementary funding, with funding for activities from Positive Activities for Young People and the East Sussex Council for Voluntary Youth Service small grants scheme.

As this project has developed over the year, referrals coming directly from young people are increasing. The building of relationships and trust is an on-going process both with young people and their parents, which also contributes to the increase of direct referrals from young people. There are now young people from the age of 10 beginning to request information on a range of issues, which previously was very rare particularly with young boys. Clare was recently asked by a very withdrawn and shy 10 year old boy to explore football teams in his locality. This young boy lives on an isolated site which has a high number of girls his age living there but few boys, so he is eager to meet other young boys his age.

Of the 64 pieces of casework under taken this year with young Travellers an astonishing 41 of these have been self referrals which is a significant increase from the first year. The remainder of cases has seen 22 referrals from parents, guardians and extended family members and 1 case by another source. However, it is impossible for Clare to maintain the levels of activity that are needed to provide proper support for so many young people across such a wide geographical area. We are still seeking to secure additional funding in order to be able to recruit a second youth worker so that Clare's work load becomes more manageable.

# Income and Expenditure Account:

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2010

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2010 £
<b>Incoming Resources</b>				
Incoming resources from generated funds:				
Grants	2	32,559	420,788	453,347
Donations		1,211	-	1,211
Bank Interest		253	-	253
Incoming resources from charitable activities				
Fees, subscriptions and publication sales		<u>9,295</u>	<u>33,079</u>	<u>42,374</u>
<b>Total Incoming Resources</b>		<u>43,318</u>	<u>453,867</u>	<u>497,185</u>
<b>Resources Expended</b>				
Charitable activities	3	26,213	436,538	462,751
Governance costs	3	<u>2,187</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,187</u>
<b>Total Resources Expended</b>		<u>28,400</u>	<u>436,538</u>	<u>464,938</u>
<b>Net Incoming Resources before transfers</b>	4	14,918	17,329	32,247
<b>Transfers</b>		<u>33,415</u>	<u>(33,415)</u>	<u>-</u>
		48,333	(16,086)	32,247
<b>Fund Balances brought forward</b>		<u>53,288</u>	<u>79,278</u>	<u>132,566</u>
<b>Fund Balances carried forward</b>	10	<u>101,621</u>	<u>63,192</u>	<u>164,813</u>

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.

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 especially indebted to -  
Communities and Local Government who awarded us a total of £270,000 under its "Tackling Racial Equalities" programme and which has made a huge difference to the scope and reach of our services.



The Big Lottery who fund our Reaching Communities project and who funded our successful Regional Traveller Advice Project.

**LOTTERY FUNDED**

The Equality and Human Rights Commission who funded our community support work in West Sussex and east Hampshire

Brighton and Hove City Primary Care Trust who funded our health outreach work and the partnerships for Health programme that funded our research on the use of Accident and Emergency Services in partnership with Brighton University.

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

Garden Court Chambers who continue to fund our vital planning work.



Lankelly Chase Foundation who fund our Mental Health and Wellbeing work

The Woodward Charitable Trust who part fund the work of our telephone caseworker

The Emigrant Services Department of the Irish Government who fund some of our work on behalf of Irish Travellers

The Tudor Trust who provide us with much needed core funding

**the**  
**Tudortrust**

## With grateful thanks to our funders and partners:

---

*Continuation...*



BBC Children in Need and West Sussex County Council who fund our work with young people.



The Pfizer Foundation who are funding a one-year wellbeing project, working with a volunteer group to develop resources for a book to be published later in 2010/11.

rethink

Sussex Partnership Trust who fund our Community Development Worker (Mental Health) under a contract won in partnership with Rethink and the Crawley Ethnic Minority Partnership

C  
E  
M  
P

Sussex Partnership   
NHS Foundation Trust

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.