

Miatta Fahnbulleh MP
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Minister for Devolution, Faith and Communities)

By email: 28th Jan 2026

Dear Miatta,

Re: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities

We write as Chair and Co-chair of the APPG for Gypsies, Travellers and Roma to welcome you to your new position. We look forward to working with you as we did with your predecessor.

You are no doubt aware that Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people face some of the [starkest inequalities](#) across a range of areas, including accommodation, education, health, employment, and access to services. Research also highlights widespread [societal prejudice](#) against the communities.

For example, Gypsy, Roma and Irish Traveller pupils have [the lowest educational outcomes of any other ethnic group](#) in England, while the 2021 Census found those who identified as 'Gypsy or Irish Traveller' were more than twice as likely to report bad or very bad health (12.5%) compared with the England and Wales population (5.2%). These inequalities are not isolated, but inextricably linked and mutually reinforcing, with insecure and inadequate accommodation playing a central role in compounding poor educational access, health outcomes and wider exclusion.

The UK government have a positive obligation under Article 8 outlined by the European Court of Human Rights in 2001 to 'facilitate the gypsy way of life'. However, the under-provision of culturally appropriate accommodation for Gypsy and Traveller communities has remained a longstanding issue, particularly since 1994, with the repeal of the statutory duty on local authorities to provide Gypsy and Traveller sites.

[Research](#) conducted in 2023 found there were 149 socially-provided sites across the 100 local planning authorities, and of these sites, 119 were built before 1994, and only 30 since then (after the statutory duty to provide sites had been revoked). Furthermore, [research](#) conducted in 2024 revealed that just 9% of local authorities had transit provision in their area.



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Research from the [Office for National Statistics 2022](#) and [Bloch and Quarmby 2024](#) also highlights poor living conditions on Gypsy and Traveller sites and dangerous proximity to environmental hazards. However, Gypsy and Traveller sites are treated and defined differently in legislation concerning disrepair, which has resulted in a lack of clear protections for families living on rented Gypsy and Traveller sites.

In 2019, [MHCLG](#) announced that it would lead a cross-departmental strategy to tackle entrenched inequality and improve the lives of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. However, this strategy was never delivered. The Council of Europe's 2023 review of the UK's compliance with the [Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities](#) and the [European Commission against Racism and Intolerance](#) both called for a national strategy to address long-standing inequalities experienced by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people in the UK.

We trust that the Government will now take steps toward delivering on the national strategy. As Minister for Devolution, Faith and Communities, your role is of course central to ensuring that government policy is responsive to the needs of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. We hope that a meeting can soon be arranged to pick up the commitments made by your predecessor, Wajid Khan, just before he left his post.

Yours sincerely

Mary Kelly Foy MP, Chair and Baroness Janet Whitaker, Co-chair
All-Party Parliamentary Group for Gypsies, Travellers and Roma

[gypsy-traveller.org/appg](https://www.gypsy-traveller.org/appg) All Party Parliamentary Group for Gypsies, Travellers and Roma

Co-chairs: Mary Foy MP, Baroness Janet Whitaker | Honorary President: Lord Nick Bourne

Friends, Families & Travellers (Charity Number: 1112326) acts as Secretariat to the APPG for Gypsies, Travellers and Roma.

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