

# LONDON GYPSY AND TRAVELLER UNIT



**Annual Report 2013**



# Statement Of Purpose

The London Gypsy and Traveller Unit is both a community development and a regional strategic organisation. We seek to support Travellers and Gypsies living in London: to have greater control over their lives; to influence decisions affecting their lives; to improve their quality of life and the opportunities available to them; and to challenge the discrimination they routinely experience. We work with Gypsies and Travellers to use this detailed local and regional experience to contribute to national policy.

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*Scavenger hunt in Victoria Park - Our Youth Work Summer Programme*

## Chair's Introduction

On behalf of the Trustee Board, I am pleased to introduce the 2013 LGTU Annual Report. Stephen Cottle and I took on the role of co-chairs at the beginning of the year and have seen many changes during this period.

We would like to express our immense gratitude to Frieda Schicker who retired as Chief Executive at the end of July after 30 years of hard work. She left us with a thriving and energetic organisation. We now have Debby Kennett and Lorraine Sweeney at the helm, promising to take the organisation to new heights of excellence. Although they share the Chief Executive position, they are still attending to their prior duties of Community Development and Youth Coordinators. Throughout this period of change we have been very fortunate to have a consistent and dedicated board of trustees to provide stability for the organisation.

During the year, staff have continued to keep trustees informed and up to date with interesting presentations demonstrating the breadth of their work such as the self-employment project and the impact



*Staff and trustees summer boat trip to mark Frieda's retirement as CEO*

of the new Scrap Metal dealers Act. The introduction of new welfare reforms is one example of the changes in legislation which are presenting our staff with ongoing challenges whilst ensuring that the work of LGTU is so invaluable to the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities whom they strive to help empower.

That is enough from me!  
Please read on.

Anthea Wormington Co-Chair



# CEO's Report

2013 has been a time of significant change for LGTU, marked by Frieda's retirement from the role as CEO in July. Frieda has continued to support our national policy work and fundraising.

This time of change has been both demanding and exciting as we have settled into our new roles and established a new way of working as joint CEOs. We were very pleased to be in a position to recruit new staff to our youth and community development teams, as well as increasing our admin support. As a staff team, we have taken time this year to celebrate our achievements, reaffirm our purpose, and look forward with a renewed vision.

We have continued to listen and respond to the concerns of Gypsies and Travellers as they face many difficult challenges through changes in Government policy and legislation. Through the resilience of the community, combined with our flexible approach, we are seeing new opportunities emerge and exciting developments in our work which we hope to build on over the next year.

Debby Kennett and Lorraine Sweeney

## Community Development And Campaigning

### Eleanor Street Site Tower Hamlets

It has been a very stressful year for the residents of Eleanor Street site. The construction phase of their new site is now underway after months of delay, the first 8 plots will now move in January 2014 with the remaining families moving later on in the year.



*Site construction underway*

We have continued to support residents with their representation on all aspects of the move. Noise and dust levels have been a big issue for families this year because they have been surrounded by building works, with the new site construction on one side of their homes, and 24 hour a day working on the Crossrail shaft on the other side. Residents successfully negotiated with Crossrail, reaching agreement on compensation for living next to the 24 hour working. This payment will enable families to take some respite from the building works.



*Consultation on the move*

We very much hope that 2014 will see the end to the 10 year long struggle by residents' to secure the successful relocation of their site which will be called Old Willow Close.



*Visit to the first completed pitches*

## Eleanor Street Youth Photo Club

As a positive response to this time of great upheaval for Eleanor Street families, the children and young people have been invited to take part in a yearlong project, where they use photography and video to capture their home life and the changes they are experiencing during this period of disruption and transition.

Over the last 6 months, we have seen some brilliantly artistic as well as informative images produced in our participatory photography club. The project has been designed using the Photo Voice methodology



which builds on the power and potential of photography as a flexible and empowering tool that is accessible, therapeutic and communicative.

During each session the young people follow themes to encourage them to adapt and improve their photography skills. Through workshops, they then discuss their work and talk about why they have chosen particular photos. When the relocation process is finally over, we plan to produce a youth led, vivid and fascinating exhibition of the year's pictures.

*This is a selection of the photo's taken by the young people participating, one also features on our report's front cover*



## Scrap Metal Licence Support and Community Campaign

In early October, Gypsies and Travellers approached us with a great deal of concern about the new Scrap Metal Dealers Act as there was both fear and confusion about how this new law would impact on one of the most common trades in the community. The changes involve a complicated and expensive licensing system, where all scrap metal collectors are now required to apply for a licence from each council they deal in or drive through. Enforcement by the police began on December 1st and many Gypsies and Travellers are facing the loss of their livelihood. We have responded by providing information leaflets and by offering to support people through the licensing process at our



self employment advice sessions. We are gathering evidence on the impact of this new law, through individual case studies along with researching and recording the response from councils. This



*Scrap Metal - evidence gathering*



*Scrap Metal - applying for a license*

will inform a community led campaign in the new year, where we seek to challenge the lack of consultation and ask for an amendment to the law which will more be workable and affordable for both scrap collectors and councils.

## ***Accommodation Advocacy And Advice Service***

Following the implementation of the Welfare Reform Act in March 2013, the accommodation advice team has focused on working with service users who have been greatly affected by the changes. We have been working alongside the Department of Work and Pensions and the Benefit Cap teams in various London boroughs, to assist the members of the Traveller community to learn new skills and gain confidence to manage their own affairs more effectively, as well as making steps towards seeking employment.

Through our discussions with families about the forthcoming change to the on-line administration of benefits, we identified that many adults would be further disadvantaged by poor literacy and a lack of computer skills. We responded to a keen interest in learning computer skills by offering a 6 week pilot computer course in June and July, which was organised in partnership with Hackney Council. This was a great success and we are now running a computer course one morning a week at the Linden Children's Centre in Hackney. The course provides basic computer skills, basic literacy and personal development including exploring options around employment. It is well attended and is officially recognised training for those affected by the benefit cap.



*Hackney Library*



*Hackney Council*



*Literacy class*



We continue to provide advocacy and support for families who live in private rented accommodation and who are facing eviction due to the benefit cap.

We liaise with landlords, housing officers and social services and also identify other agencies to ensure appropriate referrals for Gypsy and Traveller families. Throughout the year we have delivered cultural awareness training to a number of different agencies.

*The AAS Team*

## Self Employment Support Project

Another response to the impact of welfare reform has been our self-employment project. In July we launched the first of our animation films, made in partnership with Plume Animations, called 'How to become self-employed'.

This has been very well received by Gypsies and Travellers and has circulated in local and national networks. Aware of the complexities of individual cases, we are also running weekly advice sessions every Wednesday, where we assist individuals and couples to go through the necessary steps, including registering as Sole Traders, developing interview skills, and dealing with tax returns.



*Still from 'How to become Self Employed'*



*Still from 'How to become Self Employed'*

We are seeing families taking this exciting but scary step into self-employment with determination to overcome some of the obstacles and becoming role models for others who we hope will follow.



# Planning And Policy Work

Our planning work over the last year has mainly consisted of monitoring the implementation of the Government's Planning Policy for Traveller Sites in all the local councils in London, the South East and East of England. The findings of this research have been featured twice in planning magazines.

In addition, we have been responding to consultations on emerging Local Plans across London and the two regions, we have taken part in Examinations in Public and engaged with local authorities in order to influence their planning policies for Gypsy and Traveller site provision. An important part of this work has been the involvement of the Traveller community in the consultation processes and meetings with local councilors and planning officers in a number of Boroughs.

In Hackney, there has been active Traveller involvement in continuing to put pressure on the council to identify land for a new site by attending and speaking at the council's scrutiny commission meeting in October. We also supported Traveller representation at two meetings with the lead cabinet member and senior director to discuss our specific proposals on land for a site. We aim to support Traveller involvement in other borough consultations on their local plans and representation at the EIP's (Examinations in public) where possible.



*Hackney Travellers representatives attending the Scrutiny Commission at Hackney Town Hall*

## Traveller Law Reform Project

Despite insecurities around the funding and future of this work, we have continued to manage TLRP throughout the year. We have also been working in partnership with other agencies to secure more funding and establish a clear direction and new management arrangements for this important area of work. Secretariat support for the All Party Parliamentary Group on Gypsies, Roma and Travellers (APPG) has continued along with important liaison role with parliamentarians and other agencies nationally.

## Media

We have actively sought to feature our planning work in both national and local media. We have briefed 'Inside Housing' and 'Planning Today', both widely read, and developed an effective relationship with the journalists, resulting in (mostly) accurate reporting several times during the year. Local press continue to contact us regularly, giving further opportunity to explain the Government's part in the lack of authorised sites.



*Hackney Travellers with Colin O'Brien*

ment by Eric Pickles (Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government) issuing guidance for councils to use enforcement powers and clamp down on illegal encampments. This was repeated throughout the day and lead to requests from other media.

In June, the Hackney Gazette featured the launch of a photographic exhibition and book called 'Travellers' children in London Fields' by Colin O'Brien. Those Hackney Travellers who went to the event, had themselves lived on unauthorised camps in and around London Fields during the 1980's and were fascinated by the old photos of families they knew.

In August, Frieda was interviewed on Sky News in response to the announce-

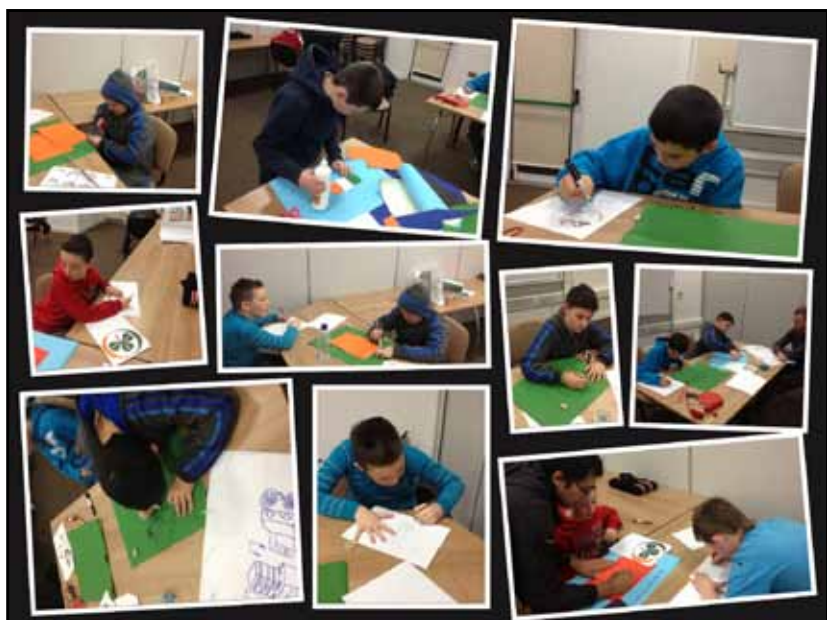


*Frieda at the launch of 'Travellers' Children in London Fields'*

## Group Work

The **Hackney Boys Group** worked on a group banner in the lead up to **Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month** (GRTHM). The idea came about whilst we were having group discussions about culture and positive role models. The group expressed that they don't like being in a setting that felt like school and thought that making a banner would be the best way for the group to express who they are creatively, where words are not so necessary. The banner was made up of a collage using various materials and images chosen by the boys to represent themselves and their culture. The project focussed on positive imagery and fostered the engagement of progressive discussions. The boys all worked hard, learning different skills which contributed to the success of the project.

The diagram, titled "Architecture of Global Workflow", illustrates a hierarchical organizational structure. At the top is a single node. This node branches into two nodes in the second level. Each of these two nodes further branches into two nodes in the third level, resulting in four nodes. Each of these four nodes branches into two nodes in the fourth level, resulting in eight nodes. Each of these eight nodes branches into two nodes in the fifth level, resulting in sixteen nodes. Each of these sixteen nodes branches into two nodes in the sixth level, resulting in thirty-two nodes. Each of these thirty-two nodes branches into two nodes in the seventh level, resulting in sixty-four nodes. Each of these sixty-four nodes branches into two nodes in the eighth level, resulting in one hundred and twenty-eight nodes. The diagram is presented in a light blue, semi-transparent style.



***Hackney Boys Group working on ideas for banner for GRTHM***



***Hackney Boys Group working on banner for GRTM***

The **Haringey Group** got off to a slow start, but is progressing well. The mixed group of boys and girls have been participating in a range of activities from arts and craft, sports, cooking, boxing, etc. The lead youth worker has established a good working partnership with Haringey Youth Service and they have a lot of exciting projects in the pipeline for the group in the near future.



### *Haringey Group motor cycle project*



## Achievement

The **Hackney Girls Group** won a sum of money from 'Media for Development' for a film they had made last year. After some deliberation on how the money should be spent, the girls decided that instead of spending the money just on the group, they all agreed that they would like to give something back that would benefit others. A number of the girls know of somebody who has suffered from cancer at one

time or another, so they chose to use some of the money to register to take part in a 5k run to raise funds for cancer research. In Finsbury Park on the 22nd June, six girls completed the 5k 'Race for Life' and raised £375 pounds. The first girl finished in 50 minutes and the last in 1hr 20mins. The girls were all pleased with the achievement and vowed to do the 10k run next year for this valuable and much needed research.



*Hackney Girls Group 'Race for Life' in Finsbury Park*

## Young People's Training

We have re-established our **young men's** training after a short break. The training kicked off with some very enterprising ideas. Untapped avenues of work for the young men were explored, focusing on the wedding industry and all the various jobs involved in the lead up and execution of the big

day: from catering to photography, DJ'ing to videography. The young men did their research to find out a breakdown of all the costs involved, which enthused the group into finding out what it would take to get more involved in this as a career alternative. They had some photography and DJ tuition that really fired their imagination. During the latter part of the year, the group expanded, therefore altering the dynamics, so we have worked on team building, effective communication and preparing the young men for our prospective construction taster sessions that we plan to start early in the new year.



*Young Men's Training*

The **young women** worked very hard throughout the year preparing for their City and Guilds Adult Literacy and Numeracy exams. They remained focused the whole time and as a result two women passed literacy, highest mark 77.5%, and two passed numeracy, highest result 82.5%. The young women did not think that it was possible to gain a qualification and are over the moon with their achievements. Now that they know that they are more than capable they are keen to progress to the next stage.



*Young Women's Training*

## Summer Programme

In August we delivered another fun filled, two week summer programme. Over 50 young people attended and had a great time. Activities ranged from: cooking, wheelchair basketball, orienteering, arts & crafts, nature scavenger hunt, music workshop, where young people learnt to play instruments, t-shirt printing, and street dancing. One of the highlights of the summer programme was a day spent with 'LetsRoll', an organisation that provides taster roller skating sessions. The day entailed teaching the young people how to skate and then ended in a roller disco where they took part in a range of fun games. We were proud of the willpower of the young people who were determined to learn to skate at all costs. Thankfully the session ended without any broken bones - a day truly to be remembered!



*'Letsroll' getting ready for roller disco*

## Finance - Summary Of Income And Expenditure

Here follows a summary of the London Gypsy and Traveller Units' financial activities for the year ended March 2013 taken from our signed-off audited accounts which can be found lodged with the Charity Commission and Companies House.

London Gypsy and Traveller Unit					
Statement of Financial Activities (Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account) for the Year Ended 31 March 2013					
	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	31.3.13 Total funds £	31.3.12 Total funds £
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>					
<b>Incoming resources from generated funds</b>					
Voluntary income	2	11,877	355,304	367,181	264,760
Investment income	3	212	-	212	173
<b>Total incoming resources</b>		<b>12,089</b>	<b>355,304</b>	<b>367,393</b>	<b>264,933</b>
<b>RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>					
<b>Charitable activities</b>					
Direct Costs	4	-	197,017	197,017	175,376
Support Cost		19,516	88,142	107,658	98,309
Governance costs	6	-	13,198	13,198	10,215
<b>Total resources expended</b>		<b>19,516</b>	<b>298,357</b>	<b>317,873</b>	<b>283,900</b>
<b>NET INCOMING/(OUTGOING) RESOURCES BEFORE TRANSFERS</b>					
		(7,427)	56,947	49,520	(18,967)
<b>Gross transfers between funds</b>	13	41,302	(41,302)	-	-
<b>Net incoming/(outgoing) resources</b>		<b>33,875</b>	<b>15,645</b>	<b>49,520</b>	<b>(18,967)</b>
<b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS</b>					
<b>Total funds brought forward</b>		<b>19,531</b>	<b>67,091</b>	<b>86,622</b>	<b>105,589</b>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>		<b>53,406</b>	<b>82,736</b>	<b>136,142</b>	<b>86,622</b>



## Staff List

Frieda Schicker  
Debby Kennett

Lorraine Sweeney

Celine Gleeson  
Geraldine Lindsay  
Lisa Smith  
Clemmie James  
Tracie Giles  
Errol Francis  
Tom Smith  
Sadia Mirza  
Fitzroy Campbell  
Sue Monaghan  
Shane Rowles  
Malcolm Swallow  
Ilinca Diaconescu  
Gill Brown

CEO until 31st July 2013  
Joint CEO from 1st August 2013  
Community Development Coordinator  
Joint CEO from 1st August 2013  
Youth Coordinator  
Accommodation Advice  
Accommodation Advice  
Accommodation Advice  
Community Development  
Community Development  
Youth  
Youth until February 2013  
Youth from March 2013  
Youth from July 2013  
Admin  
Resources  
Finance  
Planning Policy  
Media and Traveller Law  
Reform Project



*Youth Summer Programme*



*Wheelchair basketball - Youth Summer Programme*

## Consultants

Richard Lee  
Frieda Schicker

Planning  
National Policy and Fundraising

## Volunteers

With many thanks  
to our volunteers  
this year.

Khristine Esan  
Nathan Whitfield  
Daniel Palmer  
Jane Coshier  
Emma Milne  
Nalder Edwards  
Roni Fraser



*Music Workshop - Youth Summer Programme*



*Youth Summer Programme*

## Board Of Trustees

Anthea Wormington (Co-Chair)  
Stephen Cottle (Co-Chair)  
Stephen Garvey (Treasurer)  
Loughlin Scully  
Bill Forrester  
Jane Andrews  
Marian Mahoney  
Christine Cawley  
Paul Smyth  
Kathleen Maughan



*Youth Summer Programme*

## 2013 - 2014 Funders

Esmee Fairbairn  
Hackney Council  
Hackney Learning Trust  
Irish Government Emigrant  
Support Programme  
Jack Petchey  
Lloyds TSB Foundation  
Oak Foundation  
The Henry Smith Charity  
Travellers Aid Trust  
Trust for London  
Tudor Trust

*If you would like further copies of  
our Annual Report please contact us  
or go to our website where it can be  
viewed or downloaded as a PDF.*



*Baking Workshop - Youth Summer Programme*



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