



Irish Traveller Movement in Britain

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Wheels in Motion

Issue 5, July 2011

www.irishtraveller.org.uk

Director's Welcome

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This quarter has been exceptionally busy for ITMB. From an operational perspective we are delighted to share with you our good fortune in achieving the **Level 2 PQASSO award**. This should certainly assist us with our endeavours to develop our work further in this era of austerity. We are also delighted with the expansion of our Volunteer base. This has been a tremendous help and support to the various work strands of ITMB.

Our Capacity Building work has gone from strength to strength with 8 community members graduating from the NOCN accredited Community Development course. We are pleased to report a healthy intake of community members on our new accredited Health and Community Engagement course. Additionally we are equally delighted to share news of a second award with you. Our health project with the Royal Free Hospital has won the **All Party Parliamentary Maternity Care Award 2011 (See further in newsletter)**. It is also a delight to welcome our latest community intern to the organisation Josie O' Driscoll.

Our Policy work has also doubled its output this quarter. A number of briefing papers were produced on Dale Farm, Education, Supplementary Schools and an intensive research project was undertaken which we published this month, **Planning for Gypsies and Travellers: The Impact of Localism**.

Discussions have continued with the European Commission and we have joined forces by extending our coalition to include our colleagues in France. We have submitted our Gypsy and Traveller UK shadow report to UN Committee for the convention on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination (CERD). We will be presenting the report to the committee in late August.

A raucous night was had at the Irish Embassy as they open their doors to the Irish Traveller community to celebrate Gypsy Roma Traveller History month. Entertainment for the evening was provided by the fantastic Doyle family who lifted the roof with a number of jigs and reels and had us all tapping our feet.

ITMB youth group members Stacy Marie Mongan and Bridy Purcell belted out a few numbers and finally the very renowned Sean-nos singer Thomas McCarthy left the crowd wanting for more as he gave us a number of traditional Traveller songs. However competition was in the making for all as the Irish Ambassador himself, Bobby McDonagh took to the floor to sign a traditional Traveller song.

On a sad note, we wish to offer our deepest sympathy and condolences to our colleague here at ITMB, Cassie Marie McDonagh who had a family bereavement this month.

We like to extend a fond farewell to Sean Risdale who is stepping down from his role as Communities and Partnership Development Co-ordinator but we hope to maintain a role with Sean and ITMB on a sessional basis. Along with this, we would like to welcome Jenny Daly as Acting Partnerships Development Officer. Jenny has worked with ITMB previously, and we look forward to working with her again!

Yvonne MacNamara,

Director, ITMB

Policy Corner

Parliamentary launch of ITMB Planning for Gypsies and Travellers report

June saw the Parliamentary launch of ITMB's *Planning for Gypsies and Travellers: The Impact of Localism* report. The launch was well attended with a wide spectrum of individuals and groups participating in the discussion, including community members and representative organisations, NGO's, local planning authorities, academics and the Homes and Communities Agency. The event was chaired by Lord Avebury and speeches made by Andy Slaughter MP and Baroness Whitaker.

The *Planning for Gypsies and Travellers* report found that only 1 out of a 100 councils interviewed in the study believe

the measures in the Localism Bill will make planning for Gypsies and Travellers easier, whilst 55 councils thought it would make provision more difficult. 40 % of councils specifically expressed concerns about increased local opposition to development for Travellers under the Bills proposed community based planning system.

Lord Avebury, Secretary to the All Party Parliamentary Group for Gypsy, Roma and Travellers commented:

There is nothing in the Localism Bill to oblige local authorities to make provision commensurate with the need, or to cooperate with their neighbours where some are manifestly not pulling their weight...This study demonstrates the consequences of proceeding as if

'localism' were an article of faith. There is still time to think again on a matter that is of enormous concern to the most deprived and disadvantaged of all ethnic minorities. Let them at least have somewhere they can live within the law, and let not the Government try to pretend that if they proceed with the Clauses affecting Travellers in the Localism Bill, it will not make their lives even harder.

The Planning for Gypsies and Travellers: The Impact of Localism report concluded that the Government's proposed measures in the Localism Bill and 'light touch' planning policy, *Planning for Traveller Sites* will most likely make the situation for Gypsies and Travellers even worse in terms of insecurity, homelessness, unauthorised development and evictions whilst increasing community tensions.

Government planning rules get even worse...(Gypsy and Traveller sites)

At the same time as he is providing extra funds to Basildon Council to cover the costs of the eviction from Dale Farm, Planning Secretary of State, Eric Pickles, is consulting on new rules 'Planning for Traveller Sites', which will make it even more difficult to get permission. The new rules will leave everything up to Councils, rather than requiring them to plan for new sites. This will give the strongest voice to the prejudices of local settled residents. This will mean more studies and plans and delay.

ITMB has been working closely with other Traveller organisations like FFT,

LGTU, the Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group & the Gypsy Council to show why the new planning rules are a backward step & persuade Ministers of how they could be improved.

Under the threat of a legal challenge, the consultation period has been extended to August 3 & there will be an 'oral hearing' for members of the community to present evidence on their problems in getting somewhere to live. If you are interested in being involved, contact the Policy Team at ITMB.

Please encourage as many community members to attend these consultations and have their voices heard. See all remaining dates

- Monday 1 August (midday – 3pm): Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group, Unit 3, Molyneux Business Park, Whitworth Road, Darley Dale, Nr Matlock, DE4 2HJ
- Tuesday 2 August (11am – 2pm): 5 St Philip's Place, Colmore Row, Birmingham, B3 2PW (Government Building)
- Wednesday 3 August (10am – 4pm): Eland House, Bressenden Place, London, SW1E 5DU (Government Building)

If you would like to attend any of these events, please contact Paul Williams on 0303 444 0000. Please note that in order to arrange visitor passes, we will need names of attendees at least 24 hours before the event. If you would like to attend one of the events but can't give 24 hours notice, please contact Paul Williams as soon as possible.

We have also published an audio version of the consultation, which is available to download from our website at:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/travellersitesconsultation>

ITMB support Ministerial meeting on Traveller Education

In June ITMB supported and coordinated a meeting on the future of Traveller education between schools Minister Nick Gibb, Baroness Janet Whitaker, Lord Tim Boswell and George Howarth MP. The meeting was also attended by a number of Gypsy and Traveller representatives with expertise in education, including ITMB Trustee and education consultant Brian Foster.

Issues such as the impact of the localism agenda on Gypsy, Roma Traveller families and pupils, racist bullying, local authorities becoming champions for vulnerable pupils and elective home education were all discussed. The meeting conclude with Baroness Whitaker, Lord Boswell and George Howarth MP offering to prepare a paper on the issues discussed for the Minister's consideration. ITMB hope that this paper will be followed by more concrete proposals by the Department of Education on addressing the unacceptably low outcomes for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils.

Eviction notices served to residents at Dale Farm after visit of solidarity by Parliamentarians

On Monday July 4th Basildon Council served eviction notices to residents at Dale Farm, resulting in the forced removal of up to 300 residents – mainly women and children – from the UK's largest Travellers site in Cray's Hill, Essex. Despite the efforts and willingness of the Dale Farm residents and supporters to find an amicable solution, Basildon has continued to pursue enforcement action.

Two months before the eviction notices were issued, on April 21 members of the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Gypsy Roma Travellers were included in a cross-party delegation who visited the residents of Dale Farm. The delegation sought to support the search to find a long-term amicable solution in which the site is vacated without the need for a forced eviction and the residents are secured alternative and culturally appropriate accommodation. The visit was organised by the Irish Traveller Movement in Britain (ITMB).

The delegation consisted of APPG Secretary Lord Avebury (Liberal Democrat), Andy Slaughter, MP for Hammersmith (Labour) and Richard Bennett (formerly a Conservative councillor). Alongside the cross-party delegation members were Michael Keaveney, Irish Community Officer for the Irish Embassy and former Secretary General of UNISON Rodney Bickerstaffe.

Delegation members shared serious concerns over the welfare and safety of Dale Farm residents, particularly the children, in the event of a forced eviction. They also agreed that such action by Basildon would exacerbate

and not resolve the issue of Traveller unauthorised sites in the local area and nationally, with approximately 80-90 families from Dale Farm joining the one in five Traveller families (living in caravans) in England who are already homeless.

On completing their visit to Dale Farm the Ad Hoc Group concluded that there were real alternatives to the proposed forced eviction which would result in a sustainable long term and cost efficient solution to the present situation. They agreed that the council should focus on where the Dale Farm residents can **move to** rather than where they should **move from**. The group resolved that alternative pitches would be the most beneficial outcome for **all parties** involved.

horrendous climate of uncertainty and cuts the survival of the forums is paramount for ensuring inclusion of the Traveller communities on local agendas.

ITMB have been taking forward the development of a TIAF in Greenwich (South London) in partnership some of our Traveller Advisory Group members with Traveller stakeholders and local agencies such as Health and Social care, Education and Police.

To promote this ITMB held a launch event hosted for us by the Department of Roma Studies at Greenwich University – this has led to increased consciousness among Greenwich Councillors and others regarding the needs of Gypsies Roma and Travellers in the Borough.

Capacity Building (Youth and Community)

Much of our capacity development and partnership work over the past quarter has been in support of new and developing Interagency Forums in the London Boroughs and continuing partnership work with existing forums.

The Inter Agency Forums have continued to be a very valuable way of bridging the gap between key service providers and the often unheard voice of the Traveller communities. In this

An update from the Community Development Team...

As we've enjoyed over the past few years, June has come to be as enjoyable as it is hectic.

GRTHM 2011 was no exception. Capacity Building and some Advisory Group Members kicked off the month offering some training to the wonderful volunteers at the Foundation for the Study of Sudden Infant Death. Only their commitment and positivity to make it better for others put us at ease around such a heart-breaking topic. Everyone at FSIDS was eager to learn all about Travelling communities and as is the case with so many of these events we had to cut the Q&A short. If your reading

this thinking you would love to learn more about Traveller Communities for yourself or your organisation, direct from the horses mouth then call us on 0207 607 2002 and talk to Grace.

The rest of the month was more celebratory, not least the showbiz launch of the 'Irish Travellers and Maternity Care' DVD in The Tricycle Theatre. Over 50 people enjoyed a delicious buffet and a congratulatory glass of wine for being part of such a successful project. 200 DVDs were given out on the night, as was much praise from the team from ITMB and The Royal Free Hospital, Hampstead that made this project award winning (see more on that later in the newsletter).

Not to be out done by such an illustrious event Hertfordshire Gypsy And Traveller Empowerment Group (GATE) celebrated GRTHM with singing and dancing from the Roma, Gypsy and Irish Traveller communities. Over 90 people watched the performances at Hertford Regional College as ITMB's own Bridy Purcell stole the show with her Irish dancing but she wasn't able to hang around to hear the accolades as she was whisked off like a celeb to dance and sing for the Irish Ambassador!

The glamour didn't stop there as ITMB staff and Advisory members were guests of Southwark Travellers Action Group at the TATE Modern. With a toast of the best orange juice we had ever had, STAG impressed with an excellent DVD which laid bare the truth about Irish Travellers in London in the wake of My Big Fat Gypsy Wedding.

The month has been long but gone fast and everyone involved has had another excellent year. Here's looking to 2012, better start planning soon!



Gypsy, Roma, Traveller History Month...

ITMB were delighted to have The Ambassador of Ireland, HE Mr Bobby McDonagh and his wife Mary, hosting an evening of music song and dance to celebrate Gypsy Roma Traveller History month for the Irish Traveller community.

Several community groups and service providers were in attendance, as well as members of the Travelling community, who entertained all in attendance with renditions of traditional Irish music and song.

A key speaker at the event was Rocky Deens who is founder of GRTHM in Britain. Rocky spoke passionately about the struggles that Travellers are faced with and the importance of the month.

He also spoke the richness of the Traveller culture, and how much song and music it has given to society.

This was displayed in an excellent manner by the Doyle Family who

entertained the crowds with fantastic traditional Irish music.

The rapidly rising star Bridy Purcell gave us a few numbers from her recent appearance in Annie, and the young Tammy Wynette of the Traveller community Stacy Marie Maughan sang some country and western.

Renowned Sean-Nós singer Thomas McCarthy also sang some haunting Sean-Nós songs.

Not to be outdone, the Ambassador took to the stage to sing a tune, and was serious competition for all.



At the awards...

On Monday the 11th a delegation from ITMB went to the Houses of Parliament to be awarded the coveted All Party Parliamentary Group for Maternity. The award for *Best example of involvement of service users in the development and delivery of maternity services* was in recognition of the 2 year project that ITMB and the Royal Free Hospital in Hampstead have been working on. Culminating in a DVD - Irish Travellers and Maternity Care (contact the office for your free copy!)

The project sought to involve the Irish Traveller women in the catchment area of the hospital and in north London generally, to influence the service they

receive themselves. The project was brought about through Pacesetters and at its very core was the ideal – Nothing About Us, Without Us. This phrase influences all the work here at ITMB and the staff, interns and lots of the ITMB regulars embraced the project.

From an accredited first aid course by the British Red Cross to a ward visit the participants learn all about the wide ranging options for the maternity journey.

They also concentrated on being able to share information with their peers to ensure the message about the offer of wide variety maternity services and their importance was spread widely.

As with other ITMB projects this had a two pronged approach and the Traveller women themselves delivered Cultural Awareness training and information sessions which highlighted there were lessons to be learnt by staff at the Royal Free too. The professionals, from receptionists to consultants, and many health practitioners, all embraced the project.

With the DVD, the shared learning and the close bonds and links forged were a brilliant result for all the hard work put in by the project.

The best thing that came of it was a bundle of joy in the shape of an Irish Traveller baby girl delivered at the Royal Free just as the project was coming to an end!

Congratulations to all who were involved.



ESRC Middlesex and ITMB PhD research project...

Since the last update from the research, we have successfully met with the Registration and Ethics Panel at Middlesex University which has approved the outline of the research, and granted full ethical approval for researching with both Traveller adults and children.

The project is now interviewing adult Travellers about their experiences of being either moved on or evicted, and also their experience of living in social housing.

At a later stage the project will arrange interviews with children. We want to give

a comprehensive picture of what it is like to be a Traveller in contemporary England, so the intention is to speak to English and Irish Travellers from different parts of the country. We are looking at East Anglia, the East Midlands, London and the South East. However, if you or anyone else is interested in talking to me about your experiences of being moved on, evicted, or your experiences of living in 'bricks and mortar', please contact the Research Team. We know that Travellers are as busy as any other people, and if you could find the time to talk to our researcher, we will be able to offer a £10 supermarket voucher of your choice as a small token of appreciation. You can contact Tracy at t.mullan@mdx.ac.uk as well as tracymullan@irishtraveller.org.uk

At ITMB, the Capacity Building team have been working closely together on the health booklet which accompanies the Health Training course.

There has also been site visits with ITMB Staff to Dale Farm, and to Cheshunt, where ITMB assisted Travellers in making formal objections to planning proposals to relocate a local authority site to make way for a shopping/leisure/housing project.

We assisted the organisers of the Panel Review on the Impact of the Localism Bill on the Travelling Community. This was held in Parliament in February. The Launch of the subsequent Report in May.

At Middlesex University Tracy passed (with Merit) the Post Graduate Certificate in Research Methods in Social Science.



PQASSO Quality Mark comes to Irish Traveller Movement in Britain

Aiming for level 2 in PQASSO, for Irish Travellers Movement in Britain has definitely been a journey with a few small bumps along the way.

The first step was to identify what was already in place within ITMB. A little bit of tidying up and standardising and we were on our way to working through the Level 1 self assessment.

This was a great opportunity to give us a sturdy foundation to work from, and to identify gaps or weaknesses within the organisation.

Once the self assessment was complete for Level 1, Level 2 self assessment was looked at. At this point, it became apparent that the work we had done for Level 1 was definite foundation for Level 2 with slightly more work to be done.

No challenge would be a challenge if it was all plain sailing, and nothing to get our teeth stuck into. Whilst working through the quality areas, it became evident that the Monitoring and Evaluation area moved at the lowest percentage for completion. It wasn't that ITMB couldn't complete it, or that ITMB didn't meet the indicators, but it always appeared to be the longest one to achieve.

As a team, we discussed this, and all members of staff had an input into where we were going wrong, what we were doing but hadn't managed properly, and highlighting what our

strengths were within this. Gradually, this area became stronger and stronger and has now become an area that we can be proud of as an organisation.

So yes, on the 29th and 30th June 2011, Irish Traveller Movement in Britain achieve **PQASSO Quality Mark in Level 2**, following the recommendation to the Charities Evaluation Services by the PQASSO Peer Reviewer.

Speaking of Irish Traveller Movement in Britain, the PQASSO Peer Reviewer said,

“The Irish Traveller Movement in Britain is an impressive organisation. In a short number of years it has developed into a formidable campaigning and lobbying force. This I would say is down to the focus and drive of its leadership, the professionalism, competence and passion of its staff, the outcomes it achieves for its beneficiaries and the way in which it is so user-centred and focused in all that it does”

To put more scope on our achievement of Level 2 in PQASSO, it was also announced in July 2009, that organisations that achieve the PQASSO Quality Mark at Levels 2 and 3 of PQASSO 3rd Edition would be able to use the Charity Commission's Charity Quality Standards stamp confirming that they are accredited by standards that meet the Hallmarks of an effective charity.

This is a massive achievement for Irish Traveller Movement in Britain, and also a great morale boost for all Staff, Management, Volunteers as well as Service Users!

Well Done ITMB!

Community Corner

Issue 5 July 2011

Hi, my name is Josephine O'Driscoll. I recently started my placement with ITMB as an. I have been involved with ITMB for about a year now, and finished an accredited community development course which I have past.

I have now started a Health Course which I am enjoying very much and of course learning at the same time.

I was involved with organising a GRT History Month event for Hertfordshire (as I live there), with support from the Capacity Building Team at ITMB. We had a great evening with about 90 people attending, with around 60 of them being from the community. It was a great opportunity for the settled

Mountain of misunderstanding between our communities. I appreciate the opportunity ITMB has given me. It has given me a sense of worth knowing I am building my capacity and skill with help and support from ITMB, and has made a big difference in my life!



Notice Board

Congratulations to Lully Cronin and Angele O'Leary who have received their certificates for successfully completing the Train the Trainer qualification accredited through The University of Derby. Pictures to follow next time!

ITMB Annual Conference:

Watch out for details of the ITMB Annual Conference which will be taking place in November at The Resource Centre, Holloway Road.

Updates will be made to our website, www.irishtraveller.org.uk, and in our next issue of the ITMB Wheels in Motion

Classified:

Have you got an something you would like us to advertise for you? Land? Carivan? If there is something, please contact the office, and we can arrange for this advertisement for you in our next newsletter. The content is subject to acceptance.



Buckinghamshire New University and the Child Bereavement Charity are carrying out some research to find out if there is a need for a specialist bereavement support service for Gypsy and Traveller families

We know that the bereavement experiences within Gypsy and Traveller communities are much greater than other communities and that grief can affect the health and wellbeing both physically and emotionally .of adults and children.

Unresolved grief can sometimes be the cause of, extreme tiredness, anxiety, depression and an increase in the use of alcohol, drugs or medication.

Children grieve too, but children's needs are often ignored by adult efforts to protect them. Children can become insecure, withdraw or regress developmentally. Unresolved grief can have long term effects on children, developmentally but also . create some of the problems experienced as adults..

This research will help to see if there is a need for any specialist bereavement support services for Gypsy and Traveller families, and to make sure that any services developed understand and meet the needs of Gypsy and Traveller communities.



Taking part in the research will involve sharing your bereavement experiences. This will mean talking to the researcher in a small group with other bereaved Gypsies and Travellers and /or a one to one interview with the researcher where you will be asked to discuss how the bereavement affected your family and what may have helped your family following the bereavement.

If you would be prepared to help with this research please contact:

Carol Rogers - carol.rogers@bucks.ac.uk

01494 522141 ext 4211 or contact the ITMB team at

info@irishtraveller.org.uk tel: 0207 6072002



Interested in Volunteering?

If you are interested in volunteering, and would like to know more about what volunteering opportunities there are at ITMB, please email info@irishtravellers.org.uk

We are funded by



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If you would like to make any contributions to our next issue or simply to make a comment on this policy newsletter, please get in touch:

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