



Oct - Dec 2004

Special Points of interest:

- G&TLRC Conference Feedback
- CRE examines the treatment of Gypsies - Have your say
- Tess the Traveller
- Viv's Spares File
- Travels with Bat
- Gypsy Poems
- History and Future of TAT
- Room to Roam
- Gypsy Women's Cookbook

Management Committee Meetings:

4th December
15th January

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Friends, Families and Travellers



Select Committee Calls for more sites



The ODPM Select Committee has published its report on Gypsy/Traveller accommodation. One key statement in the report declares:

"We are not satisfied that sufficient progress has been made by the Government since our report (report on the draft Housing Bill 2003, which called for a duty). There are a number of mechanisms that should have generated greater provision of sites, including the Gypsy Sites Refurbishment Grant programme. The data available suggests that over 3500 Gypsies and Travellers still have no legal place to stop and unauthorised encampments continue to cause disruption and frustration in many parts of the country. This situation is unlikely to change without some form of Government intervention. The evidence we have received points to the need for the Government to re-introduce a statutory requirement for local authorities to provide accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers resorting to or residing in their areas".

Below is a brief summary of the report's recommendations:

- 1/ A statutory duty to provide sites.
- 2/ A Gypsy and Traveller Task Force to help identify sites.
- 3/ Sites should only be built in places which are also fit for residence by the settled community. Site location should provide good access to services and interaction with the settled community.

4/ The ideal size for sites should be around 18 pitches with flexibility for natural increase.

5/ A new definition of Gypsy and Traveller should comprise ethnic origin and nomadic lifestyle.

6/ The completion of the biannual counts should be compulsory with a process of verification.

7/ There is a need for a range of accommodation including public and private and residential and transit. Group Housing may be appropriate for some. There should be a capital grants programme to fund site construction.

8/ Guidelines on the design of sites need to be updated.

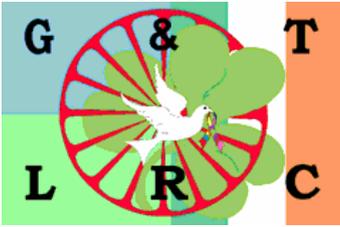
9/ There should be capacity building on sites to give Travellers greater skills to partake in the running of sites - possibly using money from the ODPM Supporting People Programme.

10/ There is a need for improved trust and working relationships with the police.

The report contains many welcome recommendations. Although the ODPM Select Committee only has an advisory role its report could place some pressure on the Government. I am disappointed though that the report does not make a clear recommendation for improved security of tenure and the establishment of site forums/residential associations. The report also says the Task Force should assist the

Continued on Page Two....

Please note that the information given in this newsletter is not necessarily the view of FFT, unless the author is given, and may not reflect the views of other Gypsy or Traveller organisations or individuals.



Select Committee Calls for more sites

Government in developing means to tackle anti social behaviour in the Traveller community. Why is there no mention of tackling anti social behaviour in the settled community, which is directed at Travellers? Personally, I believe that a better secondary role for a Task Force would be in developing policies to tackle social exclusion. Non a positive note

though the report does contain many useful recommendations that will be of great assistance in our campaigning.

The report can be accessed at:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmodpm.htm#reports>

Gypsy Children visit Downing Street

On the 11th of November at 2 pm children from the Gypsy and Traveller community visited Number 10, Downing Street to hand deliver a letter to Tony Blair

Bernadette Collins, 12, said her family had had to move from London to Middlesbrough because there was not enough room at a site in the capital.

"There are seven families using one toilet and there's no electricity or running hot water and we're having to go to the swimming baths every night for a shower"

The open letter, which was handed in to No 10, highlighted the shortage of sites. The letter stated that Gypsies and Travellers are fearful of the "campaign of hatred" being stirred up by the media. "We are being described as 'invaders' and 'rural terrorists'. We are fearful of where this hate will lead".



Read more on <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/3992575.stm>

Photo from the BBC News website

"We are being described as 'invaders' and 'rural terrorists'. We are fearful of where this hate will lead".

The Gypsy & Traveller Law Reform Coalition - Conference: Feedback

"The Gypsy and Traveller Law Reform Coalition conference was a great success. Our speakers, Tom Sweeney, Kay Beard, Cliff and Janie Codona, Siobhan Spencer, Len Smith, Rob Torkington, Violet Tucker were excellent.

I was really inspired by Violet's words at

the end, which were full of strength and determination. Some of the older Travellers said that listening to her words made them feel assured that there would continue to be great lead campaigners for Traveller law reform in the future. She later said how honoured she was to be speaking in front of such great activists,



Council for Racial Equality speaker

The G&TLRC Conference: Feedback

who had been doing this for such a long time and with such passion.

Read Violet's speech below.

It was also great to see an eight year old Irish Traveller girl, Shannon Collins make such a moving contribution through her good questions

A big thank you to Richard O'Neil also

Violet's Speech:

"I would like to start by saying how honoured I am to be speaking here today, to finally being the one doing the talking at events like this and not just being sat in the audience being talked about.

When I was asked to speak today my immediate reaction was "God no I have nothing to say", but while driving home that evening I drove past a few old camps. The camp where my sister was born, I sat patiently in my Granny's trailer having my hair put in ringlets so when I went to the hospital, I would look nice for my Mam and the babby. It's an industrial estate now. I then went past the camp where I got my first pup. We had loads of dogs but this one was mine. I was about 5 and his name was spot, he was a little jack Russell, he died not long after the vet said he wasn't strong enough and there was nothing that could be done to save him, he was buried there. That camp is now a piece of land with a 6 ft bund surrounding it. On the other side of town is a road where I spent my last few years as a proper "Gypsy" the government would say I'm not one anymore as I don't move around. Anyway, we spent probably 2 years moving between 3 different camps down that road, before my Mam and Dad decided to buy a house and yard. I learned to roller skate on them camps, to swim, to ride a bike and most importantly my Mam showed that we can make a difference to our own lives by standing up and making our voices rise above that of our oppressors. In the place of those memories is a restaurant another

for facilitating/chairing the event and playing a big role in making it the success it was." By Andrew Ryder

A BBC report on the G&TLRC conference can be accessed at:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/3960199.stm>

bund and a pub car park. Yet it is Gypsies and Travellers who are accused of invading the space of the General public it is Gypsies and Travellers who descend upon the lovely tranquil idyllic life that these people seem to live until we arrive at our old traditional stopping places. So where does this leave us. I am now living on a site with water you can't drink or cook with, unreliable electricity and the only reason the site is there is because the ground is subsiding and contaminated. I know that the only way I can get things changed is to have my say. I also know how lucky I was to have a Mam who brought me up to believe in justice, to be the one doing the fighting and not just to sit back and let the world carry on turning. That if you expect equality then you have to believe in yourself. It is this idea of standing up and fighting that I want to pass on to the young people I am working with, because not everyone is as strong as my family are. Most of the young people seem to think that they are allowed to be treated like dirt, that shops, police and anyone else who feels like it can give them abuse. That this is allowed! Sad but true. So slowly and slightly covertly we are letting the young Gypsies and Travellers of Leeds know what it feels like to speak up and be heard. We started by coaching a young Irish Traveller girl who had been threatened with arrest because she wanted to take back a faulty item and

after people heard about that success we have assisted in situations ranging from national super stores to racist police areas. We are a long way from being equal in this world. But our small success' give people confidence and it is only by building an oppressed people's confidence that they can truly start seeing the injustice in their lives and truly know what they are fighting for."



Shannon Collins with Noelette Keane (ITM)

Picture from BBC News

"I live on a site where there is one toilet shared by seven families," she says. "It's a disgrace. We need more sites and we need them now."

Shannon speaks at the G&TLRC conference

Council for Racial Equality (CRE) examines treatment of Gypsies: Have Your say

An inquiry into the way Gypsies and other Travellers are treated by town halls and the police was launched by the Government's race watchdog today. The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) is investigating whether local authorities respond properly to gypsies' needs. CRE chairman Trevor Phillips will visit two Gypsy sites in east London as part of the review. His deputy, Sarah Spencer, will make a trip to another site in Leeds. Mr Phillips said: "Discrimination against Gypsies and Travellers appears to be the last 'respectable' form of racism in Britain. "There is no room in Britain for discrimination of any kind. "And yet complaints of racism from gypsies and travellers are on the increase." He added: "The CRE's top priority is to secure better site provision - with this issue being identified by many Gypsies and Travellers as the most significant problem facing them in Britain today.

will focus on the way town halls evict Gypsies and Travellers and deal with planning issues and site provision. It will also look at police eviction powers and the effect policies have on travelling communities' education and health. Mr Phillips went on: "We need to find out exactly what is happening on the ground in local authorities - are they providing sites? "If so, are these close to basic facilities such as schools and health services? "Are they addressing the needs and responsibilities of all groups within their areas? "Do they play an active role in minimising any tensions that arise between Gypsies and Irish Travellers and other communities? "We also need to know where local authorities are solving problems and managing to provide decent services for Gypsies and Travellers."

The deadline for submissions to the inquiry is **December 5** and the CRE is providing a freephone number for contributors to record their comments on 0800 0831717.

" There are not enough sites and those that exist are often in polluted environments far from public services." The research

*The deadline for submissions to the inquiry is **December 5** and the CRE is providing a freephone number for contributors to record their comments on 0800 0831717*

Please sign the Irish Travellers Movement's petition to stop the closure of Walman Place Travellers Site

Residents of Wallman Place Traveller Site, which is located behind the Civic Centre in Wood Green, Haringey, have been offered compensation to move off, as the Council intend to sell it.

The Travellers stated they were not interested and they have asked ITM to convey to their local Councillors, for the Bounds Green area, and Haringey Council their complete opposition to any attempt to close their Site. This matter has caused great anxiety to the

occupants of the Site, which has been intensified by the sudden closure of the Wood Green Common Site.

This is a model Site not only in its design but also in terms of the relations the Travellers enjoy with the surrounding area. Any threat of closure will be met with strong opposition within and outside the Traveller community.

Please cut out and sign the Walman Place petition, and post it back to ITM.

Petition

Save Wallman Place Traveller Site

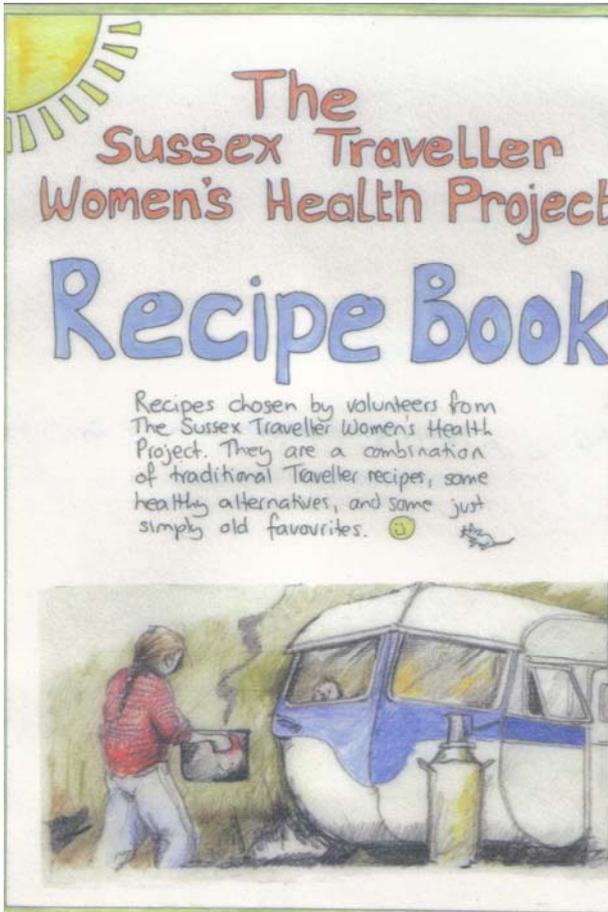
I the undersigned note that the Wallman Place Travellers Site, Haringey, London is a model Traveller site and has been the home to 6 families over the past 18 years. I hope that Haringey Council does not consider uprooting and forcing to the roadside; these families who are living contently and whose children are in fulltime education.



Please post the completed petition to:

Irish Traveller Movement in Britain
Banderway House
156 – 162 Kilburn High Road
London
NW6 4JD

Traveller Women's Recipe Book



The Sussex Traveller Women's Health Project's Recipe Book is now available.

The book is being launched by the Traveller women who contributed recipes. They will be displaying their cookery skills to the public, using recipes from the book.

To obtain your copy, send a self-addressed envelope (A4 size) with stamps to the value of £1.01 to:

The Sussex Traveller Women's Health Project
Friend's Families and Travellers
Community Base
113 Queens Road
Brighton
East Sussex
BN1 3XG



Recipe Development!

Extract from 'Discussion Paper Regarding Planning Sites and other issues': an amendment

This is an amendment to an "Extract from "Discussion Paper Regarding Planning Sites and other issues" as published in the previous newsletter.

"T&CPA 1990 s178 can only be used where there is an outstanding enforcement notice, part or all of which has not been complied with. If there is

an ongoing enforcement notice appeal, then s178 cannot be used. However s187B injunction action could be used even when ongoing appeal but no doubt there might be a good South Bucks v Porter (Porter No 1) challenge if that was attempted."

By Chris Johnson.

Get your free (with SAE) copy of The Sussex Traveller Women's Health Project's Recipe Book

Young Friends, Families and Travellers with Tess the Traveller

This is Tess and her son Toby. They are Travellers and live in a truck with their dog Teabag.

TESS THE TRAVELLER

written by
Fiona Earle & Ross Heulin
Illustrated by
Loll Golding

A series of ten story books for and about Travellers for children between the age of three and seven



'Tess the Traveller' story books come in a set of ten stories featuring:

- 'Tess at the Horsefair'
- 'Tess at the Circus'
- 'Tess at the Car Boot Sale'
- 'Tess at the Green Gathering'
- 'Tess Cleans Up'
- 'Tess and the Flat Tyre'
- 'Tess at the Party'
- 'Tess and the Snowy Day'
- 'Tess Has Visitors'
- 'Tess Goes on a Ferry'

Sets cost £35.00 (£3.50 per book) plus P & P.

Call FFT on 01273 234777 for more information

Young Friends, Families and Travellers with Tess the Traveller



Meet
Tess'
friends
and
family



A Threatened Culture: success in Kingston Upon Hull

A letter from John Mercer:

I am happy to be able to report to you, about the County Court case I attended as an advocate for a family in Kingston Upon Hull (Case No.4KH04583). It is a good result in our struggle to preserve the Gypsy and Traveller culture. I can't be complaisant towards this small victory, because it is not just about winning, it's the rights, the way of life and the welfare

of these families that takes precedence.

Wishing you well and Kushti Bok,

John Mercer (Gypsy Advocate).

For more please call: 07787834123

John Mercer has been elected to the management committee of the G&TLRC.



The University of Sheffield

The Health Status of Gypsies & Travellers in England: a report to the Department of Health 2004, by School of Health and Related Research, Sheffield University

“Gypsy Travellers have significantly poorer health status and significantly more self-reported symptoms of ill-health than other UK-resident, English speaking ethnic minorities and economically disadvantaged white UK residents”

The research was designed to address health policy objectives by identifying the inequalities in health status between Gypsy Traveller and non-Gypsy Traveller populations using a valid and reliable measure of health status. Among other health problems, the report addresses mental health, stroke, and heart disease, as these are health service priorities and health improvement targets.

A second strand of the research explores the health experiences, beliefs, and attitudes of Gypsy Travellers, and perceived barriers to service access or use.

Finally, Primary Care Trusts and Strategic Health Authorities in England are surveyed to understand better the current pattern of health planning and provision for this ethnic minority.

The report concluded, among other findings, that: *“Gypsy Travellers have significantly poorer health status and significantly more self-reported symptoms of ill-health than other UK-resident, English speaking ethnic minorities and economically disadvantaged white UK residents..... Gypsy Travellers have poorer health than that of their age sex matched comparators.”*

The full report can be downloaded from

www.shef.ac.uk/scharr/sections/ir/library/publications.html

Gypsy Poems by Gordon Hedges

I wonder if things will change?

The road I travel is long and winding; it seems there is no end
People meet upon the way but not one to call a friend
The look upon their faces speaks a thousand words, go on keep moving you are not welcome here
You stop awhile and think peace at last now I can settle down then your legs are kicked from under you and you're face down on the ground
How much longer I wonder will this go on, will I find peace on this earth or will it come from beyond the grave
When the spirit can float upon the wind and wander where it please, for then it will move over hill and dale and glide between the trees and my voice will be heard to whisper upon every breeze. God willing.

The Horseman's prayer

Let the piebald pull the hearse boys and give me a good wash and shave so I am nice and clean boys when I go to my grave
Put my whip in my coffin and a rope halter or two, for you can bet that I will be trading when I get where I am going to
Do not screw down the lid boys, so I may come up to the fair and watch all the horse boys as I float through the air
To see all the dealers and watch all the deals struck and wonder how much money will be given back for luck
When that day comes boys do not grieve for me, for it is then boys, this spirit will be free

I would not change even if I could for the sky is my roof and the greenfield my bed

I am a lonely Gypsy man who leads a life of his own who settles down anywhere he can
Wherever I may roam
I have no education, my manners they are few, yet there is determination in everything I do
I judge a man by what he is, not by his power or wealth as his character and virtues are confined within himself
People say I am lawless a child born on the wind
Yet when I find peace and happiness my nature is quiet mild
I live a life with nature on this earth as often as I can
For only nature knows the worth of a lonely Gypsy man.

“How much longer I wonder will this go on, will I find peace on this earth or will it come from beyond the grave”....

The Travellers Aid Trust – *Past, present and future!*

The Past - On the 21st of January 1988 a group of Travellers, civil liberty campaigners and solicitors came together and formally set up The Travellers Aid Trust as a registered charity. The two main objectives of the charity are:

- The relief of poverty, hardship, sickness and distress among such persons that adopt, whether temporarily or permanently and regardless of race, culture, nationality or ethnic origins, a nomadic style or habit of life (herein after referred to as ‘Travellers’).
- The advancement of education among the children of Travellers by attendance at school or otherwise.

For the next couple of years, the charity ran an advice line for new Travellers using various peoples’ homes and run primarily on donation. By the late 1980’s, the activities of the charity had begun to dwindle as a result of people moving abroad and a number of long-term supporters passing away.

The charity then became dormant for the next ten years. In the late 90’s, the Trustees approached Friends, Families and Travellers suggesting a takeover of the charity. After careful consideration and consultation, FFT offered instead to revive and administer the Trust, helping to maintain it as a separate sister organisation. In June 2000, a new board of Trustees was elected, made up of a mixture of one of the original Trustees, FFT directors and independent parties.

In 2001, FFT was notified of a bequest of a property. Although this was an amazing windfall for the organisation, the bequest left FFT with a very difficult choice. The property was in a state of disrepair and included a barn on the verge of collapse. There were also questions about what the property could be used for as the land was categorised as Green Belt which consequently restricted any potential develop-

ment. At the time, FFT only had sufficient funds to continue operating for about six months and all the funds it did have were ‘ring-fenced’ (i.e., they were grants given for a specific purpose and could not be used for anything else). This meant that FFT did not have sufficient funds to insure the property against Public Liability were anyone to enter the land and injure themselves, let alone develop it in any way. In order to manage the property in anyway, including something as simple as emptying the cesspit and paying the rates, would have made FFT insolvent.

After taking legal advice from the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) and after much consideration and debate, the FFT Directors realized that they had three options open to them:

- 1.) Keep the property and go bust. Although FFT would eventually have raised funds from the sale of the property, somewhere in the region of £30,000 would have been lost in legal and maintenance fees along with 40% of the overall bequest being paid out in Capital Gains Tax. More importantly, FFT would have had to shut down completely for at least a year, if not longer.
- 2.) Offer the bequest to the Travellers Aid Trust and benefit from the bequest through long term grants for core costs.
- 3.) Give the property to someone else and get nothing.

The only real choice facing the FFT Directors was to give the bequest to the Travellers Aid Trust. There were also some additional factors that weighed in favour of this decision. TAT has practically identical objectives to FFT and so it was felt that the asset would be safeguarded in its use and in the spirit in which it had originally been intended when left to FFT. In addition to this, as TAT is a charity, there would be a considerable tax saving on the property (40%) thereby providing the Travellers

“...this was an amazing windfall for the organisation..”

The Travellers Aid Trust — *Past, present and future!*

Aid Trust with some additional resources to manage the bequest. This would be used on administration, legal fees, and on seeking independent professional advice on how to manage the asset in the best interest of the client group of both FFT and the Travellers Aid Trust (i.e., Travellers).

And finally, in April 2000, at the first Trustees meeting of the revived Travellers Aid Trust, it had been agreed that FFT should become the main beneficiary of any fundraising initiatives carried out by the Trust. If the property was sold (which was the most likely outcome) it was understood that FFT would receive contributions to long term core funding, not only in compliance with the previously agreed policies of the Trust, but also as the bequest had originally been intended for FFT. However, it was hoped by the FFT directors that the bequest would also benefit other Gypsy and Traveller organisations, as well as Travellers directly, through the development and running of a small grants programme, thereby 'sharing' this unique gift.

The recommendation to transfer the bequest to TAT was then put to the members at the 2001 FFT AGM and voted through. The necessary arrangements were then made and the 'Deed of Variation' (as it is called) was agreed by all parties concerned.

Once they had acquired the property, the TAT Trustees instructed an independent consultant to investigate possible uses of the property and the consequences of such. Following this report and legal advice on the options available to them, the Trustees determined that, in the interest of the Trust beneficiaries (i.e., Travellers), the best use of the property was to sell it and use the money to fulfil the Trust's objectives. In other words, it was not in the interest of the Traveller community that the Trust keep the property or try to develop it.

The Present - On the 30th of November 2002, the Trustees agreed, in principle, to use the bequest as follows:

1. To reduce the capital asset by around 60% over a five year period. This spending would be broken down into:
 - Core funding for Friends, Families and Travellers
 - The cost of administering the Trust and further fundraising
 - Grants programmes
2. To hold the remaining 40% of the asset as reserves

At the end of January 2003, the property was sold and the funds were finally transferred over to the Travellers Aid Trust in April. At the end of July 2003, the Trust employed a new Trust Administrator and became independently active for the first time in over a decade.

THE SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME FOR TRAVELLERS

The Trustees were very keen to ensure that individual Travellers benefited from the bequest as soon as possible and they therefore launched the first round of the Small Grants Programme for Travellers in April 2003. This scheme awards grants of up to £250 for applications that are of benefit to Travellers or the Traveller community.

Since July 2003 the Trustees have given out 74 grants totalling just over £17,500. Successful applications have covered a range of items, activities and projects including a day out to the theatre for a group of Gypsy women, materials for a site playgroup, an exchange programme between sites in Middlesbrough, Chester and Liverpool, chainsaw and blacksmithing equipment for individual Travellers, and repairs, improvements or equipment

"...the FFT directors that the bequest would also benefit other Gypsy and Traveller organisations, as well as Travellers directly, through the development and running of a small grants programme, thereby 'sharing' this unique gift.."

The Travellers Aid Trust — *Past, present and future!* *Cont.....*

for play areas on sites. Grants have also been given out to families in need of medical equipment, special play equipment for disabled children, special tuition for children with Dyslexia and materials for home education. At least nine Traveller-led groups or projects have also benefited from the programme. The Small Grants Programme is currently under review and the next round will be held in mid-2005 with a new set of guidelines and criteria.

Due to the large number of requests for funding to provide Travellers with solar panels and other forms of alternative energy, the Trust is also currently running a one-off Alternative Energy Initiative called 'Travelling Light' which will provide 100 free kits (made up of a solar panel, inverter and battery) to Travellers throughout the UK.

THE TRAVELLER LAW REFORM COALITION

In May 2003, the Trustees were approached by representatives of the Traveller Law Reform Coalition requesting support in an application for funding to Comic Relief in order to employ a National Policy Development Officer.

Although direct involvement in projects is not an area that the Trustees wanted to develop, they nevertheless agreed to support the Coalition due to the unique nature of the working partnerships it represents and the groundbreaking work it had already achieved. Consequently, a bid to Comic Relief was submitted on behalf of the Coalition in June 2003 and following approval of a three year grant, a National Policy Development Worker for the Traveller Law Reform Coalition was employed by the Trust in October 2003.

The Trust has also secured funding for a Special Bursary Fund for Travellers which will help to subsidise travel costs to meetings and seminars as well as training

costs for workshops and courses related to Traveller law reform.

The Future

The bequest left to FFT and subsequently transferred over to the Travellers Aid Trust is a rare and unique occurrence – something that is practically unheard of in this field of work and carries with it great responsibility. Both the FFT Directors and the Travellers Aid Trust Trustees have made every attempt to do the right thing, to look at all possibilities and make the right choices so that as many Travellers as possible would benefit from this unexpected gift and the TAT Trustees are committed to continuing this effort.

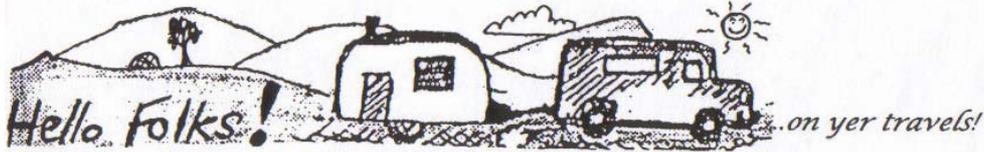
In line with its objectives, the Trust is committed to supporting FFT and the Traveller community as a whole. Its grants programmes are constantly under review and will change and develop as the needs of the Traveller community dictate. As Travellers, your input into the Trust's development is essential and feedback about the grants will help to inform the Trustees of what improvements can be made and what new developments are needed. For feedback forms, please either write directly to the Trust or download a copy from the website

(www.travellersaidtrust.org).

Alex Pickles, TAT Administrator.

"As Travellers, your input into the Trust's development is essential and feedback about the grants will help to inform the Trustees of what improvements can be made and what new developments are needed".

Viv's Spares File



Hello yet again folks! And welcome to the 35th Spares File! Here we are - at the end of yet another year – so for all those of us that have made it up to the threshold of 2005, I wish you a very good new year...

* * * *

Parts and equipment for caravans, motorhomes, horse boxes, van conversions, plus caravans wanted, and breaking – Tel. 01495 774999

* * * *

Suspension or road springs, leaf spring problem? Call Paddington Motor Springs Ltd., Unit 46, Stadium Bus Centre, North End Rd., Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 OAG. Repairs, upgrades, modifications, quick fitting service available, free collection and delivery of springs. Tel: 0208 7953300 Fax. 020 8795 5954

* * * *

Supplier of obsolete cross-ply car and van tyres: - 12"/13"/14"/15". Leave contact details on 24 hour answer phone service for us to send you a list of available tyres, through the post: Tel. 01902 452914

* * * *

Recon. Water pumps; - supply from stock or repair your pump. Established 30yrs+ E.P. Services, Unit 1, Central Trading Estate, Cable Street, Monmore Green, Wolverhampton, WV2 2HX. Tel. 01902 452914

* * * *

Hose Direct Ltd. Supplies hoses and fittings: - Units 2+3 Brunel Panel, Blyth Road, Harworth, Doncaster, DN11 8NE. Tel. 01302 746969

* * * *

Wiper arms and blades: - Telescopic Trading, Derek Andrews, 202 Chantry Gardens, Southwick, Trowbridge, Wilts. BA14 9QX. Tel. 01225 766800

* * * *

Well....

A Small selection for your truck's Xmas stocking.....
Wow....I know you're a cagey lot, hogging and keeping your favourite scrapyards to yourselves.....but if you'd like to let the Spares File know – as we'll be finishing the A-Z of scrapyards soon – send your info to "Spares Scrap File", Viv's Spares Fil, Llwynceilyn, Eglwysrwrw, Crymmych, Sirpenfro (Pembrokeshire), SA41 3SB.

* * * *

History of Travelling Fairs and Festivals. Part One

By the mid 18th Century, stock fairs were facing serious competition from regular country markets. Then there was an outbreak of cattle plague in 1867, which seriously affected the cattle fairs. Of course, when it started to hit the pockets of local tradespeople, then something had to be done. And then there was the mess in the streets after the fairs ended, with possible health hazards. There were accidents at shooting galleries and 'knock 'em-downs', and stream driven roundabouts weren't always safe. Some of the rides were so huge that sometimes accidents happened in transit between fairs, too.

All these problems vexed municipal authorities involved in enthusiastic reform, reorganisation and regulation of their boroughs. Fairs were – to them – an infernal nuisance, but the ordinary people loved them and faithfully flocked to them whenever they rolled into town.

One of the most perilous charges made against Travellers was that they were disease carriers. This was probably the authorities' trump card, because nothing else was more guaranteed to turn the settled community against the Travelling fraternity. On July 5th 1871 at Bognor Fair, a rumour was put round that fair folk had brought small pox to the town. The crowds soon dispersed, the streets became deserted. All the showpeople got together and sent around a town crier offering a reward of five pounds for offering information leading to those who had circulated the false rumour – but it was too late. The fair was ruined. And so it went on...in 1872 the 'July Lamb and Pleasure Fair' attracted complaints from local residents (most likely big-wigs) "The continual thumping into an old broken drum and the clamour of a couple of cracked trumpets, plus the odour, tends to drive a man out of his mind! There is no way of getting rid of these noisy, filthy people until after midnight!"

Viv's Spares File



All Things Bright and Beautiful

All Travelling people will be saddened to learn of the recent passing away of Teddy Stone who kept unspoilt land in the Mendip Hills, near Shepton Mallet, for many years and allowed much of the Travelling community to stay, visit and hold festivals and gatherings there.

Teddy's funeral was held on Saturday 9th of November at 2pm at Pilton Church, whose vicar had attended the same school as Teddy. He was buried in the family grave, next to his mother. The graveside was attended by Spiral Camp women, Buddha Field folk, Tribe of Doris, Magical Youth, Michael Eavis, Jacob of the Healing

Field, and many many more. In the church, it was standing room only at the back, all the pews being filled. The mourners also included many local residents.

Teddy was widely known, loved and respected by so many people – from all walks of life. His gentleness, humility, kindness to all and his regard for all creatures great and small, will live in our memories for many years to come. It was fitting, therefore, that the hymns chosen were “Jerusalem” and “All things bright and beautiful”. That's what you always were and will be to all of us, Teddy. God bless you. Rest in Peace.



Travels with Bat Chapter Two - Part Two Scotland is a-calling

“Off we go...along the A46, then a cut-across to Leominster along a very pleasant back road. Half way there, we stop and visit Risbury – a hidden treasure. Nowadays part of a farm, and used for sheep pasture, this is a steeply-banked, thickly-wooded hillfort, guarded all around by silvery-trunked ash trees – pale, ghostly, beautiful, in the gloom of the woods. We climb and clamber up and down and all around the rings of steep banks. Then sit atop the innermost heights which arise from a final deep ditch. The wind sighs and whispers amongst the trees. Leaves rustle mysteriously. I am taken back thousands of years. What were the people like who built these places?

* * * *

At Leominster a “fringe festival” is going on but most of it is happening in three days time, so we carry on. We head deeper into hilly Welsh Border country – west of that wonderful border road, the A49. It is a most useful road for travellers – running south and north – it skirts

the “Great Divide” between the land of the Anglo Saxons and the land of the Cymru, and disappears, exhausted, near Manchester.

All day it has been gloomy and oppressive. At Leominster it chucked it down. But now, as I drive in the early evening towards Clun, the skies clear, promising a fair evening. We are passing through countryside where great conical hills tower around us. Thick dark conifer forests march down their flanks into valleys.

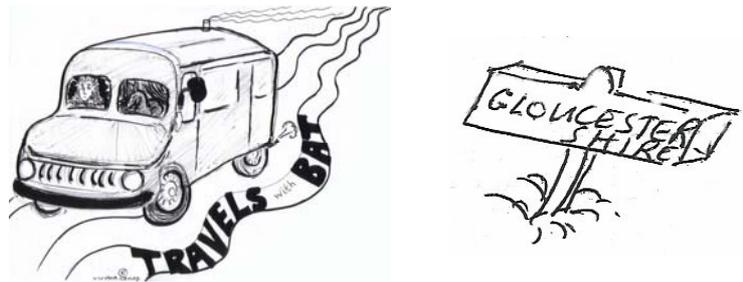
* * * *

Clun is a small, stone-built town of “character”, tucked into the middle of nowhere. To my delight, and Bat's relish, we find a carpark with toilets and a picnic table or three, down beside the local stream. The castle is next door. Clun Castle was built by Picot de Say, one of William The Conqueror's followers. Eventually it passed into the hands of the Fitzalans and finally to their descendant, the Duke of Norfolk. We clamber the mounds it was built upon – no doubt a more ancient settlement way be-

Travels with Bat

Chapter Two - Part Two

Scotland is a-calling



fore the Normans pushed their way into Britain; and we sit at the highest point to watch a glorious sunset. Peach flames and dusky purple; cream and gold; against a pale aquamarine sky. The castle's remains – the great tower – looms over us, a crumbling grey hulk of a stone keep, stern reminder that arrogant might is never invincible.

Way below, the stream serves as a moat, shimmering with streaks of gold and orange. Long-horned sheep peep from behind jagged rocks and stunted hawthorns. Later, back in car park, I lie on the bank of the stream and listen to the gurgling water in the growing darkness. We sleep well that night.



Next morning, we're off again – our next stop, further north, and high in the Herefordshire hills, is at Mitchell's Fold Stone Circle.

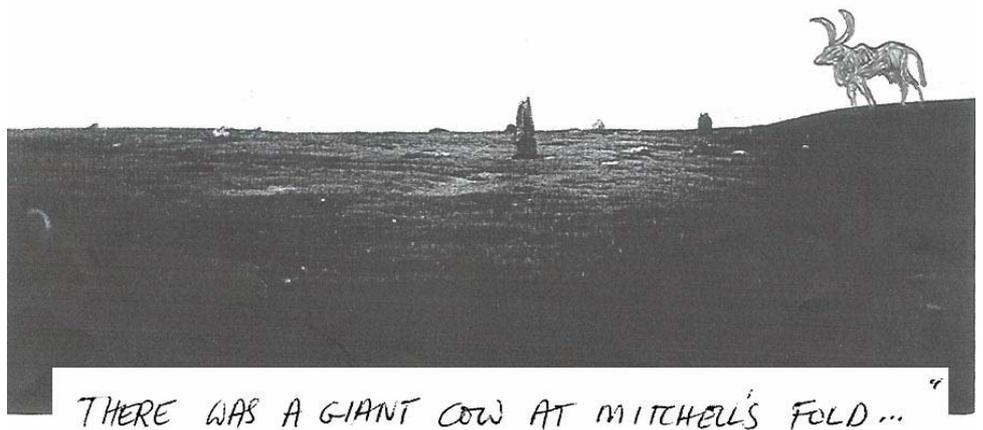
“At Mitchell's fold, there was a Giant's cow who gave milk to all who came along. Then a witch milked her through a sieve and she vanished. As punishment the witch was turned to stone, and the stone circle built around her”.

So runs the legend, distorted from its ancient mystical message when wise women and fairy cattle freely roamed the land. There was a thriving 'Bronze Age' community in this area, around 2000-1200 B.C. Ancient Britons, not yet threatened enough to flee forever into Wales, had a huge axe-making factory here which supplied axe-heads to tribes as far away as Lands End, Cornwall. Also in this area are several more stone circles – the Whetstones, Druids Circle, and the Hoarstones.

In blustery wind – with sunshine peeping, then blazing in and out of large clouds – grey-white, sooty, sailing on – we walk for a couple of hours over

high moorland. Past the stone circle and on. During a heavy shower we sit between two gorse bushes with a plastic mac bivouacked overhead as a shelter. Bat and I share chocolate. I try to imagine the Giant's Cow. Her ancestors roamed these islands in great herds. Now they, and the giants are gone. Their long bones lie hidden. Beneath the heather and boulders.

I see, in my mind's eye, a huge white ox-like creature with long back, dewlap and great gracefully curving horns. At our feet, amongst the tough spiky grass, tiny yellow orchids gleam.





Travels with Bat

Chapter Two - Part Two

Scotland is a-calling



We now have a drive to Ellesmere. Down, down – and down – then up again; then down and down. All through Herefordshire I have admired the well tended hedgerows, set on top of earth banks and often growing ten feet high, or more. Estimate the age of a hedge by counting the differing species growing there – Hawthorn, Wild Rose, Oak, etc. . . for each, count hundred years. The Herefordshire hedgerows must easily be seven hundred years old. You can't see over them or through them. Long may they guard the winding lanes and not be ripped down by "progress". When they go the birds cry for their lost homes and the wind shrieks

in anguish over a barren land! Here and there trees form archways and tunnels to pass beneath – I call them "Protected Passages" – as we wend the narrow lanes.

When the countryside finally opens out we are on a flatter landscape. Eventually on faster main roads for the first time in days, we arrive at Ellesmere – and the Striding Man Folk Festival. There are events on the school playing field and in three town pubs. I park down by the wharf at the back of the town, by the Shropshire Union Canal.

"The difficulties that they met and overcame, in the face of great prejudice, forms an important contribution to the general history of the New Forest."

Romany Nevi-Wesh: An informal history of the New Forest Gypsies by Len Smith

This important and eagerly awaited book traces the origins of the New Forest Gypsies, following their routes across continents before arriving on the shores of Britain in the 16th century. Harsh Tudor statutes proved no match for their ability to survive in wild places.

The Gypsies who settled in the New Forest found common cause with the commoners (of the New Forest) in holding on to a precarious way of life in the face of officialdom ever keen to move them on. The difficulties that they met and overcame, in the face of

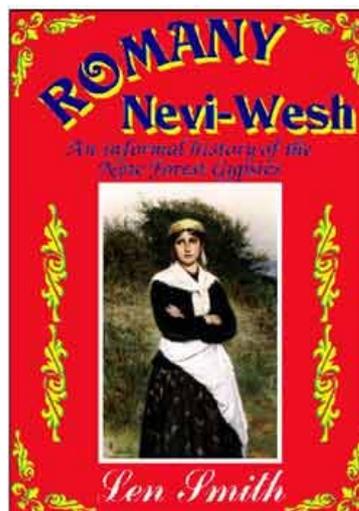
great prejudice, forms an important contribution to the general history of the New Forest.

That they were eventually forced to adopt a way of life for which they were totally unsuited is one of the great tragedies and injustices of the 20th century. This book unashamedly puts forward a Gypsy view of these last important years whilst there are still those alive who experienced it.

190 pp, over 80 b&w photographs and illustrations, comprehensive index.

Hardback £19.95
Paperback £14.95

<http://www.novaforestabooks.co.uk/>



“Room to Roam: England’s Irish Travellers”

by Action Group for Irish Youth

Irish Travellers are an indigenous minority in Ireland, north and south, who have a long history both of emigration to Britain, and of moving between Britain and Ireland. The research project Room to Roam: England’s Irish Travellers, undertaken over a period of three years, investigated the condition of the Irish Traveller community in England. It was designed to develop new information and research about the experiences of Irish Travellers in England in their relationships with health, welfare, criminal justice and educational agencies. It builds on the small body of research available which has already indicated the social exclusion of Irish Travellers from British society.

Many of the issues and problems facing Irish Travellers in Britain resonate with the experiences of Gypsies. However, it is important to recognise that Irish Travellers are a distinct ethnic group with their own history, culture and social mores.

The principle findings from the research included:

1. There is a general lack of recognition of the specificity of the position, culture and experiences of Irish Travellers. This lack of recognition inhibits the ability of statutory and non-statutory agencies to develop appropriate support and outreach for Irish Travellers.
2. The high levels of prejudice and discrimination experienced by Irish Travellers has led, in some instances, to strategies of avoidance of disclosure and/or discussion of ethnic and cultural backgrounds by Irish Travellers.
3. Accommodation is the single most pressing issue facing Travellers. The lack of appropriate accommodation

strategies for Irish Travellers has marginalised and criminalised them.

4. Many Irish Travellers live in insecure and unhealthy conditions. The health consequences of the stresses of frequent moves and lack of appropriate halting sites have not been appropriately measured or monitored, but there is evidence, including from this research, to suggest that the health of Irish Travellers, adults and children, has suffered as a consequence.

5. Irish Travellers in the school system are often negatively stereotyped as inattentive and slow learners. They experience racist bullying because of their ethnic background and are often blamed when they retaliate.

6. Evidence, including from police officers themselves, of police officers actively using racist attitudes towards Irish Travellers to inform policing decisions. This includes police forces ordinarily treating familial gatherings and events such as funerals and weddings as public order threats rather than a response to actual events or incidents.

Copies of the full report and the Summary of Research and Selected Recommendations are available free of charge from:

Action Group for Irish Youth
356 Holloway Road
London N7 6PA

Telephone: 0207 700 8137
Email: agiy2@aol.com
Web Page: agiy@irish.org.uk

“...police forces ordinarily treating familial gatherings and events such as funerals and weddings as public order threats rather than a response to actual events or incidents”....



Noticeboard: For Sale, News, Events and more.

Noticeboard

V&A Photographic Exhibition

The photos by Traveller and Romany children exhibited at the V and A in February 2002 (Moving Forward) are now available for loan on 11 panels for a mere £10 a week. They include pix of the Woodside Caravan site before the bulldozers moved in.

Information leaflet with booking form from The Social Inclusion Officer Learning and Interpretation Department Victoria and Albert Museum London SW7 2RL

Citroen BX 16 Auto TRS

Good Condition. Electric windows, electric sunroof, radio cassette, new tyres, new battery, MOT August 05, light blue, super runner, comfy as anything. G reg. Quick sale, £400.00 Contact zak, mob: 07711 776402

"Traveller Boys, Strategies for Success in School."

The Milton Keynes Traveller Education Services have produced a 4 -sided colour pamphlet called "Traveller Boys, Strategies for Success in School." Produced for "the purpose of helping schools better understand specific issues facing Traveller boys attending school. We hope that through improved understanding , new ideas and approaches may be adopted in order to help Traveller boys adjust to school life and achieve their full potential".

The contact on the pamphlet for information or for copies (at £2.50 each) is samantha.brewer@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Vet Services

Hi my name is Deborah Stafford and I am a veterinary surgeon currently based within private veterinary practice in the UK.

I was hoping that you may be able to help me find out how accessible the travelling community find the veterinary service in the uk. particularly in relation to yearly vaccination for their animals.

I am currently in the very very very early stages of researching the possibility of setting a mobile, preventative medicine based (ie vaccines, worming etc) subsidised vet service that could be present at one or two regular gatherings in the travelling calendar every year.

The idea would be to allow accessibility and subsidy for health check and vaccination for dogs (and cats) at the same time every year. This would meet with the vaccine requirements for these pets and hopefully allow early detection of disease in these animals.

At the moment all I want to know is whether you feel there would be a need for this type of service and whether it could be trusted and accepted.

thanks for you help

Debs

deborah.stafford@elnor.org.uk

Vacancies

Novas Group are looking for Support Workers, Site Officers and managers to work on Traveller sites in the London and Sussex area. Posts are due to be advertised shortly. For more information contact Sue Forrest 0208 300 1609.

FFT welcomes letters and articles from all our members - so get writing!

-

we look forward to hearing from you

Contacts

Local FFT Contacts

Brighton:

Judy Pointing -
01273 698531

Cornwall:

Sue Burton -
01736 752036

Worcester:

Sheila Wells, Worcester -
01905 821 302

Lincolnshire:

Rob Torkington -
07971 542 108

Somerset:

Tony Thomson -
07779 310 577

Surrey:

Franqui Wolf, Dorking -
01306 883254

Other Gypsy and Traveller Organisations

The Traveller Law Reform Coalition,

Andrew Ryder, Policy Development Worker, Banderway House, 156-162 Kilburn High Road London NW6 4JD 020 7625 2255 email: romani-stan@yahoo.com www.travellerslaw.org.uk

Travellers Aid Trust

PO Box 16 Llangyndeyrn Kidwelly SA17 5YT email: travellersaid-trust@yahoo.co.uk www.travellersaidtrust.org

Europe Roma

0208 802 7496 - 07812 694 347

Travellers Consultancy Service

Freelance consultancy services in all areas affecting the Gypsy & Traveller Community in the UK www.travellerscs.co.uk info@travellerscs.co.uk

The Travellers' School Charity

PO Box 2 Goodwick SA64 0ZQ Tel 07717 055378 Email stigstrunk@aol.com www.travellersschool.plus.com

Educational Advice for Travellers

Fiona Earle, P.O. Box 36, Grantham, Lincs., NG31 6EW

The Gypsy Council

Charlie Smith / Anne Bagehot - 01708 868986

The National Association of Gypsy Women

Rachel, CVS Building, Church Row, Darlington, DL1 5QD. Tel.: 01325 240033 or 07748 670200

New Futures Association (NFA)

c/o 42 Wade Court, Lings, Northampton, NN3 8ND, Tel: 07880 753 713 Email: cal-nfa@hotmail.com or mail@newfutures.fsnet.co.uk

National Romany Rights

Basil Burton 10 Dugdell Close Ferndown Dorest, BH22 8BH Tel. 01202 893228

BIAS Irish Traveller Project

Banderway House, 156-162 Kilburn High Road London NW6 4JD 020 7625 2255

National Travellers Action Group

Cliff & Janie Codona 01767 689736

Irish Traveller Movement in Britain

Banderway House, 156-162 Kilburn High Road London NW6 4JD 020 7625 2255

York Traveller Project

01904 630526

London Gypsy and Traveller Unit

020 8533 2002

Scottish Gypsy Traveller Association -

0131 650 6314

Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group (DGLG) -

Ernest Bailey Community Centre, Office 3, New Street, Matlock, DE4 3FE. Tel/Fax 01629 583300

Irish Traveller Movement

4/5 Eustace Street, Dublin 2, Ireland - 00353 1 679 6577

Labour Campaign for Travellers Rights

0113 248 6746

Leeds Justice for Traveller - Tommy Collins

9 Mowbrary Court Seacroft Leeds, LS14 6UN Tel: 0113 264 8658



FFT Contacts

Contacts can also be found at:
www.Gypsy-Traveller.org/contacts.htm

FFT contacts, other Gypsy and Traveller organisations, legal assistance, planning advice and more.....

For more contacts, please visit

www.Gypsy-Traveller.org/contacts.htm



Contacts continued.....

Pavee Point
North Great Charles St,
Dublin 1
00 353 1 878 0255

Robert Barton Trust
3 Silver Street
Glastonbury
Somerset, BA6 6BS
Tel: 01458-833797

**The Children's Society,
South-West**
Rachel Grant & Debbie
Harvey - 92b High Street,
Mid-Somer Norton, Somers-
et - 01761 411771

TravellerSpace
c/o Henjy, Canonstown,
Hayle. Kernow. TR27 6LZ.
01736 711 378
traveller-
space@linuxmail.org

**Cambridge Travellers'
Advocacy Service**
7e High Street
Fenstanton
Cambs, PE28 9Lq
Tel: 01480 496577
advocacy@ormiston.org

**Leeds Gypsy and Travel-
ler Exchange**
7 Shafton Lane
Holbeck
Leeds LS11 9LY
01132346556
07974574889

**Cardiff Gypsy Sites
Group,**
114 Clifton Street,
Roath,
Cardiff, CF24 1LW
Tel: 029 2021 4411

**Save the Children
(Scotland)**
Michelle Lloyd - 0131 527
8200

PressWise -
Mike Jempson
0117 941 5866

Groundswell
Elmfield house
5 Stockwell Mews
London
SW9 9GX
Tel: 020 7737 5500
fax: 020 7733 1305
info@groundswell.org.u
k
www.groundswell.org.u
k

**National Association of
Boat Owners**
01749 677195

**Commission for Racial
Equality (CRE)**
020 9390000

Justice?/Schnews
- 01273 685913

Planning Aid - 01963
230045

Education Otherwise -
PO Box 7420
London
N9 9SG
UK
www.education-
otherwise.org/
Email: enquir-
ies@education-
otherwise.org

Land Registry Office -
01705 768 820

**The National Small
Woods Association,**
3 Perkins Beach Dingle,
Stiperstones, Shropshire,
SY5 0PF, - 01743
792644

Legal Advice and Representation

**Traveller Advice Team
(TAT)** (Community Law
Partnership)
24hr. mobile: 07768
316755; Advice Line for
Travellers: 0845 120 2980;
and Landline: 0121 685
8595

Public Law Project - 020
7467 9800

**Squatters Advisory Ser-
vice**
020 7359 8814

Legal Aid Head Office
020 7813 1000

Chapter 7
The Potato Store,
Flaxdrayton Farm, S.
Petherton, Somerset. Tel:
01460 249204.
Email: chap-
ter7@tlio.demon.co.uk

*FFT contacts, other Gypsy
and Traveller
organisations, legal
assistance, planning
advice and more.....
For more contacts,
please visit
www.Gypsy-
Traveller.org/contacts.htm*

Friends, Families & Travellers was established in response to the passage through Parliament of the 1994 Criminal Justice & Public Order Act. It has since grown into a nationally recognised voluntary organisation which serves the whole spectrum of the Traveller community, both traditional and new, settled or on the road. The majority of work promoted by FFT is carried out by an Advice and Information Unit based in Brighton and covers evictions, harassment, planning, employment, benefits, education, health, civil rights, discrimination and legal representation. The Unit is also active in research, monitoring, mediation and policy development at local and national levels.

In 1999, FFT was one of five organisations short listed for the Human Rights Award, part of the United Nations International Day of Human Rights. FFT became a company (non-profit voluntary organisation) limited by guarantee on the 14th of July 1998, no. 3597515. The company is run by a management committee made up of directors elected by the membership. Management committee meetings are held every six weeks and are open to all members.

**FFT
Community Base
113 Queens Road
Brighton BN1 3XG**

**Tel: 01273 234 777
Fax: 01273 234 778**

This newsletter is kindly sponsored by



**Pump Court
Barristers Chambers
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www.1pumpcourt.co.uk



*The Telephone Helpline
for Travellers: Evictions,
Site problems and other
issues on
0845 120 2980*

Telephone Helpline for Travellers

0845 120 2980

This advice line is open between

10.00am—1.00pm and 2.00pm—5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

Travellers can speak directly to experienced advisers on questions of eviction, planning matters, issues involving official caravan sites and other matters.

It is run by the Travellers Advice Team at the Community Law Partnership.



The service is funded by the Legal Services Commission.



FFT's Christmas Appeal



In this season of goodwill
help fund us give advice and information
to all Gypsies & Travellers that aren't receiving Xmas cheer



£200 will pay for one months phone charges on the advice line
£500 will pay for one months rent for the offices of the Advice & Information Unit

All assistance in the running cost of the Advice & Information Unit at FFT will be gratefully received

**If you believe that all members of society should have the right to travel and to stop without constant fear of persecution because of their lifestyle:
JOIN/MAKE A DONATION TO 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.

N A M E : _____ A D D R E S S : _____

POSTCODE: _____

SIGNATURE: _____ I enclose my subscription:
Waged-£8.00 Unwaged-£3.00 Family Waged-£12.00 Family Unwaged-£5.00 Organisation-£20.00 / 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.