



HOUSE OF COMMONS

Rt Hon Theresa May MP
10 Downing Street

By email

17 July 2019

Dear Prime Minister

We write to you as Co-chairs of the Gypsy, Traveller and Roma All Party Parliamentary Group. We welcome your announcement of the creation of The Office for Tackling Injustices, and are interested to learn more about it, particularly whether the inequalities experienced by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities will be embedded in OfTI's work.

As you know, stark inequalities are experienced by Gypsy, Traveller and Roma communities, which have been well-documented over the years, and most recently in the Race Disparity Audit and in the recent report from the Women and Equalities Select Committee.

The majority of Gypsies and Travellers live in housing, with many also living on local authority and privately owned sites. However, the MHCLG caravan count listed 2811 caravans without an authorised stopping place, and for those living on unauthorised encampments, accessing basic amenities and services such as water, sanitation, healthcare and education is extremely problematic. Lack of access to these services exacerbates the poor health outcomes Gypsies and Travellers experience, including a life expectancy that's 10-12 years lower than the national average, higher rates of infant mortality and long-term health conditions. It also affects the educational outcomes Gypsy and Traveller pupils experience.

It is important to note that the inequalities experienced by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities are not limited to the more nomadic families, but accommodation insecurity and a constant cycle of evictions compound the inequalities experienced in other aspects of their lives.

Unfortunately, we lack robust, consistent and disaggregated systems for capturing data about Gypsy, Traveller and Roma communities. The Women and Equalities Committee drew attention to this in their 'Tackling inequalities faced by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities' report, recommending that *'The Race Disparity Unit should review all the Government and public datasets that currently do not use the*

2011 census ethnicity classifications and require their use before the end of 2019.'
We urge that work on improving data collection should commence as swiftly as possible, so that the disparities experienced by Gypsies, Roma and Travellers can be more readily identified and acted upon.

We hope you can give us an assurance that the Office for Tackling Injustices will have a clear focus on the inequalities experienced by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, and we would welcome the opportunity to meet the Director at an early date.

Yours sincerely



Kate Green MP and Baroness Janet Whitaker

Co-chairs, all party parliamentary group for Gypsies Travellers and Roma