

Friends, Families and Travellers

June - Sept
2009

Travellers Times has been saved!

One of the most heartwarming stories to come out of the news this month is that the Rural Media Company is among the list of organisations receiving funding from the Government under its Tackling Racial Inequalities Fund. This means that the

brilliant magazine 'Travellers Times' will continue to be published in hard copy form rather than simply as an on-line document (to which many Gypsies and Travellers would not have easy access).

We at FFT are among Travellers Times biggest fans and the copies that we distribute to the individuals and families with whom we are working are always hugely appreciated.

The Sun apologises

Some weeks ago the Sun newspaper carried a scurrilous and inaccurate article suggesting that a group of Gypsies had damaged a police helicopter which, it claimed, had been carrying out surveillance of an encampment. Emma Nuttall of Friends, Families and Travellers checked the facts with the police and discovered that, not only

was there no evidence linking the damage to the helicopter with Gypsies but the police had not been carrying out surveillance of the site as the paper had claimed. Emma's persistence in following this up resulted in a retraction and an apology from the Sun.

Needless to say that whilst the original article was blazoned in banner headlines the apology was hidden away in small type on an inner page. It does show though that it is possible to challenge misreporting of this kind, and it is important that we never let the media get away with irresponsible and prejudiced journalism

Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month

Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month seems to have been a great success this year with many exciting events taking place around the country. Let's hope that GRT History month goes from strength to strength and, importantly, raises the awareness and understanding of people from outside the travelling

communities of the richness and diversity of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller cultures.

In contrast, Sunday 2nd August, the International Remembrance Day of Roma victims of the Pharraimos (Holocaust), seemed to pass relatively unnoticed in

the UK although remembrance events took place in many other countries throughout Europe. Perhaps this day could be added to the UK calendar for commemorative events and more steps taken next year to mark this occasion.

Work in the Regions



Health and Wellbeing Project

For more information about national health policy initiatives:

heal.fft@gypsy-traveller.org

For more information about Community Support in Sussex contact:

Bek 07990516612

or email:
Rebekah@gypsy-traveller.org

Friends, Families and Travellers is seeking to extend its work at Regional level, focusing on the South East, South West and the East of England. Zoe Matthews is leading a Department of Health funded project to help Gypsy and Traveller representatives to access into the participative and consultative mechanisms being rolled out by the National Health Service (such as Local Involvement Networks) and we will be working with partner organisations in the South West and the East of England to deliver this project. We will also be linking up with Leeds Gypsy and Traveller Exchange who are being funded to produce a tool-kit to enable Primary Care Trusts to engage more effectively with the travelling communities, and with the Race Equality Foundation who are doing wider work

on helping Black and Minority Ethnic Communities to engage with healthcare services.

We are also to receive funding from the Department of Communities and Local Government under the 'Tackling Racial Inequalities' programme to carry out community development work in the same three Regions. We want to support small grass roots Gypsy and Traveller organisations to develop a more effective voice and the ability to identify and secure their own funding. We also want to help Gypsy and Traveller individuals to engage with local democratic processes. Too often the only engagement a local Council has with the travelling community is via the Traveller Liaison Service or the Traveller Education Service – OK as

far as it goes (sometimes!) - but where are the attempts to involve Gypsies and Travellers on Focus Groups, Citizens Panels, to encourage people to register to vote or to become a local Councillor?

We only know of one Gypsy/Traveller Councillor in the whole country – the wonderful Cllr Candy Sheridan from Norfolk – and this out of a total of what must amount to many tens of thousands of Councillors. How can Gypsies and Travellers ever achieve true equality in our society if none of the people who make the decisions affecting their lives are themselves from the travelling communities? Local Councils should be proactive in seeking genuine engagement with all the communities in their area, including the travelling communities.

Community Support in Sussex

The weather may not be great but the summer is bringing in more referrals for the case work we do in both East Sussex and West Sussex. Working closely in the community is giving us a real insight into the lives of Travellers both housed and mobile in Sussex. The need for cultural training of both statutory and voluntary services in our area is becoming more apparent as we link in with more and more services. The refreshing thing is that many

of these services really want to receive this cultural training so they can tailor their services to the individual needs of travellers. This makes 2009 a very exciting year for FFT casework.

I am also very proud to be part of a new Health Network that aims to identify the needs of Travellers and produce culturally sensitive promotion and information materials specifically for

the community. This network includes Diabetes UK, National Child Birth Trust, Meningitis UK, British Red Cross, Traveller Education, and FFT

Some organisations have already adapted materials with feedback from the group. We are also looking peer education approaches to share key health messages and improve access to services for travelling communities.

Mental Health and Well-being in Sussex

We have just started a new project building links between FFT, Travellers and Citizens Advice Bureaux in West Sussex, with Equalities & Human Rights Commission funding.

I am continuing to support people into voluntary sector and mainstream services. A current issue that I am having with

helping Travellers and Gypsies to access services is the massive underfunding of Mental Health service's so that when some of my clients come forward and ask for support, the services are not there to meet their needs.

Lisa Bruton, our Community Development Worker for Mental Health has been doing a lot of

training, both in the prison services and mental health services. In July we held a Well-being Event in West Sussex which was a great success with around 100 delegates, Traveller speakers and Speakers from both FFT and the Ormiston Trust.

Gemma Challenger

Delegates enjoying traditional Romany dishes at the Well-being event in West Sussex



Youth in Sussex

We are starting an exciting new project for young people aged 12-18 in Sussex

Together with an environmental education charity called Circle of Life Rediscovery, we have gained funding to run conservation courses leading to an accredited award.

The courses last for 6 weeks and we will be running 4 to 5 courses a

year over 3 years. We will be targeting young Gypsies and Travellers on a restricted timetable at school or being home educated.

We are interviewing soon for sessional staff and the first course will start in September

Clare Bingham



For more information on Mental Health and Well-being in Sussex email:

Gemma@gypsy-traveller.org

For more information on Youth Work in Sussex email:

Clare@gypsy-traveller.org

A visit from the Children's Commissioner for England

During July, Friends, Families and Travellers was delighted to welcome a visit from the Childrens' Commissioner, Professor Sir Al Aynsley-Green. Sir Al is an indefatigable proponent

of the rights of children from all communities and was interested to hear of the work that our Young Persons Coordinator, Clare, is doing with children and young people across Sussex. As part of his

visit we took Sir Al to meet some Gypsy children and young people on an unauthorised encampment in Brighton so that he could hear about some of their issues and

concerns at first hand. Sir Al steps down as Children's Commissioner in February next year but has pledged to do all he can in his remaining time to try to get a fair deal for Gypsy and Traveller young people.

Advice, Policy and Training

Domestic Violence Conference

We held the first national conference on supporting Gypsies and Travellers facing domestic violence in London on 8 May this year, and heard speakers from Solace women's refuge, One Voice, Kent Irish Traveller Movement, and Leeds Gypsy & Traveller exchange, as well as Women's Aid. There is a conference report, domestic violence leaflet and case studies and links to two reports on our website.

We also delivered two workshops at Women's Aid's national conference in Leicester in July.

Police Training

We've also delivered training to Kent, Sussex and Surrey police so far this year, in conjunction with Gypsies and Travellers from those counties.

The All Party Parliamentary Group on Gypsy & Traveller Law Reform

The All Party Parliamentary Group

on Traveller Law Reform has had meetings in April with Caroline Spelman to try and find out the Tories' Traveller policy, and in May with the Equalities and Human Rights Commission. Our next meeting will be with the new minister for Gypsies & Travellers, Shahid Malik, to see if the government can speed up site provision.

Site Management Guidance.

The Government finally published 'Gypsy and Traveller Site Management Good Practice Guide' on 16 July 2009. It provides good practice guidance on all facets of managing Gypsy and Traveller sites. It is intended to help new and existing managers to maintain well-run and sustainable sites that provide a safe environment for residents and their families, and can be downloaded from the Communities and Local Government (CLG) website www.communities.gov.uk

Progress report on

Gypsy and Traveller Policy

CLG also published in July 'A progress report on Gypsy and Traveller Policy'. In its response to the report 'The Road Ahead' by the independent Task Group on Site Provision and Enforcement for Gypsies and Travellers, the Government committed to report annually to Parliament on progress on Gypsy and Traveller issues; the July report is the first such report. This too is available on the CLG website. The report states that the current position on site delivery remains unsatisfactory, and that it is clear that local authorities need to increase the pace at which suitable site locations are identified.

National Advice Line

Through FFTs national advice line we have given advice to countless members of the travelling communities and other agencies working with Gypsies and Travellers. Since April we have opened 39 cases, many of which we are still working on as unfortunately a lot of issues take some time to resolve. Due to the difficulties in getting legal aid for

planning the number of cases we are dealing with in this field are increasing. We are not qualified planners but try where possible to guide and support Gypsies and Travellers through the planning process. There are also a number of open cases relating to sites, either obtaining a plot on a local authority-run site or problems of badly managed sites. We also have a few cases relating to dealing with the police, discrimination and a variety of other issues.

Since April 51% of our cases have been with Gypsies, 34% with Irish Travellers and 15% with New Travellers.

Most of our cases are in the South East but we also have cases in other regions, such as the East of England, London, the Midlands, the North East and South West. If anyone would like help or advice from FFT, whatever region you live in, please feel free to phone our advice line:

National Advice Line:

01273 234777

Boat Dwellers

We have received a number of enquiries from boat dwellers recently, so have decided to gather together all the contacts for boatedwellers in one place on our website.

Boat dwellers, also known as 'continuous cruisers' are another part of the Travelling community who suffer from being moved on by the authorities, namely British Waterways. To find out more about the legislation that covers the waterways visit the British Waterways website:
<http://www.britishwaterways.co.uk/home> or
<http://www.waterscape.com/>.

There are also a number of support groups offering advice and support for continuous cruisers who are experiencing difficulties due to the lifestyle:

Low Impact Life Onboard (LILO)



The LILO website provides information about the eco-boating community in Britain. It gives details of campaigns and of boating communities (some of which are also listed below). Website:
<http://www.liloontheweb.org.uk/>

Calderdale Boaters

This is a 20 boat moorings club on the Rochdale Canal around Hebden Bridge which aims to provide affordable moorings to club members. The Calderdale Boaters take an active role in permaculture projects along the canal and host events at their community space at Callis Mill. Calderdale Boaters PO Box 54 Hebden Bridge HX7 6WY Email:

guyrees@btinternet.com

London Boaters

London Boaters are a group of waterways dwellers who are developing agendas for radical change on London's canals and rivers. They focus on the legislative issues that affect their lives and aim to advance viable alternatives to those that have adverse affects on the boating community. They meet monthly for a social and a discussion of current issues and future plans.

Email:
londonboaters@imap.cc

Tel: 07791976357

National Association of Boater Owners (NABO)

NABO is an organization which acts on behalf of private boaters on the waterways of the UK. They can address issues such as mooring restrictions and waterways legislation and licensing etc.
 NABO
 Mill House End Farm
 Grape Lane, Croston
 Leyland
 Lancashire
 PR26 9HB
 Tel: 01772 600886
 Website:
<http://www.nabo.org.uk/index.html>

Travellers' Advice Team (TAT)

TAT can be contacted for legal advice and representation for boat dwellers facing eviction.
 Tel: 0845 1202980

Other Contacts

Friends, Families and Travellers have just begun to compile a list of boaters who would like to network to discuss some the issues affecting the boating community. They are as follows:

Nick Brown:
nick.brown@greenamps.co.uk

Julia Lally:
julialally@googlemail.com

Sam:
madeleine.slewis@ukonline.co.uk

Panda:
pandarainbow@hotmail.co.uk

If you would like your name adding to this list please email: fft@gypsy-traveller.org



Picture from LILO

Noticeboard

Irish Oral History Archive

The Archive is concerned with making a comprehensive oral history record of Irish people's experience of emigration. The Archive Director, Glenn Cumiskey would personally like to ensure that Travellers are very well represented in this collection. You can find out more about the Archive's work at www.ioha.co.uk or contact Glenn at the Irish Oral History Archive, 3 Icon Building, 15 Cluny Place, London, SE1 4QS t: 020 7357 7517

New Travellers History

The Children's Society has been given some money by the Heritage Lottery Fund to research and record the history of New Travellers in the South West. We very much want this history to be written from the point of view of New Travellers themselves and so we need your help.

We are looking for experienced Travellers to share their memories and experiences - good and bad. Once we have collected your stories, we will turn them into a public exhibition about New Traveller heritage and culture and use it to challenge the misconceptions and prejudices the general

public hold.

Here are the ways you can help:

Oral Interviews: Do you have a story to tell? We are looking for older Travellers willing to give up an hour of their time to be interviewed about their memories by a young Traveller. This would be digitally recorded but you don't need to give your name or even consent for your voice to be used - we can use the information without identifying you.

Photos: A picture tells a thousand words and we'd love to see your snaps of faces and places from the past. We can make copies of your photos on site, so we won't take them away and lose them, but you will have to give us your permission to use them in a public exhibition.

Telling Us About Old Sites: Where have you lived over the years? We want to build up a map and picture book of all the places New Travellers have been.

Young Travellers: We are looking for young Travellers to help us uncover the histories hidden in New Traveller sites and get older Travellers to share their memories. So if you want to get involved, find out about your heritage, learn some new skills like how to interview people, and

help build up a collection of memories from people on different sites, please get in touch

If you think you are interested, please get in touch with Rosie Wild by phone: 07740 038725 or email: rosie.wild@childrenssociety.org.uk or letter: Children's Participation Project - Wessex, Unit 5 Westway Garage, Marksbury, Bath, BA2 9HN.

£100 for being photographed for a Census campaign

Looking for members of the Traveller community to take part in a public awareness campaign. This will require you to have your photo taken to appear in posters and leaflets encouraging the community to take part in the next Census in 2011.

You would need to spend 3-4 hours in a studio in London in August, for which we will pay £100 plus reasonable travel expenses.

We're open to considering people from different ages and backgrounds but are particularly looking for:

- a grandparent
- a man and a woman in their mid 30s



- a man and woman in their 40s
- a 5 or 6 year old girl and boy
- an 8 or 9 year old girl.

If you're interested, please email Ashnoor Pardhan at Ashnoor@linstockcommunications.com with a photo of yourself and indicate your age, height and ethnic origin.

Official Appleby fair Website

This new website has lots of useful information, particularly on temporary stopping places en route to the Fair and licensed sites during the Fair itself:

www.applebyfair.org



Noticeboard

Quids for Kids in Devon

The Quids for Kids project is for families living in Devon with a child with special needs, a long term illness or disability, and in addition help for young people aged 16-21 (regardless of their health). The number for free entitlement checks and confidential advice is 01392 274 869.

Nora Corkery, who manages the project, persuaded the funder (Devon County Council), that Gypsy and Traveller families can be a target group for the project. Previous work Nora has done in relating to welfare rights for Gypsies and Travellers revealed many families with children with common illnesses like asthma who were not getting the benefits (or health care in many cases) they were entitled to.

Revised Horse Passport Law, from 1 July 2009.

From 1 July 2009 owners will need to get all foals and previously unidentified older horses microchipped as well as obtaining horse passports, which are documents which officially identify each animal.

While horse passports have been required since 2004, microchipping is now required as well to

ensure even clearer identification of horses. This may help; reunite lost horses with their owners, protect horses' welfare, control the spread of diseases, recover stolen horses, make it easier to sell horses, prevent identity fraud at sales and competitions, and allow the continued availability of low cost medicines. If your horse is not correctly identified you could be prosecuted and fined up to £5,000. A list of authorized Passport Issuing Organizations can be found at www.direct.gov.uk/horsepassports. Some deal with particular breeds; others issue passports for any horse.

Microchipping must be carried out by a vet. Owners must ensure their horses are correctly identified. Owners and keepers with primary responsibility for the care of horses must ensure their passports are available at all times. For more info: www.direct.gov.uk/horsepassports email: helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk or call Defra on 08459 33 55 77

Shelter Gypsy & Traveller Law courses

This course covers the law relating to accommodation issues

that affect Gypsies & Travellers. It includes planning law, enforcement actions, appeals, security of tenure on official sites, evictions from unauthorised encampments and homelessness as it relates to Travellers. London, 20-21 Oct 2009, & 30-31 March 2010 Prices £370 commercial, £345 standard, £295 concessionary.

Job Vacancies

We have noticed that the number of specialist Gypsy & Traveller job adverts seems to be rising. Here are some we have been asked to advertise:

Posted 17 July 2009
Gypsy and Travellers Support Worker
 Are you an experienced support worker? Do you have previous experience supporting Travellers and gypsies in mixed tenure accommodation?

If you are immediately available and have a CRB dated within the last year we would like to hear from you.

You should be confident with lone working, providing advice on benefits and tenancies, and have experience with this client group.

Please submit your up-to-date CV with date of CRB clearly stated to Badenoch and Clark at www.badenochandclark.com/jobs/government
 Tel. 020 7429 5000

Specialist Health Visitor – Refugees, Travellers and Homeless people

£33,247 - £42,508 p.a.
 Band 7
 Permanent Position
 37.5 Hours per week
 Part time or Job share applications will be considered
 Based in Bromley

Closing date: 21 August 2009 For more information and an application form please go to www.nhsjobs.uk and search using reference 505-CH4854 Tel. Tina Cook, Health Improvement Manager on 0208 662 6696 or 07785 720153 on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday morning.



FFT Newsletter

Friends, Families and Travellers

Community Base
113 Queens Rd.
Brighton
East Sussex
BN1 3XG

PHONE:
01273 234 777

FAX:
01273 234 778

E-MAIL:
info@gypsy-traveller.org

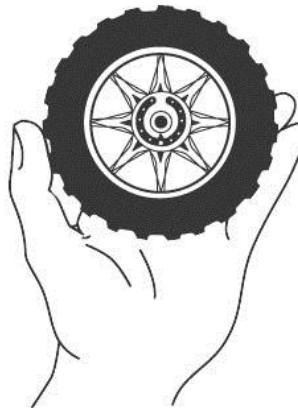
Charity no. 111 2326
Company 3597515

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.Gypsy-Traveller.org

for information, useful contacts and more.



Friends, Families & Travellers is a nationally recognised voluntary organisation which serves the whole spectrum of the Traveller community, both traditional and new, settled or on the road.

FFT runs a national helpline covering evictions, harassment, planning, employment, benefits, education, health, civil rights, discrimination and legal representation. FFT is also active in community support, research, monitoring, mediation and policy development at local and national levels.

National Contacts

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

Traveller Advice Team (TAT)
0845 120 2980
07768 316755 24hr

Community Legal Advice
0845 345 4 345

Family Rights Group
0800 731 1696

Shelter (homeless)
0808 800 4444

Squatters Advisory Service
020 7359 8814

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

Travellers Aid Trust
www.travellersaidtrust.org

The Gypsy Council
01708 868986

National Association of Gypsy Women
01325 240033

National Romany Rights
Tel. 01202 893228

Pavee Point
00 353 1 878 0255

Children's Society, South-West
01761 411771

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

National Association of Boat Owners
01749 677195

Equality & Human Rights Commission
020 9390000

Planning Aid
01963 230045

Education Otherwise -
enquiries@educationotherwise.org

The Travellers' School Charity
Tel 07717 055378

Roma Support Group
020 7511 5721

If you believe that everyone should have the right to travel and to stop without constant fear of persecution because of their lifestyle: JOIN FRIENDS, FAMILIES AND TRAVELLERS NOW!

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

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

POSTCODE: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

Waged-£10.00 Unwaged-£5.00 Organisation-£25.00 / or Donation

I do not wish to join FFT, but please accept a donation towards the work you carry out

Please state if you wish to remain anonymous.

I do not wish to join FFT, but would like to receive newsletters (subscription costs as above)

**Please make cheques payable to FFT and return to: FFT, Community Base, 113 Queens Rd., Brighton BN1 3XG.
All membership information held by FFT is confidential and will not be made available to others without your consent.**