

Who are the Travellers?

There are several main groups of Travellers in the United Kingdom

- Anglo-Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers
Welsh Gypsies and Scottish Travellers
- Fairground or Show people
- Circus families
- New Age Travellers
- Roma




A short history




- 1505 - First record of Gypsies in Britain
- 1530 - First law making being an immigrant Gypsy punishable by death
- 1596 - 106 Gypsies condemned to death at one sitting in York
- 1783 - First act repealing the above legislation
- Second World War - 600,000 Gypsies died in the concentration camps
- 1989 - Anglo-Romany Gypsies legally recognised as an ethnic group
- 2000 - Irish Travellers legally recognised as an ethnic group

Travel Patterns

- **Nomadic** - constantly travelling or travelling for long periods
 - Occupation
 - Family connections
 - Retaining networks
- **Semi-nomadic** - travelling for part of the year
 - Seasonal occupation
 - Religious conventions
 - Family / personal reasons
 - Retaining networks
- **Static** - travelling for short periods
 - Holidays
 - Family visits
 - Religious conventions



Recent Legislation




- 1959 - Highways and Byways Act - no longer allowed to stop on the side of the road
- 1960 - Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act - no longer permissible to camp on farmers land
- 1968 - Caravan Sites Act - local authority site provision linked to designation and rapid eviction
- 1994 - Criminal Justice and Public Order Act - criminalized illegal camping, increased police powers, guidelines that local authorities should take into account health, education and welfare needs before eviction
- 2004 - Housing Act & Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act

The Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000) places a general duty on a wide range of public authorities to promote race equality.

In everything they do they should have due regard to the need to:



- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity
- **Promote good race relations between people of different racial groups**

Public perceptions

Following a training session on Gypsy & Traveller culture, a group of trainee teachers in Chester surveyed their family and friends.

Some of the results

- **94%** thought of Gypsies as unclean.
- **89%** thought of Gypsies as dishonest.
- **72%** thought it was ok for a pub to put up a 'No Gypsies' sign.
- **78%** thought that Gypsies should not be allowed to vote.
- **94%** thought Gypsies did not pay taxes.

Recent incidents in Cheshire

- May 2003 - Ellesmere Port - Johnny Delaney



- Oct 2008 - Facebook group set up against a proposed site in Northwich

"There will always be problems when travellers arrive dirt, rubbish, unsightly illegal squatting and their associated crime. A law unto themselves. They pay neither tax or domestic rates, yet they seem to manage to live in luxury caravans. Meanwhile they take the benefits provided by the tax paying public, including medical care and education etc."

"If they knock on my door selling pegs they'll get told in no uncertain terms to "f*** right off" seriously though I couldn't agree more with what you've all said, what bright spark thought it would be a good idea to put a pikey camp site in between a children's play area and a nature reserve....."

Thoughts of Ellesmere Port residents when asked about having a permanent site for Travellers (April 2005):

"The Gypsies don't deserve a permanent site. They just abuse whatever they are given."

"I don't want the Gypsies over here in the first place. They should all go back to Ireland where they came from."

"I'm dead against the whole thing. They make an awful mess."

"I doubt whether many people could tell me the location of a privately owned site in this constituency as it has never been subject of a complaint to my office." Andrew Miller MP

Incidents in Cheshire Schools

An eight-year-old boy received a Christmas card in the school Christmas post, from one of his classmates, which said:
"F... off, you f..... gypsy"

(the original was written out in full)

Response from a parent to a questionnaire asking for suggestions for improvements at the school:

"Get rid of all the gypsy children."

Of four Gypsy children in a High School only one remains after a series of bullying incidents related to their ethnicity.

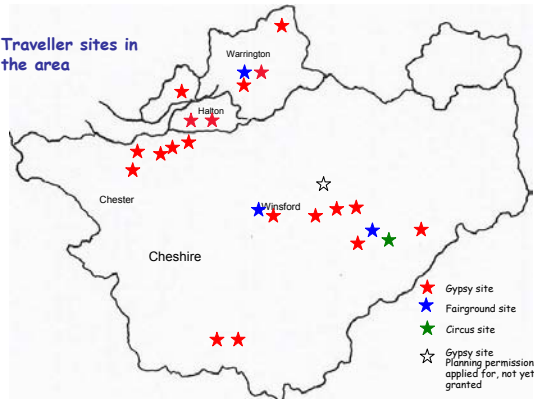
The girl who is still in school has told everyone that she is Indian and she has not been bullied.

A disadvantaged community?

- Enforced movement into housing
- Clash of customs - relationships with neighbours, traditions
- Increase in stress related illnesses and suicides
- Life expectancy - 12 years fewer for women, 10 for men
- Neo-natal death rate higher than settled population
- Difficulties in registering with GPs
- No access to screening programmes
- Low rates of vaccinations
- Higher rates of death in childbirth
- Difficulties in accessing education and other services



Traveller sites in the area



Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment

- £97 million to be used in site provision across the UK
- Grants available from the Homes & Community Agency
- £4 million allocated to the North West
- 100% allocation for new builds or extension of existing sites
- 50-75% allocation offered for refurbishment of existing sites

Community Numbers – Does It Add Up?

- There is no definitive number of Gypsies & Travellers in Cheshire due to low level ethnic monitoring, crossing of borders due to nomadic lifestyles and many travellers now being housed
- 75% of travellers in the UK are in bricks and mortar housing due to either a lack of site provision, disability, poor health, or preference
- The map shows there is only 1 permanent Local Authority run site in Cheshire and this is at Astbury Marsh, Congleton with 17 pitches
- The remainder are licensed by Local Authorities but privately run
- For 2006 – 2011 Cheshire has formulated it's requirement as 113 -154 permanent pitches (not including transit sites). Figures for the North West have now been revised by 4NW as part of the continued consultation process on site provision

Gypsies & Travellers - a few questions

- How many Gypsies and Travellers are there in Europe?
- Many words from the Roma language have now slipped into common use here in the UK. Do you know any?
- How many Gypsies and Travellers are there in Cheshire?
- Where do Gypsies and Travellers come from?
- Can you name the different groups of Gypsies and Travellers living in the UK?
- What do Gypsies and Travellers do for work?
- Do Gypsies and Travellers pay tax?
- When were Gypsies and Travellers legally recognised as ethnic groups?
- Are Gypsies and Travellers protected by Race Relations legislation?
- Have you ever come across instances of discrimination against Gypsies and Travellers?
- Should Gypsies and Travellers be allowed to vote?
- Why do you think children from travelling communities perform poorly in education?
- Do Gypsies and Travellers tax and insure their vehicles?
- Have you ever met a Gypsy or Irish Traveller?

Community Challenge

- Kick it Out
- Changes – Ages 11 to 19
- Live Wires – Ages 5 to 10
- Back to Basics Fashion Project
- Business Enterprise Coaching
- Street Safe
- Middlewich Vision

WEB LINKS TO LEGISLATION, DOCUMENTS AND ORGANISATIONS

Communities and Local Government
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/corporate/?view=Search+results&query=Gypsies+and+Travellers&contentType=all&site=all&site&quickSearch&results&resultPage=20&vc=23&ve=9>
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/unauthorisedsites>
Temporary Stop Notices
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/amendmenttemporariresponses>
Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/accommodationassessments>
New Drive to Improve Gypsy and Traveller Site Provision
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/593429>
Consultation with Showmen
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/archived/publications/planningandbuilding/consultationshowpeople>
Guidance on Managing Gypsy Sites
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/guidancemanagementgypsies>
Guidance on Managing Unauthorised Camping
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/guidancemanaging>
Final Report of the Task Group on Gypsy Site Provision and Enforcement - The Road Ahead
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/gypsyresponsesroadahead>
Facts about Gypsies and Travellers
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/communities/raceandcohesionfaith/communitycohesion/combatingmisinformationaboutfactsaboutgypsies>
Sustainable Communities – A Five Year Plan
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/archived/publications/corporate/homesforall>
Homelessness Code of Practice for Local Authorities
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/homelessnesscode>

Planning and Travelling Showpeople Circular: Regulatory Impact Assessment
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/homelessnesscode>
 Definition of the term 'gypsies and travellers' for the Purposes of the Housing Act
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/homelessnesscode>
 Local Authorities and Gypsies and Travellers: a guide to responsibilities and powers
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/homelessnesscode>
 Draft Guidance on the Design of Site for Gypsy and Travellers
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/guidancedesignsites>
 Housing and Regeneration Bill (Clause 272 Security of Tenure)
<http://www.parliament.uk/bills/2007-08/housingandregeneration.html>
 Housing Act 2004
http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2004/en/ukpgaen_20040034_en_1

ORGANISATIONS

Travellers Aid Team
 This also gives links to other Gypsy and Traveller organisations, recent legislation, cultural and historical information
<http://www.gypsy-traveller.org.uk/travellers-aid-team/>
 The National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups – Good link to other G&T organisations nationally
<http://www.nationalgypsytravellerfederation.org/>
 Equality and Human Rights Commission
<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/Pages/default.aspx>
 Shelter and the Housing Act 2004
<http://england.shelter.org.uk/policy/policy-5028.cfm?fromAtlas=housingact/>
 Homeless Link
<http://www.homeless.org.uk/>
 Site Grants Application Form
<http://www.homeless.org.uk/page.aspx?pointerid=601697e24e5411109f75846659484c>

DVD - Gypsy & Travellers by 4NW
http://www.nwrpb.org.uk/downloads/documents/feb_09/nwra_1234530058_RTPI_2008_Award_article.doc