

MY DREAM SITE



RESEARCH WITH TRAVELLER CHILDREN AROUND THE
ISSUE OF SITES.

BY THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY, CHILDREN'S
PARTICIPATION PROJECT

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THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY

The Children's Society is a national voluntary organisation working with and for children. The organisation has about 100 projects throughout England and Wales that focus on human rights issues for children and young people. There are 5 basic rights that the Children's Society believes that all children should be entitled to. These are:

The right to:

- have a good start in life
- be protected
- be treated fairly
- have sufficient resources to be included within society
- be listened to

The Children's Participation Project (Wessex) focuses on two of the rights listed above, these being the right to have sufficient resources to be included within society and the right to be listened to. The project works in three different areas: these are working with children and families on low income in rural areas, ensuring that children are involved and that their voices are heard in decisions which have an impact on them and working with new traveller children and families to help them access essential services.

The work with new travellers began in 1992. The work grew from some involvement with young, homeless people in Bath who saw getting a vehicle and travelling as a way of regaining some control over their lives. The project then carried out some research which was published as "Out of Site, Out of Mind"; which looked at the reasons people took to the road and impact of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Bill, as it was then, might have on families living on the road.

The work with travellers has moved on a lot since the initial research. There are now two Traveller Support workers who cover the counties of Devon, Dorset, Somerset, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and the new unitary authorities replacing Avon.

The work falls into three main areas:

- i. direct work with travellers
- ii. work with other agencies to influence policy and practise related to travellers
- iii. research.

We believe in the rights of traveller children to enjoy the travelling lifestyle, to remain travelling and still gain access to health care, education, play facilities and safe and secure sites.

If you would like more information on the work of the Children's Participation Project or more information about this or any other research carried out by the project then please contact:

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WHY CONSULT WITH CHILDREN?

Children are often more capable than many adults realise and can be very articulate. They have strong views on issues, which effect them. It is important for us to consult with and listen to children about decisions which effect their lives as it can help us to make our services more appropriate to the needs of children. Without talking with children we will not know what they want.

As well as making our services more relevant for what children want as opposed to what adults think that they might want, consultation will increase information sharing and an understanding of processes or changes which might be made. Including children in any decision-making processes leads to a greater involvement and ownership over decisions and a feeling of inclusion and support for any outcome or changes that might happen.

As well as all of the above it is worth remembering that one of the best reasons for consulting with children is that they often have some very good ideas.

Children also have a right to be consulted. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, particularly Article 12 which gives children the right to be consulted over matters which affect them, was one of the starting points of the research.

We use the term children to include those under the age of 18 years. This means that within the law they have few rights to determine their own actions independently of parents or guardians. It is necessary to balance the rights of the children to be involved in the research as independent participants of the research against the rights of parents and guardians to have control or an awareness of what their children are participating in.

THE RESEARCH

At the time the research was carried out there was renewed debate around site provision by some Local Authorities (*see Appendix 1*). There are many arguments for and against site provision, however this research does not attempt to examine these. What the research sets out to do is to ensure that if these debates are happening then the voice of traveller children and their needs around site provision should be heard. It was felt that enabling these children to be consulted over issues relating to site provision would hopefully benefit not only the children involved in the research but also other traveller children.

The purpose of the research is to give an example of the value of consulting with children. The research is qualitative. Thirty traveller children on ten different sites in the Southwest were consulted about their views on site provision. This report will set out what these views were, looking at location and services both on and off site which are important for children.

Throughout the research we talk in terms of site provision and are using the term in its' broadest capacity. The opinions expressed and the rationale behind the choices

made provide a clear case for the value of including children in consultations. It is hoped that this research will influence and inform the discussions around the provision of sites and traditional stopping places for travellers by ensuring that the views of children are heard.

The research does not set out to speak for all the children of the travelling community. It relates to the experiences of a proportion of the children living in the Southwest. It is hoped that the research will inspire people, when they are researching other issues that have an impact on the lives of children, to look at creative ways of involving children in the consultation process and to recognise the importance of accessing the views of children.

THE BACKGROUND

The research took place between 1997-1998 and was carried out on 10 sites in 4 different local authorities. The number of children who were interviewed over that period was 30 and the number of children who played the "Dream Site" board game was 32. The sites used in the research were the ones which the Children's Participation Project had ongoing contact with through the Traveller support workers. There was no minimum age requirement to be a research participant although the amount that the younger children participated varied and the methodology altered depending on age. The importance of ascertaining the views of the children was not age dependent. The youngest child that was involved in the research was 3 years old and the age group then spanned up to 13 years old.

The sites on which the research was carried out reflected the diversity of lifestyle among the travelling community. Two of the sites were bender sites with no vehicles on them, the rest were a mixture of vehicles. One of the sites had temporary planning permission at the time of the research, some of the travellers were living on land that they owned, some had permission from the owners to be on the land, some sites had been there for years and others were very transient. The size of site varied from one family and a couple of vehicles to sites with over twenty living vehicles on.

Three of the children who participated in the research lived in benders at the time of the research and the rest lived in vehicles which ranged from caravans to double decker buses. However, in total, one third of the children had lived in benders at some period of their lives. Changing from bender to vehicle to horse drawn or a combination of all three was not an unusual experience for children and gave them a wide range of experiences to draw on.

Over half of the children were born on the road and although they often had some experience of living in a house, most of their life had been spent living on sites. A proportion of the children included in the research lived on the road part-time, often because their parents had split up. They spent some of their time living in houses. There seemed to be little correlation between time spent in a house and the desire for services such as showers or hot water on site as children who had never had these facilities on site also wanted them. Most of the children (22) had some experience of living in a house. This varied from staying with friends for a few weeks to having lived in houses for a number of years.

METHODOLOGIES

When deciding what methodologies would be most suited for the research the most important consideration was that the process be an enjoyable one. The choice of involvement throughout the research was left up to the children with an opt out clause at any time. The methodology that was used needed to engage the interests of a mixed age group of children who were likely to vote with their feet if they found the process uninteresting (*see Appendix 2*). Including children in the process of choosing which methodologies to use was necessary to ensure that we were using appropriate methods. We worked with a group of traveller children who lived in vehicles to look at different methods that we could use and the use of appropriate images and language. The research was then piloted on a bender site to ensure that the different issues affecting sites which are not dependent on vehicles had been included.

THE GAME

We worked on the idea of a board game with a group of traveller children and came up with the idea of "Dream Site". The idea of the game was that a player moved around a board landing on different squares. Each square represented something good or bad that could be found on or near to a site. An example would be a square with a school on or a square with a bender on. As each player landed on a square they would collect a card with a picture of what they had landed on. The primary objective of the game was that it would generate discussion around whether the different squares were seen as positive or negative.

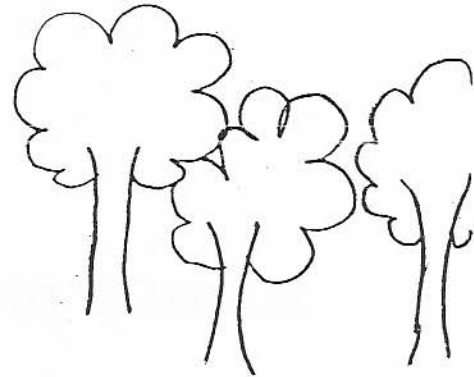
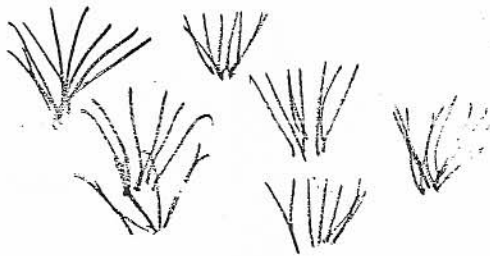
MAPPING

With the cards that had been collected in the game or as a separate mapping exercise the children planned their site. This exercise meant that the children could discuss their ideal size of site, in terms of the number of living vehicles and the people. It also enabled us to look at the location of facilities on or near to a site and the reasoning behind their positioning.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

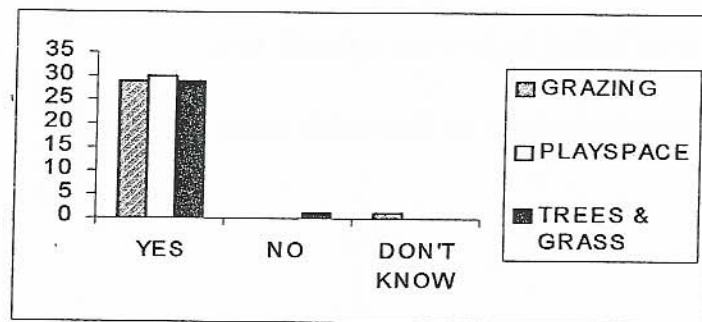
A questionnaire was compiled to enable the contextualising of some of the information, in terms of the children's' experiences, that came out of both the game and the mapping. The questions were kept to a minimum as it was felt that a lengthy questionnaire would either end up being boring or exclusive in terms of age and comprehension. (*See Appendix 3*)

MAIN FINDINGS



"Lots of playspace". Harry aged 6 years.

Out of the 30 children who completed the questionnaire 30 said that they wanted to have playspace on site, 29 said that they wanted trees and grass and 29 said that they wanted grazing.



The main finding that stands out from all the methodology used and throughout the entire age range of the children involved, was the consensus around playspace. Children, when asked about playspace on site, saw it as important for them to have a safe area on site for them to play. When the children were asked about services and facilities that had not been included in the research but that they saw as important to have on a site they chose things that were play specific such as swings and slides, places to ride their bikes and tree houses.

For children, play forms an essential part of their social, physical and emotional development and learning. A safe space to play can be a luxury for many traveller children. The inadequate number of sites provided for travellers and the preventative measure taken to stop access to traditional stopping places has forced families to stop in places where the external environment is not conducive to a safe playspace.

Next to playspace was the need to be on a site with trees, grass and grazing. Trees were seen as

"Good for climbing" Jade aged 8 years.

Grass was seen as good because,

"You can play in it and it's good for the horses." Tom aged 8 years.

Twenty-nine of the children said that they wanted trees and grass on site and only *one* child said that they did not.

The issue of grazing reflected for some of the children their experiences of being horse drawn and for others the needs of the animals that they had on site with them. For others it reflected the common love of most children of animals, and once the term was explained to them it became something that they would like on their ideal site.

Twenty-nine of the children said that they wanted grazing on site and *one* child said that they did not know.

LOCATION OF SITE

Nine of the sites where children participated in the research were in the countryside and the other site was on the outskirts of a village. Most of the experiences of the children were of rural communities and this was reflected in their choice of location for a site. Given four choices – in the countryside, in a village, on the edge of a town or village, in a town – *twenty-three* said that they wanted to be in the countryside, *four* said in a village, *one* said on the edge of a town or village, *one* said in a town and *one* did not know.

There was little debate around the site location although when it came to discussing the amenities located in the vicinity of a site some of the rationale behind the choices became clearer.

SIZE OF SITE

"I like small sites. If you have small sites then you can't have lots of people crammed in, cos' then it's horrible." Rosie aged 8 years.

Site sizes when the children did their mapping tended to either reflect the size of the site that they were currently living on or to be small sites. Almost all the children were living on small sites at the time of the research. The advantages of living on a small site were that there was enough space and people were not living in overcrowded conditions. A small site also had the advantage of being more inconspicuous. Large sites were seen as drawing more attention to the travellers and therefore leading to an increase in the risk of being evicted.

In terms of size of site the most important aspect for those who participated in the research was that there were other children on the site. All the mapping included at least one card with children on it.

"It's good to have children on site to play with." Vicky aged 11 years.

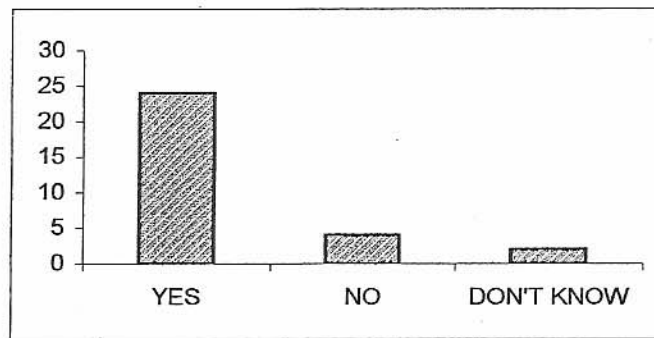
Other children were important as playmates, for support and because they also shared the same traveller identity.

"When we used to go to me dads it used to be so boring we didn't come down but when there was other kids on site we came down." Lucy aged 13 years.

SHOPS



Twenty-four of the children wanted to be near shops with *four* saying 'no' and *two* did not know.



"If you have shops near you, you can get food and that, but if you don't have shops near you, you don't really get that much hassle." Jade aged 8 years.

Children who had experience of moving about and being in different locations were more cautious about living in close proximity with the settled community, aware of some of the tensions that this could cause. Others adopted a more pragmatic approach and saw the definite advantages of living near shops.

"So we don't have to walk all the way to town". Tom aged 9 years.

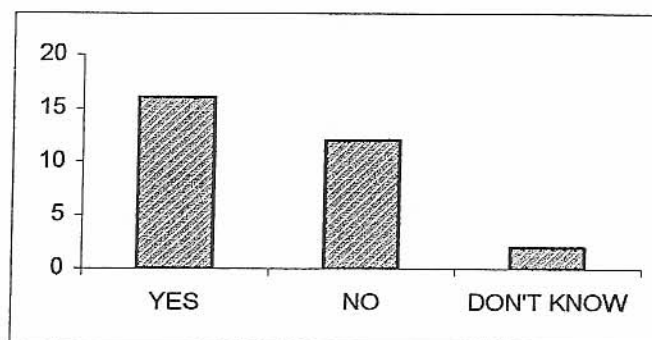
Rural sites, along with the rural communities that they live in proximity with, rarely have an adequate public transport service.

SCHOOL



Sixteen of the children wanted to have their ideal site located near to a school,

Twelve did not want to have a site near a school and *two* did not know.



At the time of the research 4 of the children were being home educated whilst the rest were attending school or nursery. School attendance for the children who moved around a lot tended to be periodic. Many factors influenced the attendance of children at school; being able to get a place, transport to school, children's experiences whilst at the school.

More than any other amenity school raised a range of emotions.

"It's good for you education but it's hard to get in because you're travellers and that, so you get a lot of hassle at school." Johnny aged 12 years.

Other children's experiences at school were similar, as they had also experienced bullying because of their traveller status.

"The only reason a lot of people do it is because they don't understand. I tell the teachers but they don't do anything." Daisy aged 12 years.

A pragmatic approach was adopted by some of the children who realised that if they did go to school then it was preferable to have one that was within walking distance.

There was a marked difference in attitude towards school from the children who had been settled on a site for a stable period of time. These children had an opportunity to settle into a school routine and knew what was expected from them in a school setting. The opportunity to build up a relationship with staff and with other children seemed to make attending school a far easier experience. They appeared to have less of a problem with being bullied because of living a nomadic lifestyle. Some of the children no longer identified themselves as travellers but saw themselves more as settlers. These children had been able to attend one school and had lived in one place for most of their lives.

There were other more creative suggestions to the issue of attending a school.

"Well, I have never had a school on site, but I think it would be good because my mum wants to work at a school and she could teach us so then we don't have to go to big school." Jade aged 8 years.

POST OFFICE



A site located near to a Post Office was of little relevance to most of the children and not one of the cards, which was used when mapping out a site. Some of the children did talk about having the facility to have post delivered to the site and that this was seen as important. This was a service which 4 of the sites in the research were receiving.

MAIN ROAD



This was one of the squares, which was used in the mapping and in the game and was seen as both good and bad by the children. The negative aspects of having a site near a main road were clear.

"Not very safe for the little ones." Tom aged 8 years.

"Bad because you get loads of air pollution and noise pollution and it's dangerous, really, really dangerous." Johnny aged 12 years.

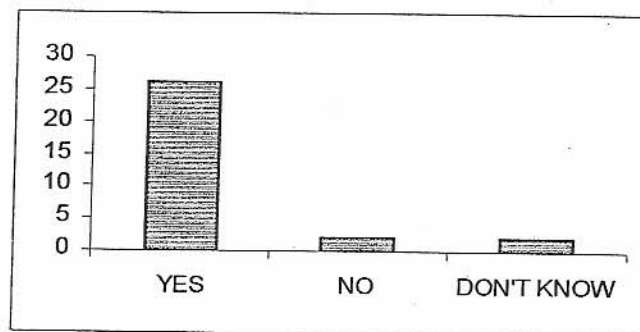
Children expressed concern at being near a main road in terms of safety both for themselves and their pets.

However there were advantages to be near a main road such as being able to access local amenities. On most of the sites that the children mapped out they had a main road near to the site.

"I'd like the main road going to the school and the shops." Harry aged 6 years.

The important issue for the children was the proximity of the site to the main road. It was necessary to be close enough to a road to access facilities, but not so close that it presented a danger in terms of getting run over, noise levels from the traffic or fumes.

LENGTH OF TIME ON SITE



Twenty-six children wanted to be able to stay on site as long as they wanted. *Two* Children did not and *two* children did not know. The question raised an interesting range of responses. Some of the children had been born on the site that they were still living on and several more had spent as long as they could remember on one site. For these children the concept of having to move on was not one that they had any experience of and they found it difficult to relate to.

For some of the children who had lived on many sites there was an awareness that long periods of time on static sites can bring with it new issues to deal with:

"Would you like to be able to stay on site as long as you want?"

"Yes, but not too long as it gets on your nerves after awhile." Sophia aged 8 years.

There was recognition of the problems that sites, which remain in one place for a long time, can face if they do not have any services. Sites with no running water and lacking in adequate toilet facilities can become health hazards. People attracted to the idea of some stability can swell site numbers and then issues such as refuse, lack of

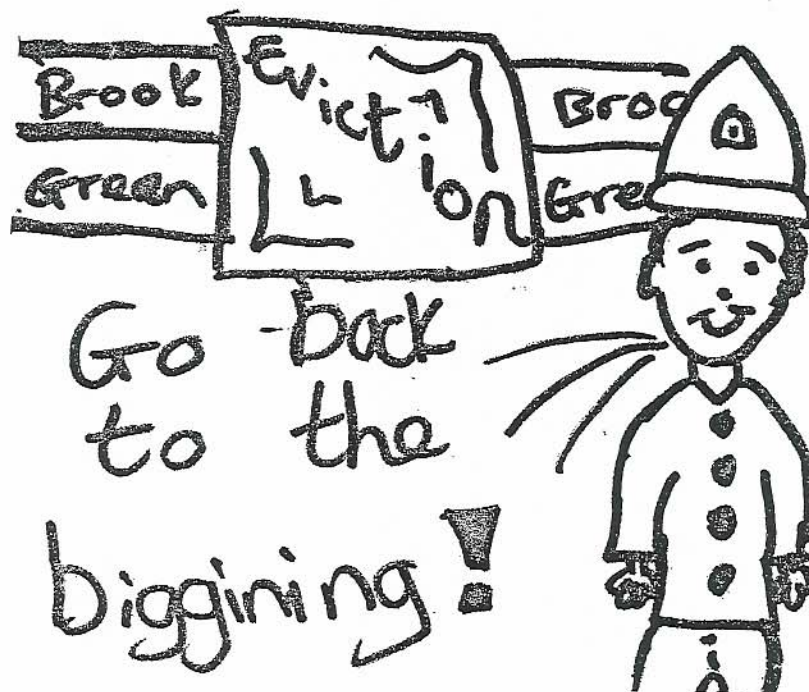
space and fire hazards with many living spaces being close together may become a problem.

Another side of the issue of length of time on site was raised by one of the children who in response to the question said:

"No, I'd like to be able to move about." Johnny aged 12 years.

For some of the children involved in the research their lifestyle revolved around movement, others had experienced the stability of one site. For those who moved around, finding suitable stopping places had become increasingly harder as traditional sites were blocked ditched or gated and the powers of eviction had been increased. One of the results of this has been that there are fewer places for travellers to move to. As well as being able to stay on a site as long as they wanted or was necessary the flip side to this is being able to move on when necessary or when they wanted. Travelling is not only about the stopping and having a right to stop but also having a right to move.

EVICTIION



The issue of sites and stopping places is interlinked with eviction and moving on. In the initial boardgame an eviction square was included as one of the squares on the board. If someone landed on the square then they lost their cards that they had collected and had to go back to the beginning. After piloting the game it was decided to remove the square as it caused too much upset. In part this upset was caused by having to start again and lose all the cards collected, but in part it was because many of the children who participated in the research had upsetting memories of being evicted from a site.

Eviction brought up different feelings depending on how the eviction had been carried out.

Moving on from a site brought up feelings of loss for some children. Where a site had been established for a while children were leaving an area which was their home. Links that had been made with the local community were severed such as friendships made at school. Sites when they are moved on are often dispersed so that friendships made with other children and adults on site are disrupted.

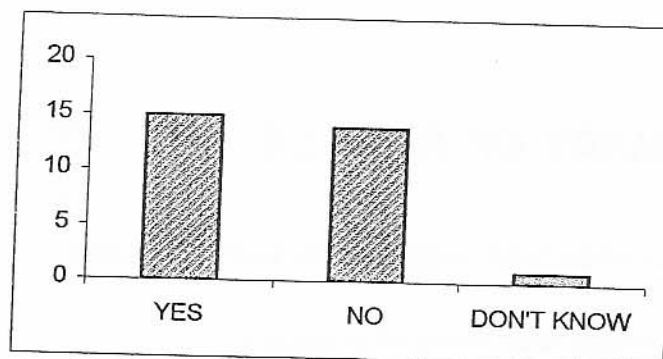
Where travellers were given notices of eviction and then moved on themselves, there were feelings of loss. Where they were moved on by force there were feelings of fear.

A forced eviction can be a threatening and frightening experience for children. There is a fear of someone taking your parent away, taking your home away or of people that you care about being hurt. Even if the threat is more perceived than real, for children the involvement of force or coercion into the eviction process can be very frightening.

There were stronger feelings about the way evictions had been carried out. Evictions which included a police presence led to a high level of fear among the children. Those where they had to move on after a set period of time or when the travellers moved off themselves were seen as being far less threatening.

SERVICES ON SITE

ELECTRICITY



Fifteen children wanted to have electricity on site, *fourteen* said that they did not and *one* did not know.

For some of the older children, particularly those who were at school and had contact with housed children, there were obvious advantages.

"Say we had a computer we could use it all the time, not like with a battery." Tara aged 11 years.

There was a general recognition that generators and batteries provided for most of the needs on site and that electricity was not that necessary.

"Generators but nothing else, but I wouldn't keep my generator on, just a bit in the day 'cos it's annoying when you have all the noise all the time." Jade aged 8 years.

On one site there was a discussion about what the advantages of having electricity were and the deciding factor came down to cost.

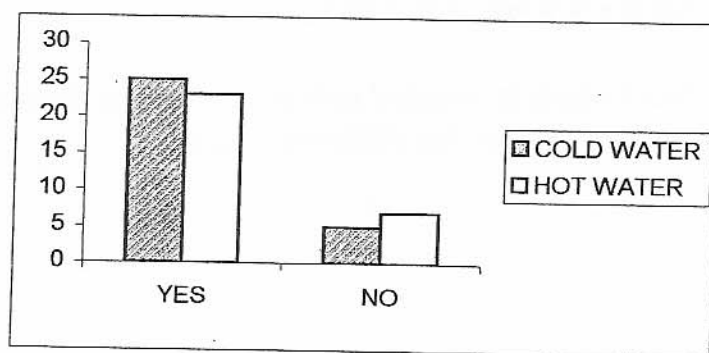
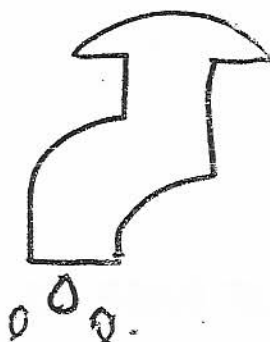
"In houses you have to pay for it." Jade aged 8 years.

"No, I don't want to pay for it. I want a generator." Tom aged 8 years.

For the children who had spent much of their lives living a nomadic lifestyle, there was a strong understanding of their consumption of resources. Few had lived on sites with many services on and electricity was regarded by many as a luxury.

"If you have electricity all the time you don't appreciate you've actually got it, so when you do get it you just think you've got your electricity again. But because we haven't got it all the time then we appreciate when we actually get it." Johnny aged 12 years.

WATER



There were more consensuses over the provision of water on site with *twenty-five* children wanting cold water on a site and *five* not wanting water on a site. For hot water *twenty-three* children wanted it compared to *seven* who did not want it.

There was a diversity of experience among the children in the research in terms of how they acquired water – one site had a well, one had a cold water tap which was connected to the mains, one collected water from a spring which was on the site and two had water butts delivered to the site by the county council. The rest of the sites collected their water from a variety of different sources and had to transport it themselves to the site.

Cold water was seen as important although preferences were expressed as to what type of water was supplied to a site.

“Tap water is good to drink but not if it comes from the council and has white bits in it.” Tim aged 8 years.

Hot water was seen as desirable, although as more of a luxury.

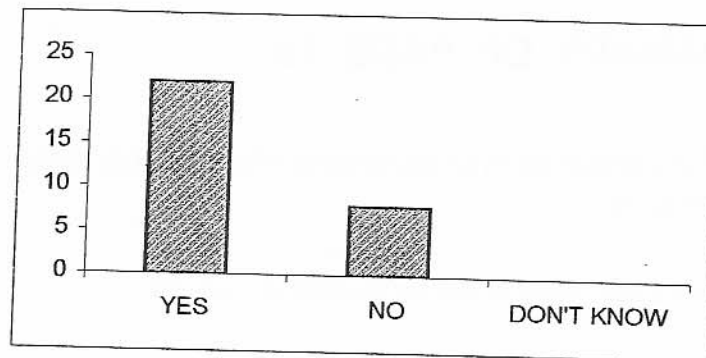
“Hot running water for the winter.” Nicky aged 8 years.

None of the children in the research had experience of hot running water on site although some of the children had had this facility at festival sites.

SHOWERS

This was seen as on a level with hot water. 23 children wanted showers on site, *six* did not and *one* did not know. This was another facility that most of the children had no direct experience of where they lived and saw as a luxury.

TOILETS



Twenty-two children said that they would like toilets on site and *eight* said that they would not.

Composting toilets, portaloos and toilets connected to the mains sewage system were the experiences of toilet provision for some of the children in the research. The composting toilet was composed of:

"A hole with pallets and at the back there's a bit where you can open it up and put it on the garden." Alfa aged 6 years.

For those with experience of them, composting toilets were seen as good. For children who had the experience of portaloos the question of whether to have a toilet on site was met with a 'no'. They were seen as being:

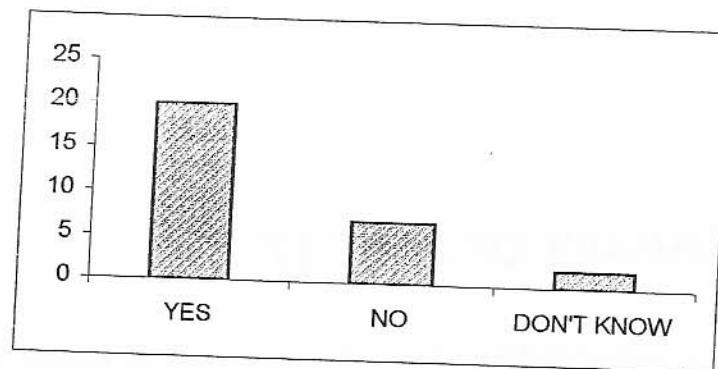
"Disgusting and stinky." Nicky aged 8 years.

Children had experienced problems with them not being emptied frequently enough. Given the choice between portaloos and not having a toilet some of the children said that they would rather have no toilet provision. Jade aged 8 years voiced their attitude:

"No, I'd rather dig a hole."

There was no objection to toilets which were connected to the mains sewage system and these were seen as preferable to portaloos.

HARD STANDING

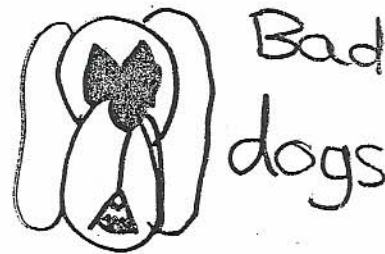


"It's good for vehicles." Johnny aged 12 years.

For children who lived in vehicles hard standing was seen as being desirable. It meant that you could get your vehicle on and off the site with greater ease and reduced the chance of getting stuck in the mud. For those who lived in benders hard standing had no importance for them.

Twenty children said that they did want hard standing, *seven* said that they did not and *two* said that they did not know.

OTHER ISSUES



When planning the game with the children originally they felt that it was important to have a card representing dogs on site. From this we ended up with 2 cards for good and bad dogs as it was felt that there was a difference between the two.

Dogs play an important role in the traveller culture; some are work dogs for guarding homes, others are pets. Bad dogs kill sheep, go through the rubbish bags or bite people. When looking at what made a good site most of the children included at least one good dog.

CONCLUSION

"Trees, children, rocks, trucks, good dogs to play with, more children. That's my dream site." Johnny aged 12 years.

The research has demonstrated the strength of opinion that traveller children have around the issue of site provision.

All the children had a slightly different version of what their dream site would look like depending on their age and experiences. The importance of this research is to show the need for diversity and flexibility in site provision. The services, location and facilities needed change depending on the circumstances of the different travellers. Providing travellers with one site with facilities and services would not suit the needs of most of the children who engaged in the research. Their lifestyle is nomadic. There needs to be a diversity of sites and stopping places to enable people to continue to move around.

Some of the children wanted very little in the way of services;

"If you always get water and toilets off the council it's like you're depending on them to give it to you. You've got to be independent, to be able to do it yourself."
Johnny aged 12 years.

What all of the children wanted was a choice and for themselves and their families to be the ones who were in control of the decision making process.

One of the objectives of the research was show the value of consulting with children. The children had very clear opinions and were able to articulate their views. Talking and listening to children enables us to have a greater insight into what they want.

The objective of the research was not to provide a blueprint of a site from a child's perspective but to add a new dimension to the debate around site provision. It is hoped that this research will inspire others to include and value the responses that children can make to any debate around issues that effect them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Children should be consulted over decisions which effect them, particularly in relation to evictions and site provision.
- Consultation with children should be creative and accessible.
- Site provision needs to represent the diversity of lifestyle that is found within the travelling community.
- Planning procedures should take into account the needs and wishes of traveller children.
- The validity of playspace needs to be given greater priority when considering the suitability of sites.

APPENDIX 2

THE PROCESS OF RESEARCH WITH CHILDREN

The research was carried out was qualitative. The children involved in the research were those who were living on sites in the Southwest at the time of the research and who were prepared to participate in the research. One of the issues with the research was accessing children. It was not always possible to get in touch with people to arrange convenient times to do the research. With some highly mobile travellers such as horse drawn, it was difficult to arrange to meet with the children given the time needed to talk with both parents and children and then arrange a subsequent visit. The nature of the travelling lifestyle meant those children had moved through the area too quickly for contact to be made.

The results of the research reflect a particular period in the children's lives. If the same process was gone through a year later the results might be different depending on what had happened to the children over that time. Some of the views that the children held were contradictory but the importance was that their views were asked for. There were enough similarities and cohesion to come from the research to give a clear picture of the demands of the children around the provision of sites.

There were some difficulties around planning a piece of research with no restriction on the age range involved. There were issues about pitching the research at too basic or too advanced a level. However the benefits of including any child who wanted to participate and the flexibility of the methodologies used enabled us to overcome most of the issues raised by the broad age group involved.

INFORMED CONSENT

It was important for the research that the right to participate rested with the children involved. However it would be naïve to ignore the issue of power dynamics between the researcher as expert and adult and the child. It was hoped that it was made as clear to the children who chose to participate and those who did not that the choice was theirs to opt in and out when they wanted to.

Another issue of consent when researching with children is the consent of the parents. This we did independently of that of the child and the consent of the parent or carer did not mean that we would also get the consent of the child. It was necessary to gain the consent of the parent in order for us to access the children to do the research.

As part of the process of gaining the consent of the children it was important to give potential participants and their parents clear information about in simple terms that could be easily understood about the issues involved:

- Why the research was being carried out.
- What their participation would involve.
- How the information would be used.
- Our ethics and procedures.

THE GAME

The advantage of the game was that it had an instant appeal to most of the children and they were happy to join in and play. However, it quickly became clear when playing the game that as researchers we had different agendas from the children. We were looking to the game to provoke discussion as the children landed on the different squares around the board, whereas the children just wanted to get on and play the game.

One of the drawbacks of using this methodology was the competitive streak in the children meant their main objective was to get around the board first or collect the most cards. Some children became upset when they were not the first to reach the end of the board and then did not want to participate in mapping out their site.

THE CARDS

In situations where there was little space, or where there were a lot of children, the cards were the methodology that was most successful. It took up least amount of space, had no competitive element and was a calming activity to do after the excitement of the board game.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

This worked well with the older children in giving them an opportunity to talk individually about what they wanted on a site and why. The benefit of this methodology was that it enabled children to discuss, debate and to be listened to on an individual level, the issues that were important to them about their home.

It was important to set the exercise up in a way that the children did not feel that they had failed if they were unable to answer the questions. This was particularly the case with the younger children who were not always able to remember answers to questions that related to the past.

11. Would you want these things for your ideal site? (*yes / no / don't know*)

- ◆ near shops
- ◆ near a school
- ◆ to be able to stay as long as you want
- ◆ hard standing
- ◆ grazing
- ◆ cold running water
- ◆ hot running water
- ◆ showers
- ◆ electricity
- ◆ play space
- ◆ trees and grass on site
- ◆ toilets

Is there anything else that I haven't mentioned that you would like?

GLOSSARY

CHILDREN - - those under the age of eighteen years old.

TRAVELLER – There are many different groups of people travelling in Great Britain, with very different cultures and heritage. The children who participated in the research are seen as being “new travellers”. New travellers are a more recent addition to the travelling scene, although some of the children are second or third generation travellers.

SITE – For the purpose of this research this is taken in its broadest context. It does not refer only to Local Authority or privately owned sites but also to traditional stopping places such as green lanes and commons.

BENDER – A bender is a home made from poles covered with tarpaulin. The poles are usually hazel and the ends are pushed into the ground and tied together to form a dome. This is then covered by tarpaulin to form a watertight structure.

HARD STANDING – Hard ground, usually concrete or stone, where a vehicle can be parked without fear of getting stuck.