

# Traveller Commissioning Strategy 2012

Balancing the needs of Traveller  
communities and the City's  
settled communities



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### **Acknowledgements**

We would like to thank all those who took the time to share their views, opinions and stories with us. These conversations have helped shape our own understanding of the needs of both Traveller communities and local residents and ultimately set the direction and priorities of our strategy.

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## **Traveller Commissioning Strategy 2012** **Balancing the needs of Traveller communities and the City's settled communities**

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## Foreword

I would like to welcome you to our new Traveller Commissioning Strategy which has been developed in partnership with residents, Traveller groups and service providers.

Travellers have been making a living around the country for hundreds of years. However, as traditional stopping places have been lost, the travelling lifestyle has become increasingly difficult. Nationally, two thirds of Travellers now live in bricks and mortar housing with those actively travelling being a minority within a minority.

As a consequence of the economic challenges facing travelling communities they are increasingly disadvantaged. On average their health is worse and life expectancy lower. Travellers are more likely to be poorly educated, suffer discrimination and experience racial hatred. Limited access to secure and safe stopping places makes it difficult for Travellers to access the services they need.

Evidence tells us that we have a lower proportion of Traveller households in the City than the South East average yet due to the shortage of stopping places for those Travellers visiting Brighton & Hove they are up to 4 times more likely to have to set up unauthorised encampments here than in the rest of the region.

The national shortage of sites causes tensions between Traveller groups and local residents particularly when unauthorised encampments are set up in parks or playing fields. We estimate that nationally, less than 6% of all Travellers are on unauthorised encampments yet myths surrounding Traveller communities, often fuelled by the media and the anti-social behaviour caused by a small minority are inflaming emotions, tensions and mistrust.

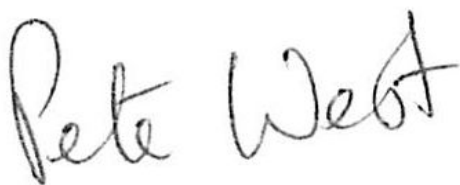
Brighton & Hove prides itself on being a tolerant and welcoming city. We recognise that embracing diversity helps the city to thrive and gives it a vibrancy that other areas find hard to match. However, sometimes tensions arise between communities which if not dealt with undermine our reputation. It is in these circumstances that the council, working with our partners, has a duty to act.

In summer 2011 we tested a part of our new approach. Rather than continuing to push Travellers around the city causing encampments that would impact on many local communities, we allowed one group to stay longer at an out of town location with a lesser impact. As a direct result of this there was a 40% reduction in the number of encampments between July and September when compared to the previous 3 months. We would normally expect to see an increase at this time of year yet there were 25% fewer encampments than during the same time in the previous year.

We also worked with the Police to support Operation Monza during the summer where the Police made daily visits to encampments to improve relations with Travellers and reassure residents. During this period, not a single encampment was moved because of nuisance or anti-social behaviour and our teams saw a marked decrease in resident complaints.

The overall shortage of temporary and permanent stopping places at a national level means that we may always have unauthorised encampments but our strategy aims to limit them in sensitive locations. A national approach is required as is a regional one, but in the absence of a lead from central government we have to fall back on local solutions. We are taking a firm but fair approach in dealing with encampments that respects the nomadic lifestyle and needs of Traveller communities and balances this with the interests of local residents.

I would like to thank all those that have been able to respond to our consultation. It is your views that have helped to shape this strategy and our priorities which will ultimately benefit both our settled and Travelling communities.



Councillor Pete West  
Cabinet Member for Environment & Sustainability

## Contents

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Foreword</b>   | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>1. Our Strategic Vision and Outcomes</b>                               | <b>9</b>  |
| 1.1 Our Vision  | 9         |
| 1.2 The outcomes we want to achieve                                       | 10        |
| 1.3 Funding our strategy  | 11        |
| 1.4 A partnership approach  | 11        |
| <b>2. Who are our Traveller communities?</b>                              | <b>14</b> |
| 2.1 Introduction  | 14        |
| 2.2 Estimating the Traveller Population                                   | 17        |
| 2.3 Inequality  | 18        |
| 2.4 The profile of Traveller inequality                                   | 20        |
| 2.5 Community and Voluntary Sector Services                               | 23        |
| <b>3. Traveller sites</b>   | <b>24</b> |
| 3.1 Site provision in the South East                                      | 24        |
| 3.2 Unauthorised Encampments  | 26        |
| 3.3 The City's need for Traveller pitches                                 | 27        |
| <b>4. Traveller health and wellbeing needs</b>                            | <b>31</b> |
| 4.1 The health and wellbeing of Gypsies and Travellers                    | 31        |
| 4.2 Living conditions and Gypsy and Traveller health                      | 33        |
| 4.3 Access to health services   | 34        |
| 4.4 Gypsies and Travellers' specialist health services in Brighton & Hove | 35        |
| 4.5 Domestic and sexual violence  | 36        |
| <b>5. Traveller education needs</b>                                       | <b>38</b> |
| 5.1 Local authority responsibility to children                            | 38        |
| 5.2 National Traveller education profile                                  | 38        |
| 5.3 Barriers to education   | 40        |
| 5.4 Traveller education good practice                                     | 41        |
| 5.5 Support for Traveller children and families                           | 42        |
| <b>6. Resident concerns about unauthorised encampments</b>                | <b>45</b> |
| 6.1 Impact on the settled community                                       | 45        |
| 6.2 Addressing resident concerns  | 49        |

|            |  |           |
|------------|--|-----------|
| 6.3        | Co-ordinating our approach   | 51        |
| <b>7.</b>  | <b>Consultation</b>  | <b>53</b> |
| 7.1        | Who did we engage?   | 53        |
| 7.2        | Resident views   | 53        |
| 7.3        | Travellers   | 54        |
| 7.4        | Community & Voluntary Sector Organisations   | 55        |
| 7.5        | Service Commissioners and Providers  | 55        |
| 7.6        | Community Champions  | 56        |
| 7.7        | Pressure Group   | 56        |
| 7.8        | Responses from others  | 56        |
| 7.9        | Traveller Strategy Scrutiny Panel  | 56        |
| 7.10       | Methodology  | 57        |
| <b>8.</b>  | <b>Our Strategy in Context</b>   | <b>58</b> |
| 8.1        | Linking to international, national and local policy  | 58        |
| 8.2        | National Policy  | 59        |
| 8.3        | Local Policy   | 61        |
| <b>9.</b>  | <b>Strategic Outcome 1: Improve site availability</b>  | <b>63</b> |
| 9.1        | Increasing pitch provision   | 63        |
| 9.2        | Goal 1: Develop a new permanent Traveller site   | 63        |
| 9.3        | Goal 2: Ensure effective management and use of the<br>Horsdean Transit Site                    | 65        |
| 9.4        | Goal 3: Develop procedures for Tolerated sites   | 65        |
| 9.5        | Goal 4: Consider the need for future site provision  | 65        |
| 9.6        | Goal 5: To provide advice to Travellers seeking to buy<br>their own land for developing a site | 66        |
| <b>10.</b> | <b>Strategic Outcome 2: Improve health, safety and<br/>wellbeing</b>                           | <b>69</b> |
| 10.1       | Health and wellbeing inequality  | 69        |
| 10.2       | Goal 6: Improve access to health and other support<br>services for Travellers in the city      | 70        |
| 10.3       | Goal 7: To improve cultural awareness in health<br>services                                    | 70        |
| 10.4       | Goal 8: To improve ethnic monitoring in health and<br>other services to include Travellers     | 70        |
| 10.5       | Goal 9: Tackle domestic and sexual violence  | 71        |
| <b>11.</b> | <b>Strategic Outcome 3: Improve education outcomes</b>   | <b>74</b> |

|            |   |           |
|------------|---|-----------|
| 11.1       | Giving children a good start in life  | 74        |
| 11.2       | Goal 10: Raise standards by ensuring successful education provision for Traveller children                      | 75        |
| 11.3       | Goal 11: Raise the engagement with learning opportunities for all traveller families visiting Brighton and Hove | 75        |
| 11.4       | Goal 12: Secure engagement of families from the early years   | 75        |
| 11.5       | Goal 13: Improve further the awareness in schools about Traveller History and Culture                           | 75        |
| <b>12.</b> | <b>Strategic Outcome 4: Improve community cohesion</b>  | <b>79</b> |
| 12.1       | Supporting our communities  | 79        |
| 12.2       | Goal 14: Increase awareness of different cultures   | 80        |
| 12.3       | Goal 15: Involve Travellers and their advocates in service design and delivery                                  | 80        |
| 12.4       | Goal 16: Effectively manage unauthorised encampments  | 81        |
| 12.5       | Goal 17: Ensure sensitive sites are protected   | 83        |
| 12.6       | Goal 18: Tackle crime, anti-social behaviour and nuisance   | 84        |
| 12.7       | Goal 19: Tackle racism, sexism and homophobia   | 84        |
| 12.8       | Goal 20: Develop a protocol for addressing Van Dwellers who are often mistaken for New Travellers               | 85        |
|            | <b>Appendix 1: Equality Impact Assessment</b>   | <b>90</b> |



# 1. Our Strategic Vision and Outcomes

## 1.1 Our Vision

Travellers are identified as being the most disadvantaged ethnic group in the country, suffering a high level of inequality. Travellers die younger, experience more chronic health conditions, have a poor level of education, and regularly experience discrimination and racial hatred. Lack of suitable, secure accommodation underpins many of these inequalities as access to employment, health, education and other services is made easier when people are living in settled accommodation.

Traveller groups estimate that nationally around 2/3 of Travellers now live in bricks and mortar housing. Of those that still live in caravans, the majority are on official sites which are owned and managed by Travellers themselves, local authorities or registered providers. Nationally, we estimate that less than 6% of all Travellers are on unauthorised encampments.

The Government's Gypsy & Traveller Caravan Count tells us that Brighton & Hove has fewer Travellers in the city than would be expected from a population our size yet a lack of suitable stopping places has resulted in Travellers being up to 4 times more likely to be on an unauthorised site in the City than both the national and regional average. This has inflamed tensions in some communities as Travellers have set up encampments in the city's parks and open spaces.

Our strategy hopes to tackle the fundamental inequalities Travellers face and the issues caused by the shortage of suitable stopping places and has a vision of:

***Balancing the needs of Traveller communities and the City's settled communities to reduce inequality and improve community relations***

*[The Vision] "Seems a sensible and fair approach to a set of circumstances that cannot be ignored."  
(Resident)*

In achieving our vision we will take a firm but fair approach to discourage Travellers from setting up encampments in sensitive locations and aim to reduce the costly and disruptive cycle where Travellers are pushed from site to site.

## 1.2 The outcomes we want to achieve

To achieve our vision we have identified 4 main outcome areas aimed at supporting Travelling communities to improve the quality of their lives and reduce the tensions between Travellers and the settled population:

Outcome 1: Improve site availability

Outcome 2: Improve health, safety and wellbeing

Outcome 3: Improve education outcomes

Outcome 4: Improve community cohesion

Action to address these priorities will help ensure we have adequate Traveller pitch provision to improve stability for those Travellers living in and visiting the city.

Improving site availability will help Travellers access education and health services more effectively and also reduce pressures on the city's parks and open spaces to tackle anti-social behaviour and improve community cohesion.

### Making a Difference

Over the lifetime of this strategy we would like to:

- Reduce the number of unauthorised encampments by making proper provision for well managed stopping places for Travelling communities such as through the provision of a permanent site
- Improve educational attainment within local travelling communities.
- Improve health, safety and wellbeing amongst local Travelling communities
- Improve community cohesion by increasing awareness and understanding between travelling communities and residents of the city
- Reduce the incidence of unauthorised encampments on the city's parks and open spaces
- Tackle domestic and sexual violence, anti-social behaviour and nuisance
- Reducing racism, prejudice and hate crime

### **1.3 Funding our strategy**

Through our strategy we want to ensure we achieve maximum value for money by providing the services that will make the most difference and by reprioritising funding from reactive to preventative services. Whilst it is difficult to quantify some costs as many services are provided to all residents, the dedicated Traveller services the Council provides in managing the Horsdean Transit site, tackling unauthorised encampments and providing outreach education services is around £600,000 per year, equivalent to about £5 of a household's annual Council Tax bill.

Just over half of our costs go on unauthorised encampments, although this cost does not include the more intangible impact on the settled and Travelling communities such as residents not being able to use parks or the impact on the health and education of Traveller from regular evictions. If we had more authorised stopping places then this money could be better used to support the provision of services and help build the bridges between our communities. In addition, those on authorised sites are required to pay rent and contribute to the cost of services and Council Tax.

The new permanent Traveller site that has been proposed is being funded by a Government grant. In addition, each new pitch provided attracts the Government's New Homes Bonus which is a payment equivalent to 6 years average Council Tax.

### **1.4 A partnership approach**

The Traveller Commissioning Strategy has not been developed in isolation but has involved services across the Council and beyond such as:

- **NHS Sussex:** Provides services to the whole community plus has staff specialised in Traveller needs to target key issues around health such as a specialist Health Visitor, Midwife and Health Trainers.

- **Traveller Education Team:** All children deserve a good education. This service is provided on our behalf by East Sussex County Council and helps Traveller children access schools and learning activities.
- **Sussex Police:** Dedicated Traveller Liaison Officers operate across Sussex to help address unauthorised encampments and provide support to Travellers and the settled community to tackle anti-social behaviour.

### *Local Leadership*

Tackling the needs of marginalised groups is not possible without strong local leadership. We understand that politicians and community representatives can face significant challenges when the needs of one group are perceived to impact upon the needs of another. Our strategy aims to support community champions with a clear purpose, effective training and up to date information to help them represent all the communities they serve.

### *Traveller Scrutiny Panel*

The development of our strategy was shadowed by a cross-party Traveller Scrutiny Panel which gathered evidence and made a number of important recommendations that have improved the final strategy and will ultimately benefit Travellers and the settled community. This valuable work has highlighted that a consensus across the whole political spectrum is vital to tackling Traveller inequality and local issues.

### *Media*

Stories in the media during the spring of 2011 highlighted the importance of developing a good relationship with the press as they have a key role to play in building stronger communities. As part of our strategy we want to work with the press to ensure that reporting is balanced and fair to both Travellers and local residents.

### *Regional Working*

The very nature of a travelling lifestyle means that we need a regional approach to tackling Traveller inequality and the shortage of suitable stopping places:

- **Sussex Joint Local Authority Traveller Forum:** This new group has been set up to help share good practice and co-ordinate a regional response to Traveller issues. The group is made up of Sussex Police, Brighton & Hove City Council, East Sussex County Council, West Sussex County Council and a number of district authorities.
- **Gypsy and Traveller Advisory Group:** In recent years, Sussex Police have worked with the Sussex Traveller Action Group and Travellers to address issues of concern.
- **South Downs National Park:** The shortage of stopping places for Travellers results in unauthorised encampments in the National Park as well as in our local communities. Through our strategy we will work with the National Park Authority to protect sensitive sites and minimise unauthorised encampments. We have also agreed a Joint Communications Protocol where we will notify the Park Authority and involve them in key decisions from the moment an encampment occurs within the Park. As the proposed location of the new permanent Traveller site is in the Park boundary it will be the National Park Authority that determines the planning application for the site.

### *Community and Voluntary Sector Services*

The Community and Voluntary Sector plays a vital role in helping service providers build trust with Traveller groups to enable them to provide the services vitally needed.

In addition, Brighton & Hove has a number of Local Action Teams made up of local residents and businesses that work to support all communities to provide information and work with services to resolve problems in their neighbourhoods.

## 2. Who are our Traveller communities?

### 2.1 Introduction

The term Travellers is often used to describe groups of people who have a nomadic lifestyle or who come from a tradition or heritage of nomadism.

Romany Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers are recognised in law as ethnic groups and are identified as having a shared culture, language and beliefs. Romany Gypsies have been in England for over 600 years and Irish Travellers have a long history of travelling and living in this country. 'English Travellers' has many meanings and can cover English Gypsies of Roma origin, Irish Travellers born or living in England and New Travellers.

The term 'Travellers' also covers some groups not recognised as ethnic groups including 'New Travellers' who are non-traditional Travellers and Travelling showpeople.

Brighton & Hove is predominantly visited by Irish Travellers and a smaller number of Romany Gypsies and New Travellers. We hope to have more information on Travellers living in the local settled community once the Census 2011 results have been published late in 2012.

#### **A special note on Van Dwellers**

Brighton & Hove also has a population locally termed as Van Dwellers. Van Dwellers are usually found living in their vehicles on the roadside or on unauthorised encampments and are generally not nomadic. Van Dwellers are not considered to meet the definition of a Traveller in any national policy as collectively they are not a recognised ethnic group nor are they considered New Travellers as they are effectively permanently resident in the city, such as through work or education.

This distinction between New Travellers and Van Dwellers is hard to make and often not recognised by local people who experience lived-in vehicles parked outside their homes, often for many days, which can further inflame tensions against Travellers. As lived-in vehicles are an issue for the city, the need for a separate protocol for van dwellers will be developed.

### **Roma Gypsies**

The Roma community left India approximately 1,000 years ago and migrated westward arriving in Europe in the 14th century. The first recorded presence of Roma in the UK was over 600 years ago.

Since their arrival in Europe they have consistently endured exclusion and persecution and remain on the fringes of mainstream society. The darkest chapter of Romani history came during the Second World War when the Nazi regime exterminated approximately 500,000 because they were seen as biologically inferior.

The socio-economic and political marginalization of Roma across Europe is more pronounced today than it ever has been as deep seated prejudices and racism conspire to ensure that Roma communities are amongst the poorest and most vulnerable people on the continent.

Gypsies were recognised as a racial group under the Race Relations Act 1976 and continue to be recognised as such under the Equality Act 2010.

### **Irish, Welsh and Scottish Travellers**

Irish Travellers call themselves *Pavee* “the walking people” and are a distinct nomadic ethnic group that has been part of our culture for many centuries. They were commonly known as Tinkers, which came from ‘tinsmith’ from their ancient pre-Gaelic language called Shelta, which some still use today.

Irish Travellers were recognised as a specific racial group under the Race Relations Act 1976 and continue to be recognised as such under the Equality Act 2010.

Scottish Travellers live a similar lifestyle to Irish Travellers and are recognised as a specific racial group in the same category as Irish Travellers. In addition there are many Welsh Travellers.

Recently, employment has shifted to casual forms of building work, gardening and scrap metal collection and has meant that many have migrated to more urban areas of the country.

### **Travelling Showpeople**

Showpeople have traditionally provided the entertainment at fairs across the country for centuries. In the past Showpeople would travel nearly all year and the return to settled 'winter quarter' home sites in the off season. Due to the decline in traditional fairs and the desire to improve the opportunities for their children through access to a stable education they are increasingly living in 'winter quarters' all year round.

The family and extended family groups are important with living in close proximity a key feature in Showpeople's culture. While the Travelling Showpeople community have certain aspects in common with other Traveller communities, they regard their culture as fundamentally different to Gypsies and other Travellers.

Due to the nature of their work, Showpeople have much greater contact with local authorities than other Traveller communities and tend to have comparatively good employment prospects, health, and educational attainment.

### **Bargees**

Bargees are boat dwelling people and are considered occupational travellers who operate barges on canals and inland waterways.

### **New Travellers**

New Travellers are non-traditional Travellers who mostly have originated from the settled community. Their history goes back to the 1960s when a number of young people started to live on the road in an assortment of vehicles.

Their reasons for taking up the nomadic lifestyle vary, from making a positive decision to choose a different way of life to feeling that it was the only option for their situation.

New Travellers are now into a 2nd or 3rd generation but they are not legally recognised as a distinct and separate racial group.



## **2.2 Estimating the Traveller Population**

There is no definitive data for the number of Gypsies and Travellers in the UK. The Commission for Racial Equality<sup>1</sup> estimated that there could be 368,000-488,000 Travellers living in England and Wales (25% in caravans and 75% in conventional housing). Other studies estimate between 200,000 and 300,000 and Traveller groups themselves estimate around 300,000 with 2/3 living in bricks and mortar housing.

The Gypsy & Traveller Caravan Count which is carried out twice a year on behalf of the Government recorded<sup>2</sup> reported that there were 3,942 caravans in the South East including 60 in the City in January 2011. From this we can estimate the population of Travellers living in those caravans<sup>3</sup>:

- South East: Around 9,000 Travellers in 2,995 households
- Sussex: Around 976 Travellers in 326 households
- Brighton & Hove: Around 146 Travellers in 46 households

However, locally we know that the Brighton & Hove Caravan Count figure includes a number of Van Dweller households so the actual number of Traveller households living in caravans in the city is likely to be fewer than the estimate given above.

Whilst nationally around 2/3 of Travellers may live in bricks and mortar housing this estimate may not hold true in Brighton & Hove. The East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Traveller Survey 2005 found only a very small proportion of Travellers in bricks and mortar housing in the city compared to the rest of East Sussex. In view of this it would not be appropriate to use the national ratio to estimate the local Traveller population.

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<sup>1</sup> Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), "Common Ground: Equality, good race relations and sites for Gypsies and Irish Travellers", 2006, section 1.2. This estimate is attributed to Niner, P, 'The accommodation needs of Gypsy-Travellers in Wales', 2006, Niner, P, 'The Provision and Condition of Local Authority Gypsy and Traveller Sites in England', 2002 and Ivatts, A. 'The Education of Gypsy / Roma Traveller and Travelling Children', 2005

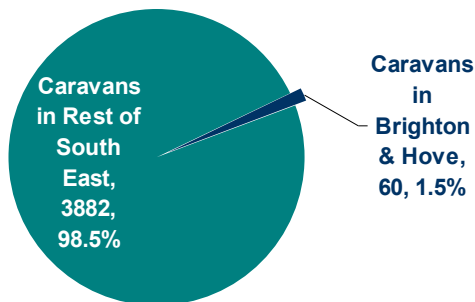
<sup>2</sup> Estimate at January 2011 from Government's Gypsy & Traveller Caravan Count

<sup>3</sup> Assumes 1 household per pitch with 1.32 caravans per pitch calculated from 1,053 known public sector pitches in South East with 1,386 caravans on them in the Jan 2011 Count. Also assumes 3.2 family members per household in East Sussex and Brighton & Hove from 'East Sussex & Brighton & Hove Traveller Survey', David Couttie Associates 2005 and 2.9 family members per households in West Sussex GTAA, David Couttie Associates 2007. South East uses both 2.9 and 3.2 to provide a range

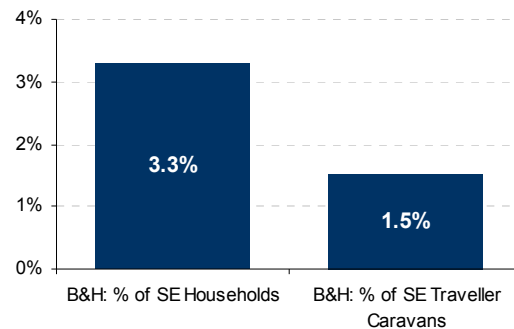
The Census 2011 recorded those who identified themselves as Gypsy & Travellers for the first time. Once the Census results are published towards the end of 2012 we will have a more accurate picture of the size of the local Traveller population.

In addition, our analysis shows that whilst Brighton & Hove's population has 3.3% of all households in the South East it has only 1.5% of the region's Traveller caravans<sup>4</sup>.

**Gypsy & Traveller Caravans in the South East**  
(DCLG Caravan Count - Jan 2011)



**Households Comparison**  
DCLG: South East Caravan Count (January 2011)



### 2.3 Inequality

Gypsies and Travellers have been identified as being the most disadvantaged ethnic group in the country suffering a high level of inequality.

Their health is far worse than the population as a whole, particularly around life expectancy, infant mortality and maternal mortality. In addition travelling communities suffer from poor education, discrimination and racial hatred.

Lack of suitable, secure accommodation underpins many of the inequalities that they experience as access to employment, health, education and other services is made easier when people are living in settled accommodation.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> We believe these figures include some Van Dwellers so the actual proportion of Travellers would be less than the figures quoted

<sup>5</sup> 'Inequalities Experienced by Gypsy and Traveller Communities: A Review', EHRC, 2009

**'Inequalities experienced by Gypsy and Traveller Communities: A Review', Equality & Human Rights Commission, 2009**

This EHRC report shows that Gypsy and Traveller communities experience extensive inequalities, such as:

- Gypsies and Travellers die earlier than the rest of the population
- They experience worse health, yet are less likely to receive effective, continuous healthcare
- Children's educational achievements are worse, and declining still further (contrary to the national trend)
- Participation in secondary education is extremely low, with bullying cited as reasons for leaving education early
- There is a lack of access to pre-school, out-of-school and leisure services for children and young people
- Employment rates are low, and poverty high
- Insecure lifestyles associated with repeated evictions can have a negative psychological impact upon children
- There is an increasing problem of substance abuse among unemployed and disaffected young people
- There are high suicide rates among the communities
- Gypsies and Travellers who live in bricks and mortar housing can experience racist hostility from neighbours and isolation from their communities
- For some particularly excluded groups of young Gypsies and Travellers, there is a process of accelerated criminalisation
- Policy initiatives and political systems that are designed to promote inclusion and equality frequently exclude Gypsies and Travellers
- There is a lack of access to culturally appropriate support services for people in the most vulnerable situations, such as women experiencing domestic violence
- Gypsy and Traveller culture and identity receive little or no recognition, with consequent and considerable damage to their self-esteem

The report highlights that lack of suitable secure accommodation underpins many of the inequalities that Gypsy and Traveller communities experience.

## 2.4 The profile of Traveller inequality

Whilst Travellers experience higher inequality than the rest of the population there are also differences within the communities.

### *Age*

Due to lack of data it is not possible to report an accurate age profile of the Traveller population but it is known that Gypsies and Travellers have larger families, have children at a younger age and have a lower life expectancy with 50 considered old age. This suggests that the Traveller population has a younger profile than the overall population of the UK.<sup>6</sup>

There is a lack of comparative information on children but studies that have taken place have found higher rates of illness among Gypsy and Traveller children as compared with others.<sup>7</sup> The limited studies undertaken, indicated high infant mortality and perinatal death rates, low birth weight, low immunisation uptake, and high child accident rates, within the Gypsy and Traveller community.

### *Race*

Racism towards Gypsies and Travellers is still common, frequently overt and often seen as justified. The Traveller communities have experienced services being not welcoming or refused; of employment offers being withdrawn; and of people being harassed in or dismissed from employment.

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful for employers and service providers to discriminate against any group on the grounds of race. This includes Gypsies and Travellers who are recognised as ethnic groups. The Act requires us to have *due regard* to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

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<sup>6</sup> 'Health and social care needs of Gypsies and Travellers in West Sussex', Report to NHS West Sussex and West Sussex County Council, Office for Public Management, 2010

<sup>7</sup> 'Inequalities Experienced by Gypsy and Traveller Communities: A Review', EHRC, 2009

The research evidence shows that Gypsies and Travellers have a culturally distinct and identifiable set of beliefs and attitudes which impact on inequality. Cultural beliefs can be a barrier to Gypsies and Travellers accessing services.<sup>8</sup>

### *Religion or belief*

Many Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers are Christians and members of Christian religious groups. Religion has become for many an important aspect of cultural identity. However, many have experienced difficulty in accessing faith groups because of their ethnic and cultural identity.

Irish Travellers are usually devout Roman Catholics and their children attend Catholic schools. Large numbers of Romany Gypsies are now Born-again Christians and the Gypsy Evangelical Church (also referred to as Gypsy Pentacostalism) has gained numerous followers and influence in the last thirty years.<sup>9</sup>

### *Disability*

In later life Gypsy and Traveller adults suffer higher rates of long-term illness, ill health or disability, limiting their ability to lead a 'normal' life. In addition, those travelling find it hard to access ongoing health and social care services to provide them with the support they need to maintain their independence.

Gypsies and Travellers have been found to be nearly three times more likely to be anxious than others, and just over twice as likely to be depressed, with women twice as likely as men to experience mental health problems. Despite an overall decline in suicide rate in Britain, Traveller communities are over-represented as being at risk.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> 'Inequalities Experienced by Gypsy and Traveller Communities: A Review', EHRC, 2009

<sup>9</sup> 'Inequalities Experienced by Gypsy and Traveller Communities: A Review', EHRC, 2009

<sup>10</sup> 'Inequalities Experienced by Gypsy and Traveller Communities: A Review', EHRC, 2009

### *Gender*

Research<sup>11</sup> shows how the family and home is at the centre of Traveller value systems. In general, men are expected to take responsibility for financially supporting the family while women take responsibility for the home and children.

In fulfilling the role of mothers, home-makers and carers, Traveller women frequently bear the brunt of family unemployment, financial exclusion, and often have to care for large families without facilities such as running water and sanitation. Even for women resident in housing, the burden of supporting a family and coping with racism, discrimination and isolation can lead to increased rates of anxiety, depression, mental health problems and sometimes substance abuse.<sup>12</sup>

The role of Traveller women allows for limited access to education or employment with poor access to information about support services. For those families on a stable site, women are adapting to changing circumstances and in some cases are returning to education, training or employment<sup>13</sup>. However, evidence suggests this shift is increasing domestic violence and relationship breakdown.

An expectation that women will marry and have children at an early age results in many girls being withdrawn from school at puberty so they lack the formal education or information that their peers have access to at school, like contraception, healthy relationships, and consensual sex.

Research has highlighted that it is particularly common for Traveller men to be stoical about their health and appear to dismiss minor health complaints as insignificant and do not go to the doctor, or present very late, and prefer to self-medicate rather than seek medical advice.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> 'Inequalities Experienced by Gypsy and Traveller Communities: A Review', EHRC, 2009

<sup>12</sup> Power, 2004; Shelter, 2007 (source EHRC review)

<sup>13</sup> Clark & Greenfields, 2006, findings from Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessments

<sup>14</sup> 'Health and social care needs of Gypsies and Travellers in West Sussex', Report to NHS West Sussex and West Sussex County Council, Office for Public Management, 2010

### *Pregnancy and maternity*

Research has highlighted the excess prevalence of miscarriages, stillbirths, neonatal deaths and premature deaths of older offspring. There is evidence that Traveller mothers are 20 times more likely than the rest of the population to have experienced the death of a child and have possibly the highest maternal death rate amongst all ethnic groups.<sup>15</sup>

### *Gender Reassignment and Sexual orientation*

Though no research on this has been identified, it is believed and reported anecdotally that Travellers from the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community face homophobia, hate crime and exclusion from their community.

## **2.5 Community and Voluntary Sector Services**

Friends, Families and Travellers (FFT) is a national organisation based in Brighton that seeks to address the problems facing the Gypsy and Traveller community. FFT not only carries out research and policy development but also provides services to the Traveller community through advice, information and advocacy. FFT has a national helpline (01273 234777) which takes cases from all around the country and local cases are managed by its outreach Team which operates across Sussex (including Brighton & Hove).

A number of groups also provide services and support to Travellers in our area:

- Clearwater Gypsies: [www.clearwatergypsies.com](http://www.clearwatergypsies.com)
- Sussex Traveller Advisory Group: [www.sussextag.org.uk](http://www.sussextag.org.uk)
- Roma Support Group: [www.romasupportgroup.org.uk](http://www.romasupportgroup.org.uk)
- The Gypsy Council: [www.gypsy-association.com](http://www.gypsy-association.com)
- Irish Traveller Movement in Britain: [www.irishtraveller.org.uk](http://www.irishtraveller.org.uk)

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<sup>15</sup> 'Health and social care needs of Gypsies and Travellers in West Sussex', Report to NHS West Sussex and West Sussex County Council, Office for Public Management, 2010

## 3. Traveller sites

### 3.1 Site provision in the South East

The provision of accommodation for Traveller communities, both transit and permanent, in Brighton & Hove can not be viewed in isolation but needs to be considered alongside provision across the region.

In recognition of the cross-border nature of Gypsy and Traveller issues we have recently set up the Sussex Joint Local Authority Traveller Forum in partnership with neighbouring authorities and Sussex Police. This forum will help us share good practice and improve our services.

Whilst there are no accurate figures for the numbers of Travellers either nationally or locally the Government's carries out a twice yearly Gypsy & Traveller Caravan Count.

In January 2011 the Count identified that there were around 3,942 Traveller caravans in the South East:

- 1,386 (35%) on local authority or registered provider sites
- 1,893 (48%) on private sites (most likely owned by Travellers themselves)
- 663 (17%) on unauthorised sites

There are approximately 82 Gypsy and Traveller sites owned by local authorities or registered social landlords in the South East with a total of 1,053 pitches (1,000 permanent and 53 transit pitches). In total these sites have a capacity for 1,442 caravans.

Almost half of all Traveller caravans are on private sites. Using the same caravan to pitch ratio from the public traveller sites we estimate that there are around 1,438 pitches on 112 private sites. In reality, private sites are likely to be smaller than their public counterpart so we can expect there to be many more than 112 private sites in the region.



**Site provision in Sussex**

In Brighton & Hove, East Sussex and West Sussex there are a total of 17 local authority and registered provider sites, providing 187 pitches, 151 of which are permanent and 36 are transit pitches.

In addition to the sites provided by local authorities and registered providers there are approximately at least a further 136 pitches across Sussex on privately owned sites, the majority owned and managed by Travellers themselves. 113 caravans have permanent planning permission and 23 with temporary planning permission. An additional 58 caravans are on Traveller owned land without planning permission.

*“In my childhood there were many places to stop but landowners are not as tolerant as before.”  
(Resident from Traveller heritage)*

**Site provision in Brighton & Hove**

In Brighton & Hove there are no private sites but there is one authorised Traveller site, Horsdean, which has 23 pitches and is managed by the council. This is a transit site, which means it provides a temporary stopping point for up to three months and Travellers pay rent and a charge for utilities. This site represents almost 2/3 (63%) of all transit pitches in Sussex.

**Traveller Sites in Sussex**



- Local Authority or Registered Provider Site
- Private Site

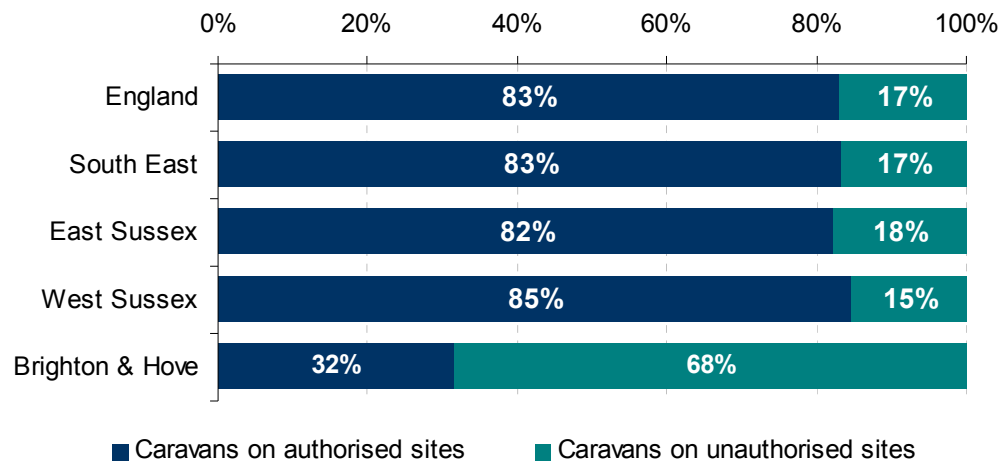
### 3.2 Unauthorised Encampments

The Government accepts that due to a national shortage of stopping places, unauthorised encampments are likely to continue.

Across the whole of England, the South East and Sussex on average around 1 in 6 Traveller caravans (17%) are on an unauthorised site. If we include Travellers living in bricks and mortar housing then less than 6% of all Travellers in England are on unauthorised sites, a sharp contrast to popular perception.

Despite there being a smaller proportion of Travellers visiting Brighton & Hove than might be expected for a population our size<sup>16</sup>, locally 2 out of every 3 caravans (68%) were on unauthorised sites, 4 times the rate of other areas.

**Caravans on Authorised and Unauthorised Sites  
DCLG: Gypsy & Traveller Caravan Count  
(January 2011)**

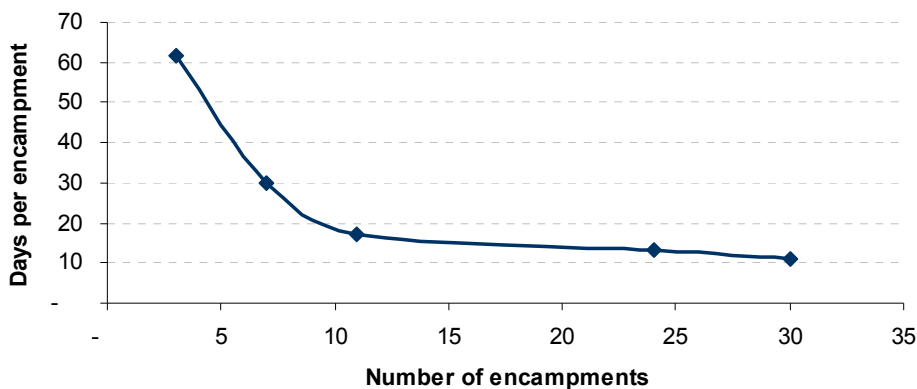


Nationally, the loss of stopping places over the last few years culminated in 2011 seeing unauthorised encampments in the city on much higher profile sites.

<sup>16</sup> We believe the Count included some Van Dwellers so the actual proportion of Travellers visiting would be less than the figures quoted

Whilst swift action saw them moved on twice as quickly as in previous years this caused the Traveller groups to break into a larger number of smaller encampments causing further disruption:

**Relationship between the time taken to move on an encampment and the number of encampments in a quarter (2010/11 Q1 - 2011/12 Q1)**



The evidence strongly suggests that the high profile nature of Travellers in the City recently is not because more Travellers are visiting the city but because there is a genuine shortage of stopping places for them around the region.

### **3.3 The City's need for Traveller pitches**

Despite there being a small proportion of Traveller caravans in the City when compared to the South East, the caravan count data indicates they are 4 times more likely to be on an unauthorised site than regionally.

The accommodation needs of Travellers fall into 4 groups:

- Bricks and mortar housing – travellers who, for a variety of reasons, require or desire bricks and mortar housing
- Permanent sites – for those with a local residential need
- Transit sites – managed sites for those visiting the city for a short period of time
- Stopping places – unmanaged open areas by or near the roadside where Travellers can stop for 1-2 nights whilst moving between areas

### *Bricks and mortar housing*

Nationally it has been estimated that most Travellers live in bricks and mortar housing (around 2/3 of Travellers) however studies have shown that this option is not desirable for many and is often only used as a last resort due to health needs or because the travelling way of life has become too difficult.

Should a Traveller household find itself in housing need it is supported in resolving this need as with any other resident household, whether this be owner occupation, the private rented sector or social housing.

Once we receive the results of the Census 2011 at the end of 2012 we hope to gain a better understanding of our housed Traveller population.

### *Permanent site needs*

Permanent sites provide long term secure residential pitches for either caravans or mobile homes. Nationally, the majority are on land owned and managed by Travellers themselves with a smaller number provided by local authorities and registered providers.

The Partial Review of the South East Plan Process 2007-2010 identified a shortage of permanent traveller pitches in the South East, with a need for 16 permanent pitches in Brighton & Hove by 2016 (14 of these by the end of 2011).

Although Horsdean is a transit site, some pitches are currently occupied by Traveller households who are in need of permanent pitches. The provision of a permanent site would free up the blocked transit pitches for those visiting the city.

### *Transit site needs*

Transit sites provide short term pitches for Travellers to stop for 1-3 months at a time whilst they are visiting an area for work, family matters or a holiday. Traveller pay rent on transit sites to contribute to the cost of site management and services such as electricity, water, waste and Council Tax.

During the summer there is an increase in the number of Travellers visiting the Brighton and Hove area for holidays or to obtain work locally. Potentially this can be up to 50 households at any time.

However, even in the winter months during the quieter periods, there are more Travellers in the city than can be accommodated at the Horsdean site. As a result, there have been unauthorised encampments all year round although some of these have been Van Dwellers rather than Travellers.

### *Stopping Places*

These are informal sites where Traveller stop for 1-2 nights when moving between areas however their availability has been steadily eroded over the last 300 years.

### *Overall pitch need*

Whilst the Partial Review of the South East Plan Process 2007-2010 concluded that a permanent site would satisfy the city's needs for permanent Traveller pitch provision up to 2016, we should also consider the potential permanent pitch requirements beyond 2016 and the short term demand for stopping places from those visiting the city.

It is expected that the ongoing requirement for permanent pitches will mainly be small numbers associated with additional demand arising from household growth.

Once a permanent site is delivered then this will allow the transit site at Horsdean to be more effectively used to accommodate short term traveller demand.

Using the Government's Gypsy & Traveller Caravan Count we have estimated that the city may have a potential demand for up to 30 short term pitches above that currently provided, although as the table below clearly illustrates, this is likely to vary considerably over time. Furthermore, as the Count included some Van Dwellers, then short term pitch demand for Travellers is likely to be less than that indicated below:

| Potential Short Term Pitch Demand   | Jul 2009  | Jan 2010 | Jul 2010  | Jan 2011  |
|---|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| Caravans on unauthorised sites <sup>17</sup>  | 33        | 47       | 52        | 41        |
| Pitch requirement for those on unauthorised sites <sup>18</sup>                     | 25        | 36       | 40        | 31        |
| Less: vacant pitches at Horsdean Transit Site <sup>19</sup>                         | 0         | 23       | 0         | 4         |
| Extra short term pitch demand before permanent site                                 | 25        | 13       | 40        | 27        |
| <b>Potential short term pitch demand once permanent site developed<sup>20</sup></b> | <b>14</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>29</b> | <b>16</b> |

To meet the permanent need requirement to 2016 and the demands of those visiting Brighton and Hove on a short term basis in order to minimise any potential for unauthorised encampments, a capacity for up to 68 pitches would be required:

- Horsdean Transit Site - 23 pitches
- Proposed Permanent Site - 16 pitches
- Additional potential demand - up to 29 pitches<sup>21</sup>

To help meet this need, our strategy seeks to be preventative in nature rather than reactive by:

- Ensuring effective management and use of the Horsdean Transit Site
- Developing procedures for Tolerated sites
- Effective management of unauthorised encampments
- Ensure sensitive sites are protected
- Developing a protocol for addressing Van Dwellers

<sup>17</sup> From Government's Gypsy & Traveller Caravan Count which includes some Van Dwellers

<sup>18</sup> Assumes 1.32 caravans per pitch. Caravans per pitch calculated from 1,053 known public sector pitches in South East with 1,386 caravans on them in the Jan 2011 Caravan Count

<sup>19</sup> Horsdean was closed for refurbishment over winter 2009/10

<sup>20</sup> There are 11 pitches in the Horsdean site occupied by families who would most likely be eligible for the permanent site once developed (although this is still subject to the allocations policy which is yet to be determined)

<sup>21</sup> Estimated maximum as these figures include some Van Dwellers

## 4. Traveller health and wellbeing needs

### 4.1 The health and wellbeing of Gypsies and Travellers

There has been limited rigorous research on the health of Gypsies and Travellers in England, and no long term follow up studies so we have to rely on snapshot survey data to assess the health needs of this group.

The most comprehensive study of Gypsy and Traveller health in England compared their health status with that of rural communities, deprived inner-city White residents and other ethnic minorities and found that for many indicators Gypsies and Travellers experienced worse health. These health inequalities are attributed to a combination of educational disadvantage, environmental hardship, social exclusion and cultural attitudes<sup>22</sup>.

We know from national research that:

- Gypsy and Traveller communities have a very different age distribution to the general population, with a high proportion aged under 16 years and much lower proportion aged over 50 years.
- Gypsies' and Travellers' life expectancy is significantly lower than other deprived groups and they are more likely to report poor health status and health problems which limit their daily activity.
- The most marked inequalities are for self-reported anxiety, and respiratory problems including asthma and bronchitis.
- Gypsies and Travellers are more likely to experience miscarriages, stillbirths, and the death of a child. Low birth weight is common.
- Mental health problems are thought to be common among Gypsies and Travellers, due to a range of factors including

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<sup>22</sup> Parry G, Van Cleemput P, Peters J, Walters S, Thomas K, Cooper C. *Health status of Gypsies and Travellers in England*. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, 61(3), 198-204, 2007.

the stress of living with discrimination and hostility. A lack of awareness of services and high levels of stigma hinder engagement with mental health care. Similarly, substance misuse is believed to be common<sup>23,24</sup>.

- Anecdotal reports describe significant oral health problems among Gypsies and Travellers, including reports of children with dental problems requiring hospital intervention, and a general lack of awareness of good dental health<sup>25,26</sup>.
- Lifestyle factors include a very high smoking prevalence, with estimates ranging from 47%<sup>27</sup> to 58%<sup>28</sup>; a high prevalence of overweight (35%) and obesity (31%), particularly among men<sup>16</sup>; low levels of physical activity; and poor diet<sup>29</sup>.
- Uptake of preventative services such as immunisations is believed to be low, and the Department of Health has stressed the importance of reaching out to Gypsy and Traveller communities to offer immunisations.
- Similarly uptake of screening services is thought to be low, for a range of reasons including cultural factors and logistical barriers such as appointments systems relying on GP registration, and postal communication.

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<sup>23</sup> Lau A. 2010. Developing a mental health strategy for Gypsy Roma Travelling communities. Mental Health Equality Board. Available at: <http://www.nmhdu.org.uk/silo/files/developing-a-mental-health-strategy-for-gypsy-roma-traveller-communities.doc>

<sup>24</sup> Goward P, Repper J, Appleton L, Hagan T. Crossing boundaries. Identifying and meeting the mental health needs of Gypsies and Travellers. *Journal of Mental Health* 2006;15(3):315-327.

<sup>25</sup> Matthew Z, Edwards T, Sillman S, Benwel S. A Collaborative Programme to Improve the Oral Health of the Gypsy and Travelling Communities in Sussex. Friends, Families and Travellers 2010.

<sup>26</sup> Office for Public Management. Health and social care needs of Gypsies and Travellers in West Sussex. Report to NHS West Sussex and West Sussex County Council. October 2010. Available at: [http://www.westsussex.nhs.uk/domains/westsussex.nhs.uk/local/media/publications/Health-professionals/8031\\_Gypsies\\_\\_Travellers\\_report\\_FINAL\\_Oct\\_10.pdf](http://www.westsussex.nhs.uk/domains/westsussex.nhs.uk/local/media/publications/Health-professionals/8031_Gypsies__Travellers_report_FINAL_Oct_10.pdf)

<sup>27</sup> NHS East of England. Lifestyle Survey – Gypsies and Travellers Draft Report. August 2009. Available at: <http://www.erpho.org.uk/viewResource.aspx?id=20364>

<sup>28</sup> Peters J, Parry GD, Van Cleemput P, Moore J, Cooper CL, Walters SJ. Health and use of health services: a comparison between Gypsies and Travellers and other ethnic groups. *Ethn Health* 2009;14(4):359-77.

<sup>29</sup> Cemlyn S, Greenfield M, Burnett S, Matthews Z, Whitwell C. Inequalities Experienced By Gypsy and Traveller Communities: A Review. Equality and Human Rights Commission. Manchester 2009.



## **4.2 Living conditions and Gypsy and Traveller health**

Living conditions are well recognised as an important determinant of health. Various factors relating to housing quality affect health, such as cold and damp, infestation, noise, overcrowding, access to amenities, safety and hazardous structures<sup>30</sup>, and many of these are particular problems for Gypsies and Travellers.

We know from national research that:

- Unauthorised sites usually have no facilities for sanitation, rubbish disposal, clean drinking water or electricity<sup>31</sup>.
- A survey of local authority sites in 2002 found that 10% of amenity units were unfit for purpose, with problems including vermin infestation, damp, lack of heating and poor build quality<sup>32</sup>.
- Poorly designed sites may contain a range of potential health hazards, such as a lack of footpaths to prevent road traffic accidents, unsafe storage of LPG cylinders and lack of fire safety standards<sup>33</sup>.
- For Gypsies and Travellers, freedom, choice and proximity to family networks are important and bring health benefits, and living on unauthorised encampments and being forcibly moved on is stressful and detrimental to health<sup>33</sup>.
- A large proportion of Gypsies and Travellers live in permanent housing, sometimes due to illness. However moving into housing can have an adverse effect on their health, particularly mental health<sup>22,34</sup>.

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<sup>30</sup> Taske N, Taylor L, Mulvihill C, Doyle N. Housing and public health: a review of reviews of interventions for improving health – evidence briefing. NICE 2005. [www.nice.org.uk/page.aspx?o=526671](http://www.nice.org.uk/page.aspx?o=526671)

<sup>31</sup> Atterbury J. Fair Access for All? Gypsies and Travellers in Sussex, GP Surgeries and Barriers to Primary Healthcare. Friends, Families and Travellers 2010. Available from: <http://www.gypsy-traveller.org/resources/documents/>

<sup>32</sup> Niner, P. (2002) The provision and condition of local authority Gypsy / Traveller sites in England. London: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). Available at: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/pdf/138832.pdf>

<sup>33</sup> Van Cleemput P, Parry G, Thomas K, Peters J, Cooper C. Health-related beliefs and experiences of Gypsies and Travellers: a qualitative study. *J Epidemiol Community Health* 2007;61:205-210.

<sup>34</sup> Cullen S, Hayes P, Hughes L. Good Practice Guide. Working with housed Gypsies and Travellers. Shelter 2008. Available from: [http://england.shelter.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/57772/Working\\_with\\_housed\\_Gypsies\\_and\\_Travellers.pdf](http://england.shelter.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/57772/Working_with_housed_Gypsies_and_Travellers.pdf)

- There is some evidence to suggest that Gypsies and Travellers living in a house are more likely to have a long term illness, a poorer health state or anxiety. Those who rarely travel have the poorest health<sup>22</sup>.

#### 4.3 Access to health services

Gypsies and Travellers experience a range of barriers to accessing health services, and may avoid seeking healthcare until a problem is well developed.

The nomadic nature of the Gypsy and Traveller lifestyle means that those who are travelling are at risk of being lost between services in different geographical areas. They may be unable to stay in an area long enough to obtain follow up care for specific health problems, or to receive results of screening or diagnostic tests. Not having a fixed address compounds these difficulties as many health services still communicate with patients by post.

Barriers to accessing services include cultural factors and factors relating to the way services are organised.

We know from national research that:

- Gypsies and Travellers can have low expectations of health, seeing ill-health as normal. Their culture includes pride in self reliance and stoicism, and this coupled with a fatalistic attitude and an intense fear of diagnoses such as cancer can lead to avoidance of services such as cancer screening, and reduce the likelihood of seeking early treatment<sup>33</sup>.
- A lack of access to primary healthcare is a common problem for Gypsies and Travellers. They can have difficulties registering with GPs due to discrimination, requirements to have several forms of ID, or being required to register as temporary patients, meaning they are excluded from services such as screening<sup>26, 31</sup>.
- Gypsies and Travellers may be inadvertently excluded from accessing health services due to a lack of information

in a suitable format for their needs. Low literacy rates mean that they can struggle to read posters and leaflets and thus are unaware of many services such as cervical screening, diabetes check ups and mental health services, and can have problems reading instructions for taking prescribed medication<sup>31</sup>.

- Gypsies and Travellers culture does not encourage interaction between men and women outside of their family which creates barriers to discussing health problems with a member of the opposite sex, and men in particular are unlikely to seek healthcare at all until a problem develops<sup>26</sup>.

#### **4.4 Gypsies and Travellers' specialist health services in Brighton & Hove**

All mainstream health services are accessible to the needs of Travellers. In addition there are a number of specialist services available in the city:

- A Health Visitor works specifically with Gypsies and Travellers in the city. They carry out regular outreach visits to the transit site and to unauthorised encampments to assess the needs of Gypsy and Traveller families, provide health advice and child developmental checks, and refer people to mainstream services where necessary.
- A weekly Traveller Women's Drop-in is held at Moulsecoomb Children's Centre, at which a wide range of health issues are discussed and health education and information on services is provided.
- There is a Specialist Midwife for Travellers based at the Royal Sussex County Hospital.
- A Health Trainer works with Gypsies and Travellers in the city on a one-to-one basis to help them make lifestyle changes and improve their health and wellbeing.
- The Health Trainers scheme also provides training to volunteers working with a range of communities, to enable them to support individuals to improve their health. A Community Health and Wellbeing Champion has been trained in this way specifically to work with Gypsies and Travellers in Brighton and Hove.

*“Health visitors can help access other services, like dentists and other special services. Midwifery services visiting site is known to everyone.”  
(Traveller)*

The specialist organisation Friends, Families and Travellers runs a Travellers Health Project across Sussex, with five outreach workers who provide information and advice to Traveller communities on how to look after their health, and how to access health services, including registering with GPs. These outreach workers each lead on specific areas such as mental health, and children and young people's health.

#### 4.5 Domestic and sexual violence

Domestic and sexual violence occurs across all communities, irrespective of poverty and deprivation, education, age, sexuality, ethnicity or ability. The vast majority of domestic violence is experienced by women, and perpetrated by men. A significant minority of men also experience domestic violence; it is experienced by transgender people, and it also occurs across heterosexual, lesbian, gay and bisexual relationships.<sup>35</sup>

Although there are no reliable statistics on the number of incidents of domestic violence within Traveller communities, research suggests that the incidence is higher than in settled communities. For example, a 2007 study in Wrexham found that 61% of married English Gypsy woman and 81% of married Irish Traveller woman who were interviewed had experienced domestic violence compared to 45% of all women.<sup>36,37</sup>

Women experiencing violence may often put their family first, prioritising the need to maintain the family unit over their own health and wellbeing. Cultural taboos in relation to involving the police and previous experiences of inequality and racism also discourage Traveller victims of violence from reporting and accessing mainstream services. A lack of awareness about services available to help victims and practical barriers

*“People don't understand the shame felt by Traveller women around domestic violence and this is why they find it hard even to talk other women in the community about it.” (Traveller)*

<sup>35</sup> Brighton & Hove Domestic Violence Needs Assessment 2011

<sup>36</sup> Roberts, A. Adkins, J. Lewis, H. & Wilkinson, C., 2007 'In Community Practitioners' and Health Visitors' Association (CPHVA) Annual Conference, Coronary Heart Disease and Mental Health in Gypsies and Travellers in Wrexham: Redressing the balance' Torquay, 31 October – 2 November 2007

<sup>37</sup> Walby, Sylvia and Allen, Jonathan (2004) "Domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking: Findings from the British Crime Survey"

such as poor literacy skills or limited access to a telephone means that they often feel that leaving an abusive relationship is not an option.

Women who do leave their husband often experience shame and discrimination and may have to leave the community entirely with the trauma of leaving the lifestyle they have grown up with; losing their extended family, home, culture, security and community. Often they will find themselves in an alien society, in bricks and mortar housing; isolated, vulnerable and open to prejudice, and without the financial means to support themselves.<sup>38</sup> Those who are re-housed need access to practical help, advocacy and support to help them recover from the violence and abuse, as well as help to deal with the loss of their community and the bureaucracies and financial hardship they may face.<sup>39</sup>

Intervention is also needed with perpetrators in Traveller communities to stop the violence and to bring offenders to justice. This needs to be accompanied by work to raise awareness of domestic and sexual violence and the help available; to support Traveller communities to prevent domestic and sexual violence; and to develop interventions to enable Traveller men and other family members to stop perpetrating domestic and sexual violence.

Brighton & Hove Community Safety Partnership leads on tackling Domestic<sup>40</sup> and Sexual<sup>41</sup> Violence focussing on prevention, early intervention and ongoing support. Friends, Families and Travellers provide support to victims of domestic violence and has a Sussex Community Outreach Service committed to improve Traveller access to domestic violence services and supporting victims.

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<sup>38</sup> Brighton & Hove Domestic Violence Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, 2011

<sup>39</sup> 'Inequalities Experienced by Gypsy and Traveller Communities: A Review', EHRC, 2009; 'Good Practice Briefing: Working with Housed Gypsies and Travellers' London: Shelter 2007

<sup>40</sup> Domestic Violence Commissioning Action Plan based on the Brighton & Hove Domestic Violence Needs Assessment [www.safeinthecity.info/files/Brighton%20%20Hove%20Domestic%20Violence%20Needs%20Assessment%20070411.pdf](http://www.safeinthecity.info/files/Brighton%20%20Hove%20Domestic%20Violence%20Needs%20Assessment%20070411.pdf)

<sup>41</sup> Sexual Violence Action Plan [www.safeinthecity.info/files/Community%20Safety,%20Crime%20Reduction%20and%20Drugs%20Strategy%202011-14%20110708%20\(electronic\).pdf](http://www.safeinthecity.info/files/Community%20Safety,%20Crime%20Reduction%20and%20Drugs%20Strategy%202011-14%20110708%20(electronic).pdf)

## 5. Traveller education needs

### 5.1 Local authority responsibility to children

Local Authorities have a statutory responsibility to provide education for all school-aged children who live in their area, regardless of parental status or length of stay.

Brighton & Hove are committed to making this the best possible education for all our children. We know that a good education is a strong protective factor throughout life and so we should make all attempts to ensure these children receive their educational entitlement via a school placement.

The Learning and Partnership Unit's main aims are to raise achievement across the city and to tackle underachievement of vulnerable groups to close the gap between the performance of groups of learners, by raising standards and eliminating underperformance in the community.

### 5.2 National Traveller education profile

Nationally, Traveller children are the lowest achieving group in our schools. This has been and remains a long standing issue.

In 1967 The Plowden Report noted *"Traveller children's educational needs are extreme and largely unmet"*.

Successive reports over the next forty years have reinforced this initial finding.

In 2008 the Secretary of State for Education reported:  
*"For a range of complex reasons many Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils are amongst the lowest achieving in our schools and the situation is not improving....For far too long society has shunned people from these communities"*

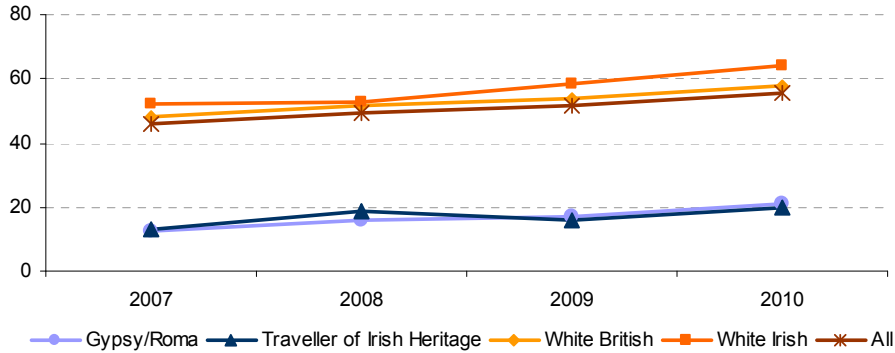
DCSF, National Strategies

The national performance data shows how wide that gap is:

**Foundation Stage Profile: 2007-2010**

Source: DfE

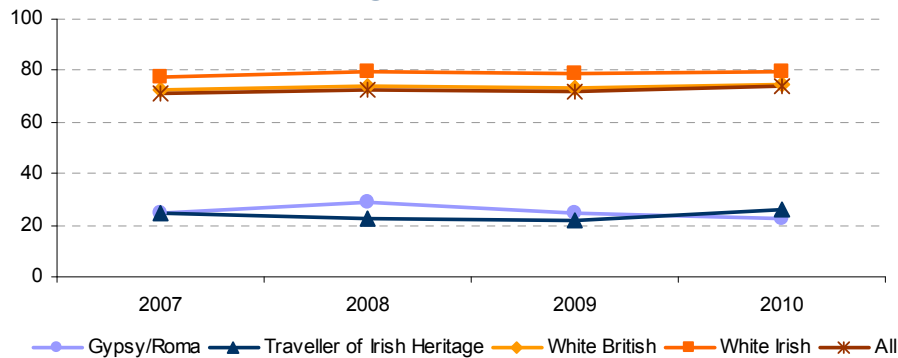
**Percentage of pupils achieving 6 points or more  
in all PSE and CLL scales**



**Key Stage 2: 2007-2010**

Source: DfE

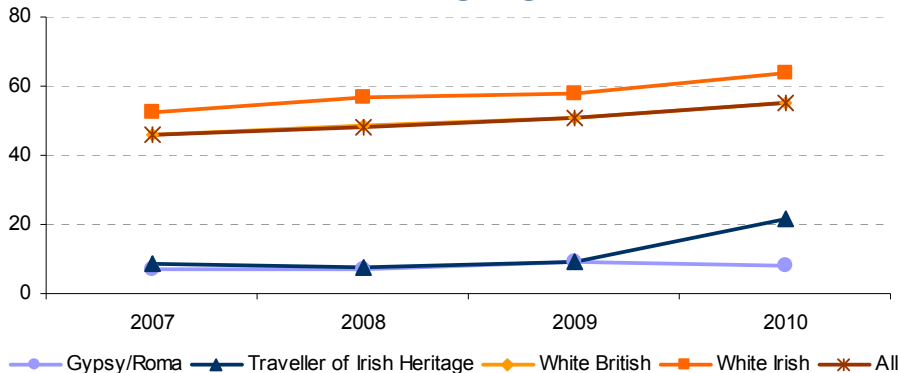
**Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 or above  
in English and Maths**



**Key Stage 4: 2007-10**

Source: DfE

**Percentage of pupils achieving 5+ GCSE  
Grade A\* - C including English and Maths**



However, all statistics to do with Travellers are notional as ethnicity is self defined and not all families are prepared to ascribe their ethnicity. Those unhappy with a school or fearful of wider discrimination within the wider community may not state their ethnicity. Mobile Travellers do not always participate in national tests or complete year 11. The reality of low attainment is likely to be worse than the published statistics suggest.

Historical data is not available as recorded ethnic categories (Gypsy / Roma and Travellers of Irish Heritage) have only been in existence within the education departments and schools since 2006 and only in the 2011 National Census.

### **5.3 Barriers to education**

Studies reviewed by the Equalities & Human Rights Commission<sup>42</sup> have identified strong common themes in relation to the barriers encountered by Gypsy and Traveller pupils. These include:

- enforced mobility and interrupted learning, consistent experiences of racist harassment and bullying, excessive exclusions linked to these experiences and to inadequate school responses
- the lack of validation of Gypsy and Traveller culture in schools
- the limited relevance of the curriculum for some pupils
- cultural barriers that children have to negotiate between home and school
- teachers' low expectations
- the impact of national targets on schools' readiness to admit Travellers

Parental literacy skills and the culture expectations within the travelling communities can be a barrier to young people engaging in education. For example, the domestic and caring expectations for girls, and for boys, cultural attributes unconnected with traditional educational achievement are more important.

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<sup>42</sup> 'Inequalities Experienced by Gypsy and Traveller Communities: A Review', EHRC, 2009



### *Early Years*

Children from Traveller communities enjoy and learn greatly from close and supportive family relationships, a culture in which children are highly valued, and in which they are involved as members of the community.<sup>43</sup>

Play is an important part of children's development, but children in Traveller communities are often deprived of adequate play opportunities due to lack of on-site safe play facilities or living on sites that are far away from playgrounds and other play facilities.

Access to early years provision such as playgroups and nurseries can be made impossible due to enforced mobility, restricted or inaccessible due to the remoteness of some sites and undermined by cultural barriers.

## **5.4 Traveller education good practice**

Comprehensive advice on good practice is outlined in several national documents:

### *Early Years*

*“As the value and significance of early years outreach work is increasingly recognised, both by the services themselves and by the families accessing outreach services, the need to share current practice, develop it further, build it into mainstream service delivery and monitor the quality of the work becomes greater. Where training programmes exist, provided by services working with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families, outreach early years practice needs to be emphasised.”*

Save the Children – Early Years Outreach Practice

### *Gypsy Roma and Traveller Culture*

*“Policy makers and practitioners need to be aware of the cultural capital within Gypsy Roma and Traveller communities that can be tapped to provide much enrichment to educational*

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<sup>43</sup> 'Inequalities Experienced by Gypsy and Traveller Communities: A Review', EHRC, 2009

*provision at all levels. These strengths should be noted so that any prejudicial views .....are countered and challenged”*

DCSF The National Strategies – Raising Gypsy Roma and Traveller Achievement

### *Schools*

*“The response to school of Travelling pupils is crucially influenced by the Travelling children’s awareness of the level of their acceptance by teachers and other pupils. Where the presence of Travelling children is openly acknowledged and where accurate and positive images of the different nomadic communities are featured within both the resources of the school and the curriculum, then the response is lively and there is an openness to learning”*

HMI – Education of Travelling Children

### *Local Authorities*

*“(Local authorities should ) ensure actions to support higher levels of achievement for GRT children and young people are prioritised within Local Authorities Children’s Services Plans, including actions to support the needs of children from unauthorised sites”.*

DCSF - The National Strategies

*“The children being at school has helped a lot – they start to get to know us and they don’t treat us any different. Same as the local shops and hairdressers – they’ve got to know us and it helps.”*

*(Traveller)*

## **5.5 Support for Traveller children and families**

In meeting the additional needs of Traveller children, the City Council funds a specialist educational support service that works with other agencies in the city to support Traveller children and their families.

The service supports the education of Traveller children through mobile teachers, Traveller Welfare Officers and pre-school workers, and helps families and pupils to find a school place and gives advice to schools and can provide support to ensure a Traveller pupil’s confident admission into schools as well as supporting children’s learning. The specialist teachers also provide advice, training and resources to schools and others on cultural awareness.

### Early Years children aged under 5 supported (2010/11)

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Children aged 0-1 seen on play bus by Health Visitor       | 19  |
| Children aged 2-5 provided with outreach play activities   | 122 |
| Children aged 3-4 enrolled in nurseries or nursery classes | 20  |

| Traveller children in Brighton & Hove schools (2010/11)                                    | Primary | Secondary | Total                                |
|--|---------|-----------|--------------------------------------|
| Pupils enrolled in a school for all/part of year   | 55      | 8         | 63                                   |
| Percentage attendance (actual/possible)  | 84%     | 86%       | (this is above the national average) |
| Schools with Traveller pupils  | 12      | 3         | 15                                   |
| Visiting fairground/circus children supported with distance learning                       | 8       | 2         | 10                                   |
| Mobile children resorting to the area who we tried to engage but did not attend any school | 15      | 10        | 25                                   |
| Elective Home Education  | 0       | 0         | 0                                    |

The Traveller Education Team is part of a network of support and services to Travellers and works closely with the Traveller Liaison service and other Traveller professionals. The service provides advice, training and resources to support cultural awareness and successful inclusion of Traveller children.

The Team have been involved in projects that support cultural awareness like Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month.

### *The Play Bus*

The Brighton & Hove Play Bus is an outreach service that offers a range of free play opportunities and activities for children and young people between the ages of 4 and 11 years across the city all year round.

The bus is fully equipped including lots of items to stimulate different aspects of play and provides weekly session for Travellers' children and young people.

### *Early Years*

The Traveller Education Team mobile outreach unit is supported by a BME designated Health Visitor plus a BME Early Years Worker who visits all encampments jointly with the peripatetic Early Years Teacher and Traveller Welfare Officer.



### *Training Material*

The Traveller Education Team are developing a range of DVDs and other resources in collaboration with our Traveller communities which are widely used for training purposes and promoted both nationally and internationally. They aim to dispel myths and increase knowledge and understanding of the rich history and traditions of Gypsies, Roma and Travellers.

Our latest resource called "Poetry in Motion" will be launched in April 2012 and captures young Travellers lives and experiences in verse.

### *Other Achievements*

Three Traveller children in Brighton & Hove schools were awarded prizes in the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History month national storytelling competing in their respective age groups.

## **6. Resident concerns about unauthorised encampments**

### **6.1 Impact on the settled community**

Responses to this consultation, resident complaints, recent public events and articles in the local press have highlighted a number of resident concerns which are almost exclusively focussed on unauthorised Traveller encampments in local communities, and include problems such as:

- the loss of public space
- anti-social behaviour, crime and nuisance
- rubbish and fly tipping
- damage to the environment
- cost of site clearance and legal action

The most common request from residents is for the encampment to be moved on immediately however this is not usually possible and not always appropriate. For an encampment to be moved on without a court order (a court order can take several months to obtain) the local authority must request that the Police use their powers under Section 61 of the Criminal Justice & Public Order Act 1994 to direct the campers to leave the land. However, just the presence of an encampment without any additional aggravating factors does not provide enough grounds for the Police to use Section 61 so the Council must use the more lengthy court procedure.

The Police decision to evict or not must be balanced and compliant with the guidance, rule of law and to an extent the terms of the Human Rights Act 1998, demonstrating legality, necessity, and proportionality, as well as principles of common humanity. The balance to be struck is between the rights the local community, the local authority as a landowner and provider of social facilities (parks playing fields etc) and the rights of Traveller groups. Police guidance states that officers must be sensitive to the fact that there is a lack of pitches on authorised sites across the country making it difficult for people to avoid setting up unauthorised pitches.

### **Sussex Police Force Policy on Unauthorised Encampments (draft pending approval)**

#### **Operational Decision Making - Section 61**

In agreeing to invoke powers under Section 61 CJPO Act 1994 it must be shown that unauthorised campers have failed to respond to requests from or on behalf of the legal occupier of the land, and that any notice period given by them had expired. The Superintendent / Chief Superintendent making the decision must be satisfied that:

- two or more people are trespassing on land, and
- they are present there with the common purpose of residing there for any period, and
- that reasonable steps have been taken by or on behalf of the occupier to ask them to leave, and
- that any of those persons have caused damage to the land or property on the land or used threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour towards the occupier, a member of his family or an employee or agent of his.

#### **OR**

- that people on the land have between them six or more vehicles.
- The Superintendent / Chief Superintendent must also be satisfied that a need for immediate action is met because:
  - The location of the encampment presents a risk to those on the site (e.g. contaminated land or other hazard) or,
  - The land itself is of a particularly sensitive nature (e.g. Site Of Special Scientific Interest) or,
  - It can be shown the presence of the encampment is seriously disrupting the ability of the settled community to make use of facilities or conduct their business (e.g. village greens, school grounds during term time, urban car parks, urban parkland including sports pitches, retail, leisure or business parks).

Such a process must be applied each time enforcement action is considered, even if the circumstances relate to a group that merely moved a short distance from a previous location.

Where immediate enforcement action under Section 61 is seen as a justified and proportionate response, then there may be occasions where it will be inappropriate to await the outcome of welfare enquiries conducted by the local authority. In these circumstances it will be essential to demonstrate that proper account of humanitarian considerations had been made. The local authority must be informed of the action taken by police as soon as possible.

The decision to serve a notice under Section 61 should take into consideration that if anti social or criminal behaviour is focused amongst particular individuals within the group, or if a member of the group is ill, it may be appropriate to take action to evict some of the group but not other members of the group.

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*Please note that this draft text will be updated with the final policy wording once approved later in 2012*

Failure to follow the correct procedures when dealing with unauthorised encampments will delay eviction and can result in costly legal battles.

### *Local Authorities*

Local authorities have legal obligations to all people within their boundaries. These obligations include duties towards children, to provide healthcare and other welfare support and to assist homeless people. Before considering how to deal with an unauthorised encampment the council must consider its obligations and will need to talk to the Travellers to determine any welfare needs.

Each encampment must also be considered on its merits against criteria such as health and safety, traffic hazards, public health risks, serious environmental damage, genuine nuisance to neighbours, planning considerations and the proximity to other land-uses.

### *Police Powers*

Whilst the Police do not have the same specific obligations as local authorities they do need to follow guidance. The Police response must take into account whether there has been criminal activity, anti-social behaviour and the impact on the landowner and settled community rather than simply because encampments are present at a specific location.

In managing unauthorised encampments officers must be sensitive to the fact that there is a lack of pitches on authorised sites across the country, making it difficult for people to avoid setting up unauthorised pitches.

### *Private Landowners*

Private landowners can use their Common Law rights to regain possession of their land and evict trespassers. This does not require the involvement of the Courts and can be enforced by the landowner or private bailiffs. The landowner may use no more force than is reasonably necessary to evict.

| Powers to Tackle Unauthorised Encampments  | Practical Use  |
|--|--|
| <b>Local Authority Powers</b>  |  |
| <p><b>Part 55 Civil Procedure Rules</b><br/>Allows any landowner (or lessee) to gain possession of his/her land. This is done through a County Court hearing and a Bailiffs Warrant is sought, a date to carry out the eviction will then be set. The use of this power means that those individuals cannot return to the location for a period of three months.</p>   | <p>As this needs a Court hearing even the most straightforward cases can take many weeks. This does not stop the Travellers from occupying another unauthorised site in the city.</p>  |
| <p><b>Section 77-78 Criminal Justice &amp; Public Order Act 1994</b><br/>Can be used on any land within the local authority area including the highway and gives the local authority the power to direct individuals to leave the land and remove their vehicles and belongings. If the individuals fail to move the case can be taken to a Magistrates' Court to obtain an Order for the Removal of Persons and Vehicles.</p>   | <p>This power is used infrequently in relation to land (as opposed to highways) with Travellers as the authority has to identify the owner of each vehicle and serve separate notices. This can be very costly as vehicles come and go and is unlikely to clear all vehicles quicker than a court order. This does not stop Travellers from occupying another unauthorised site in the city.</p> |
| <p><b>Quia timet Injunctions and Anti-Social Behaviour Orders</b><br/>Where particular individuals or groups repeatedly return to an area it may be appropriate to consider a preventative injunction. Further options such as injunctions or Anti-social Behaviour Orders, may be appropriate in certain circumstances.</p>   | <p>To obtain an injunction or anti-social behaviour order requires a large amount of evidence. This approach has been little used but we are considering its use where we have built up enough evidence.</p>   |
| <b>Police Powers</b>   |  |
| <p><b>Section 61 Criminal Justice &amp; Public Order Act 1994</b><br/>The Police can use this power to direct unauthorised campers to leave the land, if they fail to leave having been requested by the landowner to do so by a particular time and date. The landowner initially makes a formal request to the Police to evict the Travellers and a senior police officer considers whether it is appropriate to use the power based on various factors and conditions being met. The use of this power means that those individuals cannot return to the location for a period of three months.</p> | <p>Travellers can be moved on within a day if necessary. However, the Police have to be proportionate in its use and must consider the impact on the community such as whether there has been anti-social behaviour or whether a community event is planned in the location.</p>   |
| <p><b>Section 62A-E Criminal Justice &amp; Public Order Act 1994</b><br/>Allows the Police to direct unauthorised campers to leave the land where a suitable pitch on a relevant caravan site is available within the same local authority area. The Local Authority needs to confirm that an appropriate alternative pitch is available. The use of this power means that the individuals cannot return to anywhere within the local authority area (other than the site they have been directed to) for a period of three months.</p>  | <p>Travellers can be moved on within a day if necessary however, our site at Horsdean is often full so the Police are unable to use this power. If the city had more official sites for Travellers this power could be used more effectively if needed.</p>  |



## **6.2 Addressing resident concerns**

The Government acknowledges that due to a national shortage of stopping places unauthorised encampments are likely to continue so the Council works with the Police to manage these to minimise the disruption to local residents.

### *Loss of public space*

The authority recognises its duty and responsibility to local residents to ensure they are able to enjoy the city's parks and open spaces whilst at the same time we are mindful that Travellers are an often marginalised group that we want to support in protecting their way of life. Whilst there are rarely enough grounds to evict an encampment straight away without a court order, the Council ensures that once an encampment does leave we return the area to its former condition so that residents can go on to enjoy their open space.

### *Anti-social behaviour, crime and nuisance*

As with all groups of people, it is only a small minority of Travellers that are associated with crime and anti-social behaviour which can often, and unfairly, become associated with the rest of the community. Other Travellers will often shun those committing the nuisance recognising the impact it has on them and the rest of their community, particularly as it can lead to an encampment being required to move on at short notice.

Joint action by the Police and Council over the summer proactively targeted those with a history of committing anti-social behaviour to help protect residents and other Travellers.

### *Protecting the environment*

Brighton and Hove has many areas that are considered sensitive in terms of their archaeology or biodiversity such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, local nature reserves or part of the South Downs National Park. We take practical measures to ensure these sites are protected and should an encampment be causing significant damage then this may be enough grounds for the Police to take swift action under Section 61.

*“I feel sad that the aggressive behaviour of a minority of Travellers creates such poor relationships with the rest of society and that the aggressive behaviour of a few of the rest of us inflames an already poor situation.”  
(Resident)*

Recently works have been completed to improve the protection at a number of sites important to local people including Withdean Park, Stanmer Park, Greanleas Recreation Ground and the Ladies Mile Nature Reserve. However, being realistic, we recognise that measures will not stop someone determined to gain access.

### *Rubbish and fly tipping*

The consultation highlighted that residents have noted that some Traveller communities take very good care with the land around their encampments and clear up after themselves whilst others do not. We are also aware that residents in the settled community have used Traveller encampments as an excuse to fly-tip their own waste.

This summer has seen a marked decrease in fly-tipping in the city due to the joint action by the Police and Council. Where evidence is available then action is taken against the perpetrators. For example, in September 2011 a Traveller from Burgess Hill was successfully prosecuted for fly tipping after being caught illegally dumping waste in a field on the outskirts of Brighton.

In the majority of cases fly-tipped rubbish belongs to local residents, whether it is garden waste, building rubble or general refuse that has been cleared by someone at a 'bargain' price. Unfortunately many people do not realise that if the waste is traced back to them then they will be prosecuted themselves which would deter many from having their rubbish cleared at these special low rates. Residents should check that those collecting the waste hold a waste carriers license which can be checked at the Environment Agency website<sup>44</sup>.

### *Cost of site clearance and legal action*

In 2010/11 legal and site clearance fees for dealing with unauthorised encampments was £130,010 (equivalent to around £1 of a household's annual council tax bill). This cost is funded through government grant and council tax.

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<sup>44</sup> <http://www2.environment-agency.gov.uk/epr/search.asp?id=EP8&&type=register>

Those Travellers visiting or living on authorised sites pay a rent which helps cover the cost of managing the site, services and council tax. Unfortunately we are unable to charge those on unauthorised sites. Having more stopping places would not only ensure that Travellers are contributing to the cost of the city's services but would also reduce the level of unauthorised encampments and associated legal and clean up costs.

### **6.3 Co-ordinating our approach**

Engagement with our communities is at the heart of developing existing and future policies and services to promote good race relations between Travellers and the local community and to increase community cohesion that will benefit all members of the community and reduce inequalities. This involves taking positive action to raise awareness of issues relating to Travellers and to combat some of the 'myths' that still surround the Traveller community.

#### *Sussex Joint Local Authority Traveller Forum*

This new group has been set up to help share good practice and co-ordinate a regional response to Traveller issues. The group is made up of representatives of Sussex Police, Brighton & Hove City Council, East Sussex County Council, West Sussex County Council and a number of local authorities. The group is aiming to develop a fair and consistent approach to unauthorised encampments that will apply across the whole of Sussex.

#### *Multi-agency Traveller Team*

The Multi-agency Traveller Team manages unauthorised encampments and includes the Traveller Liaison Team, Police, trading standards and waste enforcement officers. The Team is an effective means of partnership working, sharing information and organising joint visits to encampments.

#### *Traveller Liaison Team*

The Traveller Liaison Team's role is to provide support to those living a nomadic lifestyle within the city, making initial contact and carrying out health and welfare checks. They provide

*“Traveller liaison team, as a professional full time worker I have yet to meet one member of this team. However when I needed to contact them via phone they have always assisted me with my enquiries.”  
(Traveller)*

primary support to Travellers and encourage them to access services such as health and education. The Team also aims to promote good race relations and equality of opportunity between communities and maintains partnerships with service providers to ensure a fair and coordinated approach.

In addition, the Team also manages the city's authorised transit site at Horsdean and responds to unauthorised encampments. This has involved taking legal action as well as allowing for periods of toleration when required, for example when there are health or welfare needs and providing advice and support to landowners and the public.

#### *Sussex Police*

During the summer of 2011 the Police implemented Operation Monza. The Council worked with the Police during this operation which saw officers make daily visits to the city's unauthorised encampments to raise awareness of acceptable behaviour and to deal with Traveller and resident concerns.

A Code of Conduct on Unauthorised Encampments was developed that outlines behaviour which may result in eviction and sets the same standards of behaviour expected of the settled community. This project saw a marked decrease in anti-social behaviour and other nuisance during this time.

Operation Monza is a police operation instigated in response to specific Traveller related problems on unauthorised encampments and will continue only whilst senior police officers consider it to be operationally necessary. The Tactical Plan for Operation Monza is reviewed on a yearly basis according to operational need.

#### *Gypsy and Traveller Advisory Group*

In recent years, Sussex Police have worked with the Sussex Traveller Action Group and Gypsy and Traveller communities to set up a Gypsy and Traveller Advisory Group. The group meets quarterly and is chaired by a member of the Gypsy community to address issues of concern.

*“Operation Monza, where two police officers visited the site regularly – this gained trust, though some strangers might have misunderstood the visits.” (Traveller)*

## **7. Consultation**

### **7.1 Who did we engage?**

In addition to working with other organisations to help develop the strategy it was important for us to engage local residents and the Traveller community to make sure that the Strategy represented and addressed their needs.

We received 108 consultation responses that were submitted via the Brighton & Hove City Council consultation portal, 15 responses through dedicated focus groups and one-to-one sessions representing 28 Travellers, 12 written contributions from individuals and organisations and 1 submission following a meeting with a service provider. In addition the Traveller Strategy Scrutiny Panel provided a detailed submission after gathering evidence from a wide range of sources. We also attended meetings of groups such as the Community Safety Forum and City Inclusion Partnership.

The findings of the consultation have been very valuable and resulted in many improvements to the strategy and action plan.

### **7.2 Resident views**

A total of 100 responses were received from residents. It was clear from their contributions that opinions were divided with a wide range of views expressed. However there were common themes that emerged that showed that residents support a permanent site on the premise that unauthorised encampments will be reduced, want to see an end to unauthorised encampments, want to see a reduction in crime, nuisance and anti-social behaviour, want improvements in health and education within the Traveller communities and support protocols to address the city's Van Dweller issues.

Of those residents expressing a view:

- 48% supported the overall vision of the Strategy
- 59% responded supported a new permanent site

- 37% supported short-term toleration
- 63% supported improving the access to health and other support services for Traveller communities
- 67% supported improving educational outcomes for Traveller communities
- 83% supported tackling crime, anti-social behaviour and nuisance
- 67% supported the protection of sensitive sites
- 67% supported the development of protocols for addressing van dwellers

### 7.3 Travellers

A total of 18 Traveller households, representing 28 Travellers engaged with the consultation. 1 response was received through the Brighton & Hove City Council Consultation Portal and the other responses came through focus groups and interviews carried out on Traveller sites over the consultation period:

- **Permanent Site:** The responses highlighted the importance of the provision of a new permanent site to Traveller communities and how this provision would support better health, education and community cohesion.
- **Toleration:** The Travellers would also like to see tolerated sites provided, suggesting that the additional provision of a permanent site and designated stopping places, especially during the summer months, would help reduce unauthorised encampments.
- **Anti-social behaviour:** Travellers agreed that anti social behaviour and nuisance was not acceptable and supported measures to address these within the Traveller and settled communities and addressing discrimination suffered by Travellers was also an importance issue.

- **Health:** The responses highlighted the importance of accessing health services and identified some of the barriers suggesting that providing more services on site would help.
- **Education:** The importance of education was highlighted with a greater emphasis on early years' education than secondary school education, due to the expectation that young people from the Traveller communities should become independent from 14 years old.
- **Van Dwellers:** One Traveller responded to the proposal to develop a protocol for addressing van dwellers, suggesting there needs to be clear distinctions between van dwellers and Traveller communities.

#### **7.4 Community & Voluntary Sector Organisations**

There were 5 responses received from consultees who identified as being Community & Voluntary Organisations. One organisation expressed certain reservations but still welcomed the general approach demonstrated in the draft strategy. The other organisations supported the strategic vision, strategic outcomes, all the strategic goals and the involvement of Travellers in service design and delivery but would like the proposal to go farther and outlined ways to achieve this.

#### **7.5 Service Commissioners and Providers**

There were 7 responses were received from service providers and commissioners. 6 responses highlighted the importance of providing a permanent site, tolerated sites and advise Travellers to by their own land for development, providing helpful information and suggestions on service provision and delivery. The other response was a written submission that focused on goals that were pertinent to organisation and raised concerns about enforcement issues.

### **7.6 Community Champions**

There were 3 responses from community champions. All of the responses supported all the strategic vision, strategic outcomes and goals highlighting the importance delivering of fit for purpose support services that will improve life experience for Traveller communities. These responses identified the importance of working with organisations with a proven record of working with Travellers communities and making sure that strategic links are made between the different goals.

### **7.7 Pressure Group**

The pressure group supported the permanent site but disagreed with toleration and felt that the provision of sites for Traveller communities should not be addressed in isolation but alongside the wider needs of the residents in the city.

### **7.8 Responses from others**

Two responses were received from visitors to the city and one response was received from a worker in the area. There was support for a permanent site, improving ethnic monitoring, access to education and tackling domestic violence.

### **7.9 Traveller Strategy Scrutiny Panel**

The Environment & Community Safety Overview & Scrutiny Committee Traveller Strategy Scrutiny Panel has shadowed the development of the Traveller Commissioning Strategy from the outset. The panel was Chaired by a respected academic and included councillors from the three main political parties. The Panel received evidence from a wide variety of individuals and organisations including Traveller groups, resident groups, politicians other local authorities.

An interim submission from the Panel in response to the draft strategy and a subsequent formal report with final recommendations welcomed our overall approach and highlighted areas where they felt there were gaps. These submissions led to many improvements to the final strategy.



## **7.10 Methodology**

In accordance with the Council's Community Engagement Framework, we provided stakeholders with the opportunity to let us know their views in two stages of consultation to give them the best possible chance of meaningful involvement:

- **1st Stage Consultation – scoping:** The first stage of consultation was undertaken over a period of 4 weeks, from 3 October to 5 November 2011 and provided local residents and stakeholders with the opportunity to comment on consultation topics covering a range of issues relating to Traveller and settled communities.
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Stage Consultation – draft strategy:** Consultation on our draft strategy that took place between 13 December 2011 and 6 February 2012. The draft strategy was developed from the findings of the 1<sup>st</sup> stage of consultation.

Our methods were based on feedback from previous consultations about accessible forms of engagement and took a number of forms:

- An online document and questionnaire was hosted through the Council's consultation portal and a hard-copy option made available through the provision of a freepost address for participants
- Written responses
- Focus groups and one-on-one sessions with Travellers. These groups were facilitated by the Council's Traveller Liaison Team and East Sussex Traveller Education Service Team commissioned by the Council's Education Department
- The Traveller Strategy Scrutiny Panel shadowed the development of the new strategy and met to discuss, comment and provide recommendations on the document

The consultation was advertised in the Argus and on the homepage of the Council's website and notification of the consultation was sent out to a wide range of stakeholders.

## 8. Our Strategy in Context

### 8.1 Linking to international, national and local policy

There has been a wide range of international, national, regional and local research and policies produced in response to disadvantages faced by many communities including Travellers.



Article 25 of the United Nations **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (Resolution 217 A (III), 10 December 1948) has clear parallels with the strategic housing function:

***Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control***

In 1992, the United Nations adopted the **Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities** (Resolution No. 47/135). The declaration is made up of 7 articles that promote and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities.



The **European Convention on Human Rights** (ECHR) was approved in 1951 with the United Kingdom being a founder member. These rights were strengthened in UK legislation through the **Human Rights Act 1998** with Article 8 of the ECHR having particular relevance for housing:

**Article 8: Right to respect for private and family life**

- 1. Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence.***
- 2. There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except such as is in***

*accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.*

Whilst these form the basic tenets for civilised society it is important to remember that fair and proportionate laws, such as those protecting the rights of land owners, still apply.

## **8.2 National Policy**

In 2004 the Government produced new **Guidance on Managing Unauthorised Encampments** which aimed to balance the rights and needs of Travelling and settled communities. This was supported by the **Housing Act 2004** which required local authorities to assess the accommodation needs of Travellers. **Circular 01/06: Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites**, outlined how the planning system should ensure a suitable level of site provision.

The **Association of Chief Police Officers Guidance on Unauthorised Encampments** (ACPO, 2011) ensures that officers act proportionately when dealing with unauthorised encampments striking a balance between the rights the local community, the local authority as a landowner and provider of social facilities (parks playing fields etc) and the rights of Traveller groups.

The Government is replacing Circular 01/06 with the new **Planning Policy Statement for Traveller Sites** due to be published in 2012 which aims to put decisions on site provision in the hands of local authorities in response to local demand. The draft policy objectives for planning in respect of travellers sites are to:

- enable local planning authorities to make their own assessment of need for the purposes of planning
- encourage local planning authorities to plan for sites over a reasonable timescale

- ensure that local planning authorities, working collaboratively, develop fair and effective strategies to meet need through the identification of land for sites
- protect Green Belt from development
- promote more private traveller site provision while recognising that there will always be those travellers who cannot provide their own sites
- reduce the number of unauthorised developments and encampments and make enforcement more effective
- ensure that the development plan includes fair, realistic and inclusive policies
- increase the number of traveller sites, in appropriate locations with planning permission, to address under provision and maintain an appropriate level of supply
- reduce tensions between settled and traveller communities in plan making and planning decisions
- enable provision of suitable accommodation from which travellers can access education, health, welfare and employment infrastructure
- have due regard to the protection of local amenity and local environment

The **Human Rights Act 1998** incorporates the European Convention on Human Rights into British law. Several convention rights are relevant to dealing with unauthorised camping especially; the right to respect for private and family life, the right to protection of property, the right to education, and the prohibition of discrimination. When considering an eviction from an unauthorised site the Human Rights Act requires authorities to have regard to whether the action is necessary and proportionate under the circumstances.

Under the **Equality Act 2010** local authorities are required to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

Government's white paper ***Equity and Excellence: liberating the NHS*** represents one of the biggest shake ups of health services since the NHS was established in 1948. The White Paper outlines sweeping changes to the NHS with challenging and far-reaching sets of reforms. The vision of the White Paper is about putting patients and public first, improving healthcare outcomes, creating more autonomy, accountability and democratic legitimacy and cutting bureaucracy and improving efficiency.

The ***Children Act 2004*** seeks to ensure every child has the opportunity for:

- being healthy
- staying safe
- enjoying and achieving
- making a positive contribution
- achieving economic wellbeing

The Marmot Review ***Fair Society, Healthy Lives*** (2010) concluded that reducing health inequalities is a matter of fairness and social justice which can be addressed through six objectives:

- Give every child the best start in life
- Enable all children young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives
- Create fair employment and good work for all
- Ensure healthy standard of living for all
- Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities
- Strengthen the role and impact of ill health prevention

### **8.3 Local Policy**

Brighton & Hove City Councils' ***Sustainable Community Strategy*** sets out the vision and plans of the agencies, organisations and communities that work together through the 2020 Community Partnership to improve the quality of life in this City. The eight priorities are:

1. Promoting enterprise & learning
2. Reducing crime & improving safety
3. Improving health & wellbeing
4. Strengthening communities & involving people
5. Improving housing and affordability
6. Living within environmental limits and enhancing the environment
7. Promoting sustainable transport
8. Providing quality advice and information services

Brighton & Hove City Council is committed to deliver high-quality, efficient and effective services working in partnership with the community and voluntary sector, the business community and residents. The five core priorities for the council's **Corporate Plan 2011/15** are:

1. Tackling inequality
2. Creating a more sustainable city
3. Engaging people who live and work in the city
4. A responsible and empowering employer
5. A council the city deserves

The adopted **Local Plan for Brighton & Hove (2005)** includes policies (HO16–18) which seek to safeguard existing Traveller sites and set out the range of planning considerations which proposals for new sites will need to address. The Plan acknowledges the need to make adequate site provision and to keep under review the demand and need for Traveller accommodation.

The new **City Plan for Brighton & Hove** will replace the 2005 Local Plan. It is anticipated that the City Plan (Part 1) will be adopted early in 2014. This Plan will set the planning policy framework for meeting assessed Traveller accommodation needs. It will include a criteria-based policy to guide site selection and to respond to planning applications for Traveller sites that come forward for sites over the plan period. Part 2 of the City Plan will, if necessary, include site allocations to respond to any outstanding requirements.

## **9. Strategic Outcome 1: Improve site availability**

### **9.1 Increasing pitch provision**

An appropriate supply of properly managed pitches will help to reduce the level of unauthorised encampments which will not only reduce conflict and tension between communities but it will help Travellers access health and education services.

*[Outcome 1 will]  
"Hopefully generate  
better relationships  
between Residents  
and Travellers."  
(Resident)*

To make sure that the city provides suitable sites to meet the needs of the travelling communities our strategic goals under this priority are to:

- Goal 1 Develop a new permanent Traveller site
- Goal 2 Ensure effective management and use of the Horsdean Transit Site
- Goal 3 Develop procedures for Tolerated sites
- Goal 4 Consider the need for future site provision
- Goal 5 To provide advice to Travellers seeking to buy their own land for developing a site

### **9.2 Goal 1: Develop a new permanent Traveller site**

The evidence gathering process behind the Partial Review of the South East Plan (2007-2010) identified a need for 16 permanent pitches in the City for those Travellers with local connections to Brighton & Hove.

Brighton & Hove City Council has been awarded government funding to develop a permanent site which will release some pitches on the transit site which are occupied by those in need of a permanent site and therefore provide pitches for Travellers wishing to stay for a few months in the area and will also help limit unauthorised encampments.

A site survey of more than 50 locations has found that land next to the current transit site for Travellers at Braypool Lane,

Horsdean would be the most appropriate location for a permanent Traveller site for the city.

The site survey used a methodology agreed by officers from both Brighton & Hove City Council and the South Downs National Park Authority. The council is now conduct an in-depth assessment of landscape, archaeology and biodiversity issues at the site before making a final decision on whether a planning application can go ahead.

### **Why a single site and not 2 or more smaller sites?**

The project has considered whether it would be better to have smaller sites in the city however, this was discounted based on a number of reasons:

- A number of smaller sites would make it harder to meet the level of need by increasing risks such as cost, planning and community cohesion issues
- Each site requires the provision of infrastructure (water, sewage, electricity, access roads etc) in addition to the pitches which will increase the projects costs
- Aside from extra costs, additional sites bring additional planning risks given the shortage of available land and the controversial nature of some of the sites already considered by the site search given that they lie within the National Park
- The government guidance for site design suggests each pitch consists of a hard standing with space for a main and touring caravan, plus a car, and an amenity unit with a bathroom, kitchen and dayroom. There should be shared play space. All residents will pay rent, bills and council tax like any other tenant in social housing.
- Each site would have additional costs from the provision of services such as management, security, waste collection etc

If future needs analysis shows a need for additional sites, and we are successful in acquiring funding for those additional sites, then they are likely to be smaller as the present site search process has exhausted the options for large sites.



### **9.3 Goal 2: Ensure effective management and use of the Horsdean Transit Site**

The Horsdean Transit site is a valuable resource for Travellers visiting the city. We need to make sure the site is used effectively to help minimise the need for unauthorised encampments.

The Council will be recruiting a site warden to ensure that the site is a safe, secure, pleasant, and welcoming environment for residents and visitors. The warden will ensure that residents do not outstay their visiting time, and that pitch and service fees are paid and to support Travellers with accessing services.

### **9.4 Goal 3: Develop procedures for Tolerated sites**

Where there is a shortage of authorised stopping places the Government's **Guidance on Managing Unauthorised Camping**<sup>45</sup> states that it is good practice to allow some toleration for short periods in locations where the encampment does not have any adverse impact on the settled community.

The use of toleration allows welfare needs to be addressed and avoids having to evict the Travellers and risking an unauthorised encampment on a more high profile and unsuitable site. The law on toleration is complex and encampments could only be tolerated for short periods on certain sites during busy periods when Horsdean is full and Travellers have health or welfare needs.

*“As a traveller being on a tolerated site has been very helpful. Particularly for those suffering from mental health / anxiety issues and those with work commitments or children. It has meant a time of recovery and work on vehicles.”  
(Traveller)*

### **9.5 Goal 4: Consider the need for future site provision**

To minimise the number of unauthorised encampments we need to consider how we best manage the potential need for short term stopping places from those visiting the city. This could be through the provision of more stopping places, tolerating encampments in less sensitive locations and/or supporting Travellers to develop their own site(s).

We also have recognised the need for a permanent Traveller site to meet the city's need for permanent pitches to 2016. We will also need to look at any potential demand for permanent pitches after 2016. The authority is mindful that any response to identified need should be in the context of the wider needs of all the city's communities.

**9.6 Goal 5: To provide advice to Travellers seeking to buy their own land for developing a site**

Regionally, around half of Travellers live in caravans on sites owned and managed by Travellers themselves. In the vast majority of cases these sites have been developed with full planning permission however a small number do not. At the moment, Brighton & Hove has no private Traveller sites.

Whilst the Council is unable to provide legal advice, we are keen to offer Planning support to ensure that if a Traveller household or Community Land Trust wanted to buy and develop their own plot, that the land is more suitable for that type of development.

The Clearwater Gypsies have produced an excellent guide for West Sussex called 'Planning Made Simple'. We will look at supplementing this with local information once the Government has published its new planning policy in 2012.

This approach will provide more effective security for the Travellers and help them manage their own housing matters in a way more appropriate to their needs. In addition, this will reduce the risk of potential lengthy and costly legal disputes.

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<sup>45</sup> <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/pdf/157323.pdf>

## Action Plan Summary

### Strategic Outcome 1: Improve Site Availability

| Strategic Action   | Target  | Current Position   | Lead Partner   |
|--|---|--|--|
| <b>Goal 1</b>  | <b>Develop a new permanent Traveller site</b>                           |  |  |
| Consult on preferred site prior to planning application  | March - April 2012  | Preferred site identified  | Brighton & Hove City Council                             |
| Obtain planning permission for preferred site  | Autumn 2012   | Preliminary discussions in progress with National Park Authority | Brighton & Hove City Council & South Downs National Park |
| Develop site   | Development throughout 2013   | Subject to planning permission                                   | Brighton & Hove City Council                             |
| Develop allocations and management policies  | To be in place for site opening in winter 2013/14                       | To happen in 2013 subject to planning permission                 | Brighton & Hove City Council                             |
| Open site  | Winter 2013/14  | Subject to planning permission                                   | Brighton & Hove City Council                             |
| <b>Goal 2</b>  | <b>Ensure effective management and use of the Horsdean Transit Site</b> |  |  |
| Appoint a site warden for the Horsdean Transit Site  | Recruitment planned for Spring 2012                                     | Job particulars agreed, advertising imminent                     | Brighton & Hove City Council                             |
| Review occupancy of the Transit Site to provide capacity to help minimise unauthorised encampments | Spring/Summer 2012 (and ongoing after)                                  | Subject to Warden recruitment                                    | Brighton & Hove City Council                             |
| Improve the collection of fees and service charges and deal effectively with arrears               | Summer 2012 (and ongoing after)   | Subject to Warden recruitment                                    | Brighton & Hove City Council                             |

| Strategic Action   | Target  | Current Position                   | Lead Partner                 |
|--|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Goal 3    Develop procedures for Tolerated sites</b>  |   |                                    |                              |
| Research Good Practice and develop guidance on toleration  | Winter / Spring 2012  | Research in progress               | Brighton & Hove City Council |
| Consult and Equality Impact Assessment   | Spring 2012   | To be planned                      | Brighton & Hove City Council |
| Implement  | July 2012   | Policy to be ready for peak season | Brighton & Hove City Council |
| <b>Goal 4    Consider the need for future site provision</b>   |   |                                    |                              |
| Traveller accommodation needs assessment   | Subject to guidance but required to plan for post 2016 need                         | New guidance expected in 2012      | Brighton & Hove City Council |
| Monitor size, duration, frequency, make up of unauthorised encampments                                   | Build up a picture of need and demand particularly once permanent site open         | Ongoing work                       | Brighton & Hove City Council |
| Implement further requirements of new government planning guidance                                       | Subject to guidance   | New guidance expected in 2012      | Brighton & Hove City Council |
| Plan according to new guidance   | Subject to guidance   | New guidance expected in 2012      | Brighton & Hove City Council |
| Ensure new City Plan recognises identified needs to 2016 and the need to consider future needs provision | Plan proposed adoption end 2013   | Plan in development                | Brighton & Hove City Council |
| <b>Goal 5    To provide advice to Travellers seeking to buy their own land for developing a site</b>     |   |                                    |                              |
| Planning advice to travellers seeking to buy their own land for developing a site                        | Appropriate advice provided as and when required to build on existing good practice | Ongoing                            | Brighton & Hove City Council |

## 10. Strategic Outcome 2: Improve health, safety and wellbeing

### 10.1 Health and wellbeing inequality

Travellers have a much poorer health and a significantly lower life expectancy than the general population attributed to:

- A shortage of permanent sites making it difficult to access services or maintain treatment
- The general struggle of life on the road
- Cultural factors including stoicism and tolerance of ill health amongst Travelling communities
- A lack of cultural awareness amongst professionals
- A mistrust of professional agencies by Travelling communities

The success of our objective is heavily dependent on *Objective 1: Improve site availability* which will help Travelling communities and professional build the trust and relationships essential for effective health, care and support services.

As with all sections of society, ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of the Traveller communities not only raises the quality of life for one of our most disadvantaged communities, it also reduces long terms costs public health costs. Hence, our strategic goals under this priority are to:

- Goal 6 Improve access to health and other support services for Travellers in the city
- Goal 7 Improve cultural awareness in health services
- Goal 8 Improve ethnic monitoring in health and other services to include Travellers
- Goal 9 Tackle domestic and sexual violence

*“Look at ways to make services more accessible to Traveller families. Starting with asking them what they want / need and what prevents / make it harder for them to access these services.” (Worker in the area)*

**10.2 Goal 6: Improve access to health and other support services for Travellers in the city**

Travellers experience a range of barriers to accessing health services which mean they may not seek healthcare until a problem develops, and can miss opportunities to prevent ill health.

To address this gap the Council and NHS Sussex (Brighton & Hove) will conduct specific needs assessment on the health and wellbeing of Travellers. The assessment will be used to develop an action plan to improve access to healthcare services for members of the Traveller community.

In addition, there will be a citywide review of Health Visitors which will consider the impact the service has on the Travelling community.

It will also be important to ensure health needs and access to health services are considered in the selection and development of a new permanent site in the city.

*“Ask a traveller to come in and talk to health service professionals. Ask health service professionals to visit traveller sites and talk about the issues they face with regards to helping travellers so travellers can see how they can help as well.” (Resident)*

**10.3 Goal 7: To improve cultural awareness in health services**

A lack of access to healthcare is a common problem for Gypsies and Travellers and improving this requires services to be responsive to their cultural needs. This includes providing information about services in a suitable format, and being adaptable to encourage Travellers to seek healthcare early in the event of illness. Cultural awareness training for health service staff is an important aspect of this

**10.4 Goal 8: To improve ethnic monitoring in health and other services to include Travellers**

National NHS ethnic monitoring does not include Travellers and so there is a lack of information about which services they use. Without this type of information it is difficult to plan and deliver services to this community, and to evaluate effectiveness of services.

Developing NHS ethnic monitoring locally will help provide us with information on the services used and needed by Travellers to ensure we can plan provision more effectively. In addition, improving the cultural awareness of services will help to encourage Travellers to identify their ethnicity when accessing services.

The council has been piloting new monitoring guidance that include Travellers. However, due to the complexities of IT systems this will take time to roll out across services. As this information begins to be collected and analysed we will be able to build a more accurate picture of service use by Traveller communities.

#### **10.5 Goal 9: Tackle domestic and sexual violence**

Whilst there are no reliable statistics on domestic and sexual violence in Traveller communities the small scale research that has been carried out suggests that domestic violence is far more frequent than in settled communities.

Our strategy seeks to increase the safety of Travellers experiencing domestic and sexual violence and hold perpetrators to account, decrease social tolerance of domestic and sexual violence amongst Traveller communities, and increase healthy relationships amongst Travellers.

To do this we need to work with staff and communities to improve awareness and education about domestic and sexual violence, the criminal penalties associated with it and the support services available with Traveller communities and service providers.

**Action Plan Summary**

**Strategic Outcome 2: Improve health, safety and wellbeing**

| Strategic Action   | Target   | Current Position  | Lead Partner                              |
|--|--|---|---|
| <b>Goal 6 Improve access to health and other support services for Travellers in the city</b>   |  |   |   |
| Conduct specific needs assessment on the health and wellbeing of Travellers  | November 2012  | To be planned   | Public Health & NHS Sussex                |
| Develop an action plan in response the findings of the needs assessment in order to improve access to healthcare services for members of the G&T Community   | March 2013   | To be planned   | Clinical Commissioning Group              |
| Citywide review of Health Visitors to include the impact on the Travelling community   | 2012/14  | Local implementation group set up   | NHS Sussex & Brighton & Hove City Council |
| <b>Goal 7 To improve cultural awareness in health services</b>   |  |   |   |
| Cultural awareness training for CCG staff and lead clinicians  | Nov 2012   | To be planned   | CCG & NHS Sussex                          |
| <b>Goal 8 To improve ethnic monitoring in health and other services to include Travellers</b>  |  |   |   |
| The Trust will ensure that all service providers are aware of the monitoring framework and use it to monitor service uptake and experience in order to identify key issues for Traveller communities | Ongoing – to be reviewed as part of needs assessment | NHS Brighton and Hove has already been using and promoting the monitoring framework | NHS Brighton & Hove                       |



| Strategic Action  | Target   | Current Position   | Lead Partner  |
|---|--|--|---|
| <b>Goal 9 Tackle domestic and sexual violence</b>   |  |  |   |
| Integrate actions to address domestic and sexual violence in Traveller communities into DV and SV Action Plans and in the Violence Against Women & Girls Strategy         | Plan in place April 2012   | DV JSNA, outcomes & commissioning priorities 2011–14 completed. Annual action plan 2012/13 in progress | Safe in the City Partnership                                  |
| Develop a package of support for Travellers subject to the overall needs within the DV Commissioning Plan, SV Action Plan and the Violence Against Women & Girls Strategy | To be developed in 2012/13   | To involve Traveller women and in line with national standards, for DV & SV work                       | Safe in the City Partnership working with other organisations |
| Integrate work of Traveller Education Team (Goal 13) with Healthy Schools Team work on gender equality / domestic and sexual violence prevention                          | 2012/13. Integration of awareness and education work. Clear pathways to services for young people for Traveller children needing support | DV / SV whole school approach being developed in 2012  | BHCC Healthy Schools Team                                     |

## 11. Strategic Outcome 3: Improve education outcomes

*“Schools have helped a lot – children on sites get Christmas cards at school from members of the settled community.”  
(Traveller)*

### 11.1 Giving children a good start in life

National studies<sup>46</sup> have identified strong barriers to education encountered by Traveller pupils including:

- enforced mobility and interrupted learning
- the limited relevance of the curriculum for some pupils
- cultural barriers
- teachers' low expectations

We want to work with Travellers to help embed the value of education throughout the family and make sure that children and young people from Travelling communities are able to access suitable education and training that enables them to attain educational standards that raises economic and employment opportunity.

We also recognise the value in learning and adopting successful good practice from elsewhere and will seek to draw in members of the Travelling community wherever possible to support training and outreach.

Again, the success of this objective is heavily dependent on *Objective 1: Improve site availability* which will help Travelling communities, schools and other professionals build the trust and relationships essential for an effective education. Our strategic goals under this priority are to:

- Goal 10** Raise standards by ensuring successful education provision for Traveller children
- Goal 11** Raise the engagement with learning opportunities for all traveller families visiting Brighton and Hove
- Goal 12** Secure engagement of families from the early years
- Goal 13** Improve further the awareness in schools about Traveller History and Culture

<sup>46</sup> 'Inequalities Experienced by Gypsy and Traveller Communities: A Review', EHRC, 2009

**11.2 Goal 10: Raise standards by ensuring successful education provision for Traveller children**

It will be important for the local schools to be ready to welcome the new arrivals and for the teachers to be confident that they can make an interesting and relevant curriculum. We will provide support for the schools that will be part of this.

**11.3 Goal 11: Raise the engagement with learning opportunities for all traveller families visiting Brighton and Hove**

We know that a good education is a strong protective factor and so we aim to bring all into contact with education services either through a school placement. Our team aims to visit all families that arrive in the city and work with them to plan a programme of learning.

**11.4 Goal 12: Secure engagement of families from the early years**

The gap in performance starts at a very early age so we will aim to provide support through multi agency teams to engage families with young children with appropriate learning opportunities.

**11.5 Goal 13: Improve further the awareness in schools about Traveller History and Culture**

The Traveller Education Team has produces resources to raise awareness and the best practice in the city shows that where there the culture is celebrated, children feel welcomed and able to learn.

*“Get Traveller parents to visit schools to speak about how they live, get their children to attend schools as well - and maybe visit encampments to see how the other half live - this might benefit both sides of the community.”  
(Resident)*

**Action Plan Summary**

**Strategic Outcome 3: Improve education outcomes**

| Strategic Action  | Target  | Current Position  | Lead Partner   |
|---|---|---|--|
| <b>Goal 10</b>  | <b>Raise standards by ensuring successful education provision for Traveller children</b>  |   |  |
| New families are visited by Outreach Team to engage with families, assess need according to age and arrange admission into local school   | 1) All pre school children are engaged<br>2) All school aged children enrolled in local provision   | 1) In hand<br>2) Many secondary aged children not currently engaged | Traveller Education Team   |
| Children are supported into new school by peripatetic teacher   | Successful admission and inclusion into new school  | Ongoing   | Traveller Education Team   |
| Home school liaison provided by outreach team and Education Welfare Service to ensure good attendance   | All children in school with attendance over 90%   | Attendance approx 85% (2010-11)                                     | Traveller Education Team & Education Welfare Service             |
| Support provided to local school and their communities closest to new site via<br>1) training re cultural awareness and successful practice in integrating Traveller children<br>2) additional teaching support to Traveller children with learning deficit | 1) All receiving schools cultural awareness training and educational resources<br>2) New Traveller children settled in schools and support plans in place where necessary | Awaiting new site development                                       | Traveller Education Team   |
| Collaborate with voluntary sector and families to provide/access out of school activities   | New children integrating into local community   | Childrens' centre / family learning in hand                         | Youth Service, Traveller Education Team, Traveller Organisations |

| Strategic Action   | Target   | Current Position   | Lead Partner   |
|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Goal 11</b> <b>Raise the engagement with learning opportunities for all traveller families visiting Brighton and Hove</b>                                     |  |  |  |
| To continue to provide a specialist/outreach provision to support all Traveller families to access learning opportunities  | Increase uptake in local provision including family learning   | Specialist / outreach in place                           | Traveller Education Team   |
| To provide additional teaching support for those with learning deficit (due to mobility)   | Improvement in attainment - Foundation Stage, KS2 and 4  | Peripatetic teachers assess before or day 1 of enrolment | Traveller Education Team & Schools   |
| To offer alternative education provision where required for 14-19 secondary aged pupils  | Improved uptake of educational opportunities   | Available but poor uptake due to mobility                | Traveller Education Team & Engagement Team   |
| Involve Traveller groups in education services development   | Consult with local Travellers  | In hand  | Traveller Education Team & Schools/Nurseries   |
| <b>Goal 12</b> <b>Secure engagement of families from the early years</b>   |  |  |  |
| To deliver weekly outreach under 5s play sessions to all families using the Traveller education team playbus in partnership with health and other professionals. | To engage all newly arrived families with mainstream services. eg children centres, early years settings and specialist services eg speech and language therapists | Ongoing  | Traveller Education Team & Health visitors   |
| To provide a parent and under 5s drop-in group for Traveller parents on site   | Attendance and participation in the bespoke group within Children's Centre and to increase participation and inclusion in wider children centre activities         | Ongoing  | Early Years Coordinator<br><br>Traveller Education Team<br><br>Moulsecoomb Children's Centre |

| Strategic Action  | Target  | Current Position                                     | Lead Partner   |
|---|---|--|--|
| Involve Traveller groups in education services development  | Improve participation and uptake of 2 yr old nursery funding  | Families consulted about these actions               | Health Visitors, Early Years Coordinator, Traveller Education Team               |
| To provide training to early years settings, children's centres, school staff re good practice in working with GRT families as both bespoke and part of LEAs training programme | Increased skills and confidence of EYs staff in working with GRT families – result increase in uptake of mainstream provision | Ongoing  | Traveller Education Team   |
| To arrange nursery places when necessary to newly arrived families and support child into nursery, to provide teaching support to children with an identified need              | Increased uptake of Early Years Educational Entitlement (EYEE)  | Work commenced                                       | Traveller Education Team   |
| <b>Goal 13</b> <b>Improve further the awareness in schools about Traveller History and Culture</b>  |   |  |  |
| Offer cultural awareness training to all educational establishments and to embed this in LEAs rolling training programme  | Uptake of training  | Ongoing  | Traveller Education Team, Healthy Schools Team                                   |
| Promote national initiatives such as Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month and encourage schools to participate  | Schools participation in GRT History Month  | Working with partners on June 2012 GRT History month | Traveller Education Team, Partnered with Traveller Organisations                 |
| Involve Traveller groups in education services development of cultural awareness and equalities training  | Travellers Participation in training  | To be addressed                                      | Traveller Education Team, Partnered with Traveller Organisations and individuals |
| Continue to contribute to schools curriculum diversity by providing lesson models, resources and artefacts.   | Culturally reflective curriculum in schools with Traveller children on roll   | Ongoing  | Traveller Education Team, Healthy Schools Team                                   |
| Information for schools updated and available via website   | Schools have accessible resources   | In need of updating                                  | Traveller Education Team   |

## 12. Strategic Outcome 4: Improve community cohesion

### 12.1 Supporting our communities

If we are successful in achieving *Objective 1: Improve site availability* this will have an immediate impact on community cohesion by minimising the unauthorised encampments that inflame community tensions.

Both Travelling and settled communities would like to see an end to unauthorised encampments but unfortunately until there are more stopping places for Travellers then unauthorised encampments will continue to impact on the lives of both the Travelling and settled communities.

However, effective community cohesion is about more than unauthorised encampments, it is about helping the city's diverse communities understand one another to get past the common myths, prejudices and stereotypes and to ensure that all those who have a stake in the city are able to get involved in decisions about the services that affect them. Local media has a key role to play in helping to build stronger communities.

To reduce fear of crime, domestic and sexual violence, anti-social behaviour, racism, sexism and homophobia and ensure community cohesion is improved across communities our goals under this priority are to:

- Goal 14 Increase awareness of different cultures
- Goal 15 Involve Travellers and their advocates in service design and delivery
- Goal 16 Effectively manage unauthorised encampments
- Goal 17 Ensure sensitive sites are protected
- Goal 18 Tackle crime, anti-social behaviour and nuisance
- Goal 19 Tackle racism, sexism and homophobia
- Goal 20 Develop a protocol for addressing Van Dwellers who are often mistaken for Travellers

*“Things have improved for us with the settled community. Our children go to school and we have got to know other mum’s and the local community – they realise not all Travellers are the same. People in the local shops know us and in the hairdressers. Everyone at the school knows we are Travellers; we go to lunch with people and to people’s houses.”*  
(Traveller)

### 12.2 Goal 14: Increase awareness of different cultures

It is very evident from the portrayal of Travellers in the media, general comments and some of the responses to the consultation that many residents are unaware of Traveller culture and history. Equally, the travelling communities have little understanding of the many cultures and ways of life of our settled communities.

This lack of understanding fuels myths, speculation and stereotypical points of view that increase tension and mistrust between the communities.

Over the lifetime of the strategy we would like to raise awareness of the Traveller culture and way of life and also the settled community to help all those living in and visiting the city understand one another. We will look at the potential to build community relations through schools, libraries, museums, staff training and community events.

### 12.3 Goal 15: Involve Travellers and their advocates in service design and delivery

We know that the most effective services are those that involve communities and service users in their design and delivery. This is particularly important in respect of services for Travellers who may have a long history of confrontation, racism and other bad experiences with service providers.

Particularly successful services go further and actively encourage members of the Traveller community to apply for roles where their specialist background and understanding can be particularly helpful in building trust and helping members of their community access the support they need.

For example, the NHS in East Sussex has recruited a Health Trainer from the Traveller community who is working across the region's Traveller sites to raise awareness of health matters and help people make positive changes that can make a real difference to their health.

*“Unless the local media is included and on board it will be much harder to succeed.” (Resident)*



During the life of this strategy we want to encourage the involvement of Travellers and their advocates in as many services as possible such as the development of the new Traveller site. To support this we are setting up a Brighton & Hove Traveller Forum to bring together local Travellers and those who regularly visit with service providers and the community and voluntary sector to discuss and resolve local issues.

In addition, the public sector is a major employer across Sussex and has the potential to work with the Community & Voluntary Sector to support Travellers into training and employment. A number of opportunities will be explored during the lifetime of the strategy both locally through the City Employment & Skills Plan and internationally looking at European Funding aimed at Traveller groups.

Once the permanent site is delivered this will help us develop a more targeted approach with longer term Traveller residents.

#### **12.4 Goal 16: Effectively manage unauthorised encampments**

Whilst we can not eliminate the risk of unauthorised encampments or move them on as quick as some would hope as there are few alternatives, we need to ensure that those encampments we have in the city are managed effectively so that they do not impact negatively on the settled community.

Where Travellers park on public land, the Police and Traveller Liaison Service make joint visits to carry out a Community Impact Assessment of the encampment upon the local area (community use of the site, biodiversity, historic significance etc) and carry out welfare checks with the Travellers.

The availability of alternative authorised stopping places in the city and the levels of community or site impact and welfare needs determine how quick an encampment can be moved.

*“Involve and engage travellers in shaping and running services and offer them the same commitment and level of support which would be shown to any other minority or interest group in the City.”  
(Resident)*

Sussex Police has developed a **Code of Conduct on Unauthorised Encampments** for Traveller communities that are the same standards of behaviour expected of the settled community. The Council has also published a **Guide for Travellers** leaflet explaining what will happen in the event of an unauthorised encampment. The Council and Police are looking at developing joint leaflets to help ensure there is a consistent approach.

It is very important to us that we communicate effectively with any settled community affected by an unauthorised encampment. We do this in a number of ways and are looking to improve this in response to the strategy and resident needs:

- We engage with staff working within the Stronger Communities Partnership that are supporting active community engagement to provide information about Traveller lifestyles, and the likely impact of an encampment on the locality
- We build positive relationships between the Traveller Liaison Team and chairs of Local Action Teams by notifying them the moment there is an encampment in their community and ensuring they receive regular updates
- We have a webpage that is regularly updated with information about unauthorised encampments within the city. This webpage can be found at: <http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/travellers>
- The Traveller Advice Line will be integrated into our customer contact centre to improve our telephone response to resident and Traveller enquiries
- We will look at good practice from other parts of the country to see what other improvements can be made to the way we work and communicate with residents

### **Traveller Scrutiny Panel Evidence Good Practice from Fenland District Council**

Fenland District Council has done a lot of work on unauthorised encampments. They worked to minimise the environmental impact and to get people to realise that although they had a right to move around, they needed to respect others: it is a 2 way process. Normal refuse services were delivered once a week and Travellers were expected to store their rubbish ready for collection in a neat and tidy way.

Additionally, FDC work to make sure the settled community are aware of the Travellers' co-operation. Central to this is working with the local media such as the Cambridge Times. In the past, stories about encampments would have been on the front page but now the Editor will contact staff to find out more about new encampments, such as how long they are staying and prints a more balanced story further in the paper. This ongoing dialogue has worked well.

In recognition of the cross-border nature of Traveller issues we have recently set up the Sussex Joint Local Authority Traveller Forum in partnership with neighbouring authorities and Sussex Police. This forum will help us share good practice and improve our services and is working on a joint Sussex Wide Unauthorised Encampment Protocol.

#### **12.5 Goal 17: Ensure sensitive sites are protected**

Preventing unlawful trespass to sensitive or high profile sites avoids a wide range of issues caused by many groups in society and is not confined to Travellers such as illegal raves, fly tipping and unauthorised encampment. Aside from preventing problems before they occur, site protection has an important role to play in reducing tensions between the settled resident communities and Traveller communities.

The council must review matters on a case by case basis through an impact assessment to determine what measures will work in that location and the potential impact on other areas if the problem is simply moved elsewhere.

*“Consult people on what are sensitive sites - come up with a list of the type of things that might qualify a site as sensitive. Make it very clear on the boundaries of any sensitive site that there will be no [toleration] of unauthorised encampments.”  
(Resident)*

The more sensitive a site the more likely protective measures should be in place, for instance sites of Special Scientific Interest, high usage parks and so on.

As funding is limited and site protection is very costly, damaging and unsightly, the Council is mindful that if we are to be successful we must select and prioritise the most important or sensitive sites for action. This would mean coming to an agreement of what sites we wish to prioritise and accepting that this increases the risk of trespass in other areas. We must be realistic and recognise that whilst land protection is a deterrent, it is not likely to prevent someone who is determined.

#### **12.6 Goal 18: Tackle crime, anti-social behaviour and nuisance**

Whilst most Travellers respect local residents and the land, as with all communities there is a minority of Travellers that cause anti-social behaviour, nuisance, fly-tipping and crime.

The Police launched Operation Monza in the summer of 2011 which saw officers visiting the city's unauthorised encampment on a daily basis to help build trust and improve relations with the Travelling communities and also to reassure local residents. In addition, a Code of Conduct was developed that outlines the standards of behaviour expected on both the Travelling and settled communities.

As a result of Operation Monza, no sites needed evicting due to anti-social behaviour, crime or nuisance and we hope that this type of proactive initiative can continue in future.

#### **12.7 Goal 19: Tackle racism, sexism and homophobia**

Unfortunately, even though the City prides itself on its tolerance, racism towards Travellers is still common despite being illegal under the Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended). Romany Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers are recognised in law as ethnic groups and are identified as having a shared culture, language and beliefs protected under the Equality Act 2010.

Ignorance and lack of awareness are often the main basis for prejudice. Promoting understanding and challenging behaviour such as the use of racist language is part of the way that attitudes and behaviour can be challenged.

To help tackle hate crime we want to increase understanding amongst communities but we also recognise that sometimes this goes beyond a lack of cultural awareness and has to be tackled in a more robust manner with the full force of the law.

Community safety services develop the most effective ways in which we can deal with specific hate crimes, provide protection to victims and help bring perpetrators to justice. The community led Racial Harassment Forum is one way in which we achieve this and we will ensure that the needs of the Traveller community are fully heard at that Forum. We are also developing new ways in which we can encourage reporting of incidents to our casework team and we will also ensure those arrangements are taken out to the Traveller community.

*“Feel it’s only  
individuals who  
discriminate –  
there’s good and  
bad in any  
community.”  
(Traveller)*

### **12.8 Goal 20: Develop a protocol for addressing Van Dwellers who are often mistaken for New Travellers**

Brighton & Hove has a population locally termed as Van Dwellers. Van Dwellers are generally found living in their vehicles on the roadside or on unauthorised encampments and are generally not nomadic. As they are effectively permanently resident in the city, such as through work or education they are not considered to meet the definition of a Traveller in any national or regional policy.

This distinction between New Travellers and Van Dwellers is difficult and often not recognised by local people who experience lived-in vehicles parked outside their homes, often for many days, which can further inflame tensions against Travellers. As lived-in vehicles are recognised as an issue for the city, we will develop a protocol to address this during 2012/13.

## Action Plan Summary

### Strategic Outcome 4: Improve community cohesion

| Strategic Action   | Target   | Current Position  | Lead Partner   |
|--|--|---|--|
| <b>Goal 14 Increasing awareness of different cultures</b>                            |  |   |  |
| Develop a greater understanding amongst the media of Traveller issues                | Ongoing work   | Approaches being made to local media                                    | Brighton & Hove City Council                                 |
| Improve further the awareness in schools about Traveller History and Culture         | Various (see Goal 12)                                      | Various (see Goal 12)   | Traveller Education Team, and Traveller Orgs.                |
| BHCC Promotion of GRT History Month  | June - annually  | Initial discussions in progress   | BHCC Communities & Equality Team                             |
| Traveller staff – workforce monitoring and action/support from BME Workers Forum     | Various as part of People Strategy and Implementation plan | Initial discussions in progress   | Brighton & Hove City Council                                 |
| Improve Community Development Workers / Local Action Teams                           | July 2012 and ongoing                                      | Work being planned  | BHCC, Friends Families & Travellers                          |
| <b>Goal 15 Involve Travellers and their advocates in service design and delivery</b> |  |   |  |
| Set up a Brighton & Hove Traveller Forum   | First meeting by July 2012                                 | Early discussions with Traveller groups                                 | Brighton & Hove City Council                                 |
| Progress opportunities for supporting Travellers into work and learning              | To be determined   | Potential European being explored and links to Employment & Skills Plan | Brighton & Hove City Council                                 |
| Involve Travellers in development and design of permanent site                       | Throughout 2012-2013                                       | Preferred site identified   | Brighton & Hove City Council                                 |
| Consult on procedures for Tolerated sites  | Spring 2012  | Initial scoping in progress   | Brighton & Hove City Council                                 |
| Involve Travellers in service development, cultural awareness, equalities training   | Travellers participating in training                       | Building upon previous successes  | Traveller Education Team, Schools/Nurseries, Traveller Orgs. |

| Strategic Action   | Target   | Current Position  | Lead Partner   |
|--|--|---|--|
| <b>Goal 16</b>   | <b>Effective management of unauthorised encampments</b>  |   |  |
| To review and update the Operation Monza Tactical Plan   | Annual review according to operational need  | Successful operation in 2011 saw marked reduction in complaints, nuisance and anti-social behaviour | Sussex Police  |
| To provide a dedicated full time Traveller Liaison Officer                                     | Full time officer in post  | Officers in post and part of Sussex wide network  | Sussex Police  |
| Ensure Section 61 and Section 62A CJ&POA 1994 applications comply with guidance                | As far as possible all applications are to be considered by local Commanders to ensure consistency | National guidance in place. Local guidance in development   | Sussex Police  |
| Provide a consistent response to all unauthorised encampments                                  | Develop a joint Sussex Wide Unauthorised Encampment Protocol (Police & Local Authorities)          | Discussions in progress about joint leaflets and protocol   | Sussex Police, Brighton & Hove City Council, East & West Sussex councils |
| Pro-actively liaise with any settled community affected by an encampment                       | Ongoing  | Community engagement through a range of expanding mechanisms  | Brighton & Hove City Council   |
| Expand Operation Monza into a joint approach   | Council Traveller Liaison Officer to accompany Police on daily visits to sites                     | Discussions in progress about joint visits to encampments   | Sussex Police & Brighton & Hove City Council                             |
| Provide necessary support the those residing on an unauthorised encampment                     | Ongoing  | Work already in progress  | Brighton & Hove City Council   |
| Take appropriate action to move on an encampment based on community impact and Traveller needs | Ongoing  | Consideration of environmental impact, community impact, Traveller welfare needs                    | Brighton & Hove City Council   |
| Work across the region to share good practice  | To work through the new Sussex Joint Local Authority Traveller Forum                               | Sussex Joint Local Authority Traveller Forum set up   | Brighton & Hove City Council   |

| Strategic Action   | Target                                      | Current Position  | Lead Partner                 |
|--|---|---|------------------------------|
| <b>Goal 17 Ensure sensitive sites are protected</b>  |   |   |                              |
| Develop a corporate proactive approach to the protection of sensitive sites within available resources | To be developed during 2012/13              | Early discussions in progress   | Brighton & Hove City Council |
| Assess sites on an ongoing basis in response to unauthorised use                                       | Ongoing monitoring of sites                 | Successful works carried out to Withdean Park, Greanleas Recreation Ground and the Ladies Mile Nature Reserve | Brighton & Hove City Council |
| <b>Goal 18 Tackling crime, anti-social behaviour and nuisance</b>                                      |   |   |                              |
| To review and update the Operation Monza Tactical Plan   | Annual review according to operational need | Successful operation in 2011 saw marked reduction in complaints, nuisance and anti-social behaviour           | Sussex Police                |
| To provide a dedicated full time Traveller Liaison Officer   | Full time officer in post                   | Officers in post and part of Sussex wide network  | Sussex Police                |
| Provide a prompt, efficient and sustainable waste collection service that tackles fly-tipping          | New contract to start August 2012           | Approval granted to procure contract  | Brighton & Hove City Council |



| Strategic Action  | Target  | Current Position                 | Lead Partner                                |
|---|---|----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Goal 19 Tackling racism, sexism and homophobia</b>   |   |                                  |   |
| <p>Developing new ways to encourage the reporting of crimes and incidents will be taken forward by community safety services and included within a work programme to develop community based reporting centres throughout the city for hate crimes.</p> | <p>Work to be undertaken during 2012 and will be completed by March 2013.</p> | <p>Work commences April 2012</p> | <p>Joint Community Safety Delivery Unit</p> |
| <b>Goal 20 Develop a protocol for addressing Van Dwellers who are often mistaken for Travellers</b>   |   |                                  |   |
| <p>Develop protocol, Equality Impact Assess, consult, launch</p>  | <p>To be developed in 2012/13</p>   | <p>Work is yet to commence</p>   | <p>Brighton &amp; Hove City Council</p>     |

## Appendix 1: Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out as part of the development of the Traveller Commissioning Strategy. The assessment looked at the equalities issues affecting both the Traveller and settled communities in relation to Traveller issues and makes recommendations as to how these can be mitigated through our strategy.

This Equality Impact Assessment is a two stage process. The initial assessment considered the main issues affecting our communities to help shape the outcomes and goals of the draft strategy. The second was developed alongside the consultation on the draft strategy to identify recommendations to minimise any potential negative impacts that may arise from the goals of the strategy that could affect Traveller or settled communities.

Travellers are known to suffer high levels of discrimination, racism, deprivation and a lack of access to culturally appropriate services. They are also known to have some of the worst health outcomes, lowest life expectancy and poor educational attainment. Much of this disadvantage and inequality is attributed to a lack of secure stopping places for Travellers with frequent evictions forcing moves making it difficult for them to access services that the settled communities may take for granted such as GPs, dentists and schools.

The primary impact on settled communities have stemmed from unauthorised encampments causing a loss of recreation space in local communities with associated anti-social behaviour such as fly-tipping or other nuisance.

The national shortage of stopping places for Travellers is recognised by Government to cause unauthorised encampments which can put Travellers in conflict with the settled community and often attract negative media interest.

The strategy is based on sound research using extensive consultation with local communities (both settled and Traveller) which shaped the final goals. The Strategic Outcomes linked to improving site stability, health and welfare outcomes, education outcomes and community cohesion cover the main identified inequalities and no fundamental negative impacts from these outcomes have been identified.

With tackling Traveller inequality being heavily dependent on the provision of secure stopping places to facilitate access to services, the shortage of suitable land in the city could pose a problem in identifying suitable locations for these.

Brighton & Hove is a city with many pressing and competing land needs, particularly in respect of infrastructure and new housing. The demand for stopping places and needs of Traveller communities must be seen and addressed alongside the wider context of the needs of the city as a whole.

In tackling inequality the strategy must strengthen the links between the Travelling communities, settled communities and our strategic partners such as the Police and health services to ensure that achievement of the objectives and goals remains an ongoing exercise during the lifespan of this strategy and beyond. This will be necessary to achieve inclusive services accessible to the Traveller community without compromising the concerns and the good will of the settled community.

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