



Irish Traveller Movement in Britain (ITMB) Annual Review 2009-2010



**Campaigning against
Discrimination, Promoting
Inclusion, Participation and
Engagement**

10th year Anniversary



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Welcome to all. 2009-10 was certainly another enormously busy year for ITMB, packed with policy and other consultations; training and other capacity-building events; as well as hosting the regular ITMB Conference (London) and Pavee Ceilidh (London and Manchester).

Keeping in line with our 2008-13 strategic business plan ITMB moved closer to gaining a Europe-wide presence and had a sharper focus on individual and collective human rights as they should operate for the Traveller communities.

The change in Government held many fears for the Traveller community, not least the possible abandonment of policies and protocols where ITMB along with many others had made significant gains, most notably in site accommodation and planning. The outcome of the Lib-Dem pact and the Big Society agenda on Traveller Gypsy Roma populations still remains to be seen.

ITMB shares Traveller community concerns about the development of powerful democratic+ local bodies with new powers over local government, but with a minimum of accountability and scrutiny. We welcome the proposed investment in greater use of volunteers and social enterprise. ITMB will continue to seek equitable treatment for Travellers Gypsy and Roma and continue to develop more robust and widespread local Traveller advocacy structures.

The media attacks on Traveller Gypsy Roma communities continued apace. As Travellers experienced increasing threats to their culture and way of life, demand was created to learn more of individual human and legal rights in practice and how to challenge media stereotyping.

The Capacity Building Project carried out much work in this area, organising joint-training initiatives to extend Traveller learning, advocacy and media skills, as well as human rights awareness.



The recession also brings challenges. With cuts yet to severely bite into the voluntary sector, funding levels are expected to drop under the new government, creating greater competition for funds. ITMB plans to remain small with a wide creative remit and is extending funding sights into Europe to help sustain the existing service. ITMB is also examining the possibility of developing a trading arm to secure greater financial independence. ITMB will continue to seek funds for one-off Projects and activities led by the Traveller communities.

Overall, both I and the Management Committee are very satisfied with the progress and achievements of the ITMB over the year. I consider it a great privilege to Chair such an energetic and creative community focussed organisation concerned with achieving immediate and long term positive impacts for the Traveller communities.

I would like to extend my gratitude to all who contributed greatly to ITMB achievements during the year: Our Director Yvonne and the staff team, the Traveller Advisory Group, fellow Trustees, the Traveller communities, Gypsy and Roma organisations, ITMB funders, Traveller volunteers, advocates and sessional workers and our ever-increasing network of partner organisations. Go raibh maith agaibh. Thanks to all!

Fr Joseph G Browne Chairman

TRAVELLER ADVISORY GROUP (TAG)

The Traveller Advisory Group (TAG) met only a few during this year, as many members were receiving extensive personal training through the ITMB Capacity Development Project. There was also a loss of some administrative support to the Group during the year, as executive attention was required for the establishment of the ITMB Birmingham office. However, the group was redrawn towards the end of the year with some 15 new members, clearer terms of reference and more democratic representation.

Despite a lack of informal meetings, members of the existing TAG engaged in extra ITMB activities as volunteers, advisors, advocates, policy respondents and sessional workers. Some noteworthy examples of TAG member engagement are given below.

Pavee Ceilidh Manchester Tuesday 30 June 2009

Pavee Ceilidh has now become a regular fixture in the ITMB calendar. It is an event held during June-Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month- and celebrates Traveller history, heritage and culture. This year the event included a Manchester dimension for the first time. The event was hosted at the Friends Meeting House and was led on behalf of the ITMB by TAG member, Julie Joyce.

The event was attended by various nearby school groups of Traveller youth and children, as well as representatives from voluntary organisations and local Travellers. There were numerous stalls, which included traditional Traveller craft displays as well as a fortune teller. There was a Traveller photographic exhibition and much creative activity in which attendants could engage.



The attendance surged late in the afternoon as groups from elsewhere joined the event, which culminated with a showing of the ITMB ~~%~~Meet your neighbours+ DVD, which features several members of the TAG. Many attendants thanked Julie, who was supported by other TAG members in preparing and staging the event, for organising such a successful Pavee Ceilidh day. Later in the year, Julie was a main speaker at the ITMB National Conference.

We also held a second Pavee Ceilidh in London which was a massive success. We had over 150 visitors on the day.

We also recruited a number of young members to the group.

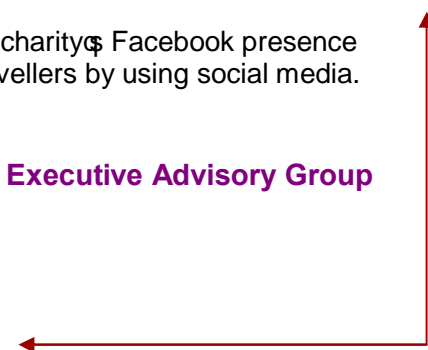
ITMB Web Social Media (Facebook) initiative →

When ITMB decided to have a social media presence, it became clear that many young Travellers used Facebook for networking with each other across the UK and Ireland.



Young Travellers were instrumental in helping to set up and design the charity's Facebook presence in January last and also advised on how best to reach out to young Travellers by using social media.

ITMB Executive Advisory Group



Who the ITMB are....

The Irish Traveller Movement in Britain (ITMB) is a national policy and voice charity, working to raise the capacity and social inclusion of the Traveller communities in Britain. We were established in 2000 and are a registered charity and company limited by guarantee.

ITMB acts as a bridge builder, bringing the Traveller communities, service providers and policy makers together, thereby stimulating debate and promoting forward-looking strategies to promote increased race equality, civic engagement, inclusion, service provision and community cohesion.

ITMB has an established track record of active policy development, campaigning, community engagement, training and awareness raising and social cohesion work. We are shared custodians of the Liberty Human Rights Award 2004.




We have an established Executive Advisory Group (EAG) which leads on the strategic direction and development of our policy engagement. This EAG is made up entirely of members of Traveller communities with nation wide representation.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF ITMB

- ➡ To create an evidence and resource base for positive change for the Traveller Communities
- ➡ To promote the social inclusion of Travellers by campaigning on issues that contribute to their exclusion and to promote equality of access to statutory and voluntary services
- ➡ To develop policy models for working with Irish Travellers and educate statutory and other services who work with Travellers
- ➡ To maintain a presence on strategic groups and become a greater source of influence and a leading authority on Irish Travellers
- ➡ To build the capacity of the Traveller communities to self advocate and represent themselves


DIRECTOR REPORT 

There have been many highlights during the year, one of the most pleasing for me being the progression of the ITMB capacity building service into regions outside of London. One of our Pavee Ceilidh event days was organised solely by Travellers and held in Manchester. The Capacity Development Project's close links to other ITMB services led to some first-time engagements of Travellers outside of London in major policy consultations, such as Regional Spatial strategies.



The profile of ITMB has been raised considerably in 2009-10, not just in areas of England, but also in other parts of the U.K. and Ireland and across Europe. ITMB attended the 20th anniversary of sister organisation, the Irish Traveller Movement (ITM) in Ireland. We earnestly hope that our visit sets the platform for future collaborations and sharing of research and best practice with ITM Ireland.

The ITMB also made a debut policy presence in mainland Europe at a conference on Roma poverty, which was hosted in Brussels by the European Roma Information Office. ITMB made some new friends in Europe-wide NGOs and were introduced to key EU policy-makers.

ITMB established a Facebook presence in early 2010 thanks mainly to young Irish Traveller, Cassie-Marie McDonagh. Our social media presence has proven to be particularly effective for communications with and receiving feedback from many young Travellers across the country. Our Facebook site also informed the Traveller community across the country of ITMB campaigns,

I am pleased to announce that ITMB acquired Level One PQASSO during the year and we are currently working on achieving Level Two. PQASSO is a quality standard mark for small organisations. Level One is a strong indicator that ITMB is an organisation fit for purpose. This standard is recognised across the voluntary sector and by funders and was a core objective of mine at the beginning of the year.

As with other charities, there were concerns about the effects of the recession and a change of Government on funding. Early Coalition indicators were that all existing streams would continue as planned. ITMB has built up a reserve fund and has also engaged in further Traveller culture awareness training exercises to generate independent income. We have researched the possibility of creating a trading arm, but at year end, remained undecided on viability. However, the fact that we are a small organisation seeking relatively minor funding for a national remit should help see us through the recession.

During the year, we were successful in acquiring new funding from the Department of Health to improve Gypsy Traveller Roma advocacy and involvement in maternity services across three regions in England. This Project will begin in 2010-11 and will employ a number of Gypsy Traveller Roma sessional workers. We will be seeking European funding in the near future to participate more fully in EU-wide policy.

Our brief Conference visits into mainland Europe during the year has proven very informative. It became obvious that Travellers in the UK are much less aware of their rights and entitlements than their Romani counterparts in mainland Europe. Consequently, in 2010-11, there will be a slight shift in ITMB strategy to improve general awareness of human rights across the Traveller population in the U.K.

It also became clear through Europe that the Roma community had achieved much through lobbying the EU. Fortunately, Roma NGOs are prepared to network and share their successful experiences with ITMB. There are a number of human rights training initiatives with associated educational qualifications, for instance, of which younger Travellers in the UK could avail. ITMB hopes to support the enrolment and attendance of some young UK-based Travellers in these initiatives in 2010-11.



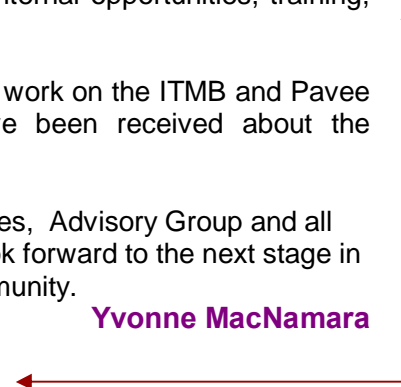
Part of our Capacity Development team is now based in our fully furnished and equipped Birmingham office. We hope to base the newly funded Maternity Advocacy and Involvement service there also. The office is fully networked to the main office database in London. Communication between both offices is carried out by Internet based communications applications, which saves on running costs.

The success of our Capacity Building Project was proven when greater numbers of Irish Travellers were employed as sessional workers by ITMB during the year. I hope that this trend continues and extends to more Travellers during 2010-11. ITMB seeks to increase internal opportunities, training, paid and voluntary employment for the Traveller community.

I would like to thank our Web consultant, Tammy Furey for her fantastic work on the ITMB and Pavee Ceilidh websites during the year. Many favourable comments have been received about the accessibility of both Websites.

My thanks and appreciation also goes out to our staff team, ITMB Trustees, Advisory Group and all others who input into our ever-growing organisation during 2009-10. I look forward to the next stage in the development of ITMB as an effective advocate for the Traveller community.

Yvonne MacNamara






ACHIEVEMENTS, ACTIVITIES, PERFORMANCE



Capacity Development Project (CDP)



The capacity building programme extended further into England, helped considerably by our now established base in Birmingham. As well as continuing to provide direct activities such as advice to Traveller-led groups and hosting training events, the CDP also jointly facilitated local Traveller capacity development and human rights initiatives organized by statutory and voluntary services. There was a substantial increase to the numbers of Travellers and agencies engaging with the Project.

Interagency Work/ Partnerships and Networks



At year end, there were 16 Traveller Inter-Agency Forums (TIAF) established in England, 6 outside of the South-East area. There were several others in the course of development, such as in the London Borough of Southwark.

These Forums provide a space for members of the Traveller community and agencies working with Travellers to come together to share information and express their concerns and solutions on local matters of significance. For example, most TIAFs have responded to Local Area Agreements and corporate strategic plans.

A very significant partnership was developed at the Royal Free Hospital under the Government's Pacesetters pilot initiative to improve Traveller Gypsy Romani patient involvement in the design and delivery of maternity services. The CDP took an advisory and community liaison role in this development.

ITMB has since secured funding from the Department of Health to be the lead partner in establishing similar Forum/ Advisory structures in three main cities, including London.

Conference: "A Time for Change"

The ITMB third national conference was held at London Resource Centre in November 2009. The event was very well attended by a broad mixture of Traveller community members, organisations and government departments.

All 6 conference workshops, some co-facilitated by CDP staff, were devised with community capacity development and action as key core outcomes.

Some workshops were co-facilitated by Irish Travellers, who were guided and supported through their workshop themes and exercises by CDP staff. Advance one-to-one training on Managing Workshops was delivered by CDP.

The Conference helped to attract a new and significant number of Travellers to CDP's various training and other capacity building services.



Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month (GRTHM) 2009

CDP had a core involvement in the preparation and delivery of events and activities for GRTHM. CDP supported and developed a team of sessional workers

who successfully completed the Oral History Project; produced the 'Meet your neighbours' DVD; provided the Pavee Ceilidh website design and material; while also making multiple presentations on Traveller awareness to schools. The CDP team also supported Irish Travellers engaged in the planning and management of the Pavee Ceilidh flagship events in Manchester and London.



CDP Training Programme



The CDP programme is principally targetted at developing the skillsbase of individual Travellers and groups as well as increasing the self-advocacy capacity of the overall Traveller community nationwide. CDP has developed capacity-building training partnerships during the year to complement its own training programme and supported Travellers to attend capacity building initiatives provided by other agencies. The CDP also deliver Traveller culture awareness raising training sessions to health and welfare service providers, who wish to increase their knowledge of Traveller culture and better engage with the Traveller community.

a) Travellers, their communities and groups

A significant development during the year has been the establishment of the **“Who R We Youth Traveller Forum”** in London.

The Forum consists of younger Travellers aiming to challenge discrimination and prejudice by providing younger people with an understanding of human rights. The Forum also serves as a means to acquire leadership and advocacy skills. The Forum has been involved in a full range of teambuilding and awareness raising activities throughout the year.

The CDP enabled the project to expand its remit into new areas with large Traveller populations, such as Manchester, Cambridge and Luton. CDP provided training in basic computer skills to support and complement several Travellers pursuing a **“Train the Trainer”** course provided by the University of Derby.

ITMB was one of six organizations supported by the British Institute of Human Rights (BIHR), as part of their Poverty Project. Several Traveller women engaged in a prolonged training programme to strengthen their understanding of human rights and also increase their awareness of how human rights can influence policy makers. This is a key development for ITMB, who aspire to a more widespread knowledge and awareness of human rights in the overall Traveller community. CDP has forged strong relationships with other key equalities and human rights organizations during the year. The BIHR training programme will continue throughout 2011.

b) Awareness raising of statutory and other groups

Our Traveller culture awareness raising sessions aim to equip statutory and other agencies with the skills and knowledge to more effectively engage with and serve the Traveller community.

ITMB successfully delivered Traveller Cultural Awareness training commissioned by Hackney Local Strategic Partnership to housing, social work and other employees from 14 local organisations. The training was hugely successful with more than 100 participants. Eighty percent of attendants agreed that the training had achieved its aims. The training was delivered by London-based Irish Travellers, supported by the CDP.

Similar awareness-raising training was carried out by Advisory Group member Julie Joyce at a school in the Manchester area. The attendance was over 50 people and included school pupils and school and Catholic Childrens Society staff. CDP supported the development and delivery of the training.



Capacity Development Project Team



POLICY, REPRESENTATION, CAMPAIGNS

The year was very much dominated by Local Authority responses to Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments and the ITMB Traveller Economic Inclusion Project research into positive examples of economic inclusion in Gypsy Traveller and Roma communities. ITMB also began to establish a European Union presence, as it seeks to have a voice in Europe policy development affecting Irish Travellers.

1. Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTANA)

At City Hall in April, partners ITMB and Planning Aid for London launched a report that examined how London Boroughs had responded to the GTANA to an attendance of over 100 people. The report established that London Boroughs had achieved very little in meeting Traveller rights for site accommodation.

A very similar scenario across the country was reported at a dedicated workshop at the ITMB National Conference where widespread delaying, questionable research, poor Traveller consultation and allocation of unsuitable sites were reported.

Under the Mayor's Plan for London, pitch provision under the GTANA was reduced by 30%, with some new provision proposed as bricks and mortar.

At year end, it remained unclear whether the new Coalition Government would continue or abandon the existing policy implementation process.

2. Traveller Economic Inclusion Project (TEIP)

TEIP is funded by the Big Lottery to carry out research into the economic inclusion of Gypsies, Travellers and Roma.

Economic inclusion is where families have a secure financial base and are able to access all of the opportunities and life chances society has to offer communities, families and individuals.

TEIP began in July 2009, is led by Irish Travellers and is supported by research academics and agencies such as %Friends Families and Travellers+ and %Big Lottery Research.+ Buckingham University, EERC Etc

By year end, over 100 interviews had been carried out within the Gypsy Traveller Romani communities to uncover how community members had achieved financial autonomy despite the many social barriers acting against their inclusion, such as low educational attainment and access to credit.

The Project used a participatory action research model which ensured Travellers were represented in every aspect of TEIP; from participating on the Project Steering Group to being community interviewers.

In 2010-11, TEIP will host a series of follow up seminars for interviewees and the Gypsy Traveller

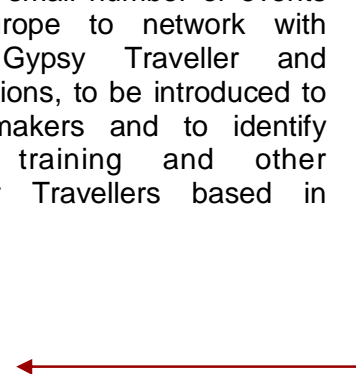
and contribute to finalizing the end Project report.

The Project research and recommendations will contribute toward Government policy on economic inclusion for ethnic minorities.

The end research report is set for publication and launch at the House of Commons in autumn 2010 and will be available for download on the ITMB website.

3. European presence

ITMB attended a small number of events in mainland Europe to network with European-wide Gypsy Traveller and Romani organisations, to be introduced to key EU policy-makers and to identify human rights training and other opportunities for Travellers based in England.



SOME OF OUR PLANS FOR 2010-2011

- ➡ Achieve PQASSO Level 2 Quality Mark
- ➡ Create a Traveller Women's Group.
- ➡ Hold ITMB Conference in November with some Euro European-wide themes
- ➡ Strengthen networking with Gypsy, Roma and equality agencies in the UK and in mainland Europe
- ➡ Set up new Gypsy Traveller Roma Maternity Advocacy and Engagement Project
- ➡ Establish a Traveller Youth presence on a youth policy body of national significance e.g., Youth Parliament
- ➡ Arrange a %Travellers Got Talent+competition
- ➡ Finalise Traveller economic inclusion research
- ➡ Develop a formal organisation-wide Media Strategy
- ➡ Seek funding for an extension to our Capacity Building portfolio
- ➡ Organise campaigns and related events through ITMB Facebook facility
- ➡ Focus on training, work and voluntary opportunities for young Travellers



The Irish Traveller Movement in Britain would like to kindly thank their funders for supporting all the work they have undertaken in the year 2009-2010



department for
children, schools and families



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha
Department of Foreign Affairs



Irish Travellers Movement in Britain.

Registered Charity no: 1107113.

**A limited Company by guarantee, registered in England & Wales No:
4038939**

10th year Anniversary

2000-2010



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