

LONDON GYPSY AND TRAVELLER UNIT



Annual Report 2016



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 them; to improve their quality of life and the opportunities available to them; 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.

Chair's Introduction

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, we are pleased to introduce the highlights of our work in the 2016 LGTU Annual Report. We have been delighted to share the position of co-chair this year. We have also been fortunate enough to recruit new trustees with a variety of expertise and energy who have been very active in the governance of the organisation. As joint chief executives, Debby Kennett and Lorraine Sweeney have consistently introduced new ideas which promise to improve the running of the organisation. The search for funding, as always, is an ongoing struggle, which we strive to stay on top of.



Dosta Grinta - Enough is Enough - rally 21 May

We are proud of the thriving and energetic organisation we represent. During the year the staff have continued to work incredibly hard and kept the trustees informed, and up to date, with interesting presentations demonstrating the breadth of their work. As ever, changes in legislation have presented our staff with ongoing challenges, proving more and more that the work and level of commitment of all LGTU staff is so invaluable to the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities whom they strive to help empower. We look forward to 2017 and the new challenges that Brexit will bring!

Anthea Wormington and Marion Mahoney Co Chairs

CEO's Report

Celebrating our achievements over the past year is crucial to sustaining our vision in the current political climate for Gypsies and Travellers. It was exciting to see our young people joining the protests that took place this year, gaining more confidence as young leaders. The refurbishment of our office has improved our working environment and has enabled us to open our new HUB. We successfully achieved the renewal of our PQASSO Quality Mark for another three years, which comes with the endorsement of the Charity Commission. We were also delighted to be awarded 'highly commended' by the UK Housing Awards for our 'We STILL count' campaign

It is a continual challenge to raise the necessary funds to ensure that we not only stay afloat, but are sustainable for the future. One important fundraising success this year was the Local Sustainability Fund grant. This has given us funds to invest in our organisational development to enable us to sustain our vision. After much debate on a name change, we have decided to simply drop 'unit' from our name and become 'London Gypsies and Travellers'. We are excited about the prospect of launching our new website and new logo in the spring of 2017.

Debby Kennett and Lorraine Sweeney Joint CEOs

The HUB

In last year's report we described our plans to establish a community drop-in space. Sure enough, in September we opened the HUB on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, taking advantage of our newly refurbished front office. Community members have been dropping in to make phone calls, use computers and access information. The HUB has got off to a great start thanks to the involvement of a community member as a friendly welcoming face. Acting as a great role model, Mena Mongan has created a relaxed and supportive environment for people to grow in confidence in managing their own affairs. We expect to see the HUB go from strength to strength over the coming year, and that the information we provide will encourage people to get more involved in our programmes and campaigns.



Homes

Campaigning for culturally suitable homes

Campaigns

2016 – a year of protest

From the moment the Housing and Planning Bill was proposed, Gypsies and Travellers around the country began to work together to challenge the government's latest attempt to side-line their cultural needs. The Bill removed the requirement on councils to carry out assessments of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs. This backward step will make the future delivery of sites even less likely.

Building on the success of the '**We STILL Count**' campaign in 2015, we brought together Gypsy and Traveller activists and joined forces with the 'Kill the Housing Bill' Coalition. We also worked with Gill Brown (secretariat for the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller All-Party Parliamentary Group) on proposed amendments as they were debated in the House of Lords.

On the 13th of March LGTU activists, staff and trustees marched and sang their way to Westminster demanding to 'Kill the Housing Bill'! It was inspiring to see Gypsies and Travellers marching alongside thousands of others and to hear Lisa Buttigieg join the stage to give a passionate speech about the future of Gypsy and Traveller rights.



'Kill the Housing bill' protest 13th March

We were also actively involved in the community-led rally on the 21st of May called *Dosta Grinta! - Enough is Enough!* LGTU activists joined their voices with other Gypsy and Traveller campaigners at the rally in Parliament Square. Horses and wagons led the march to Downing Street, where a small group of young people handed in a petition to the government. The petition expressed the community's strong feelings about harmful changes to the definition of Gypsies and Travellers in planning law. We all agreed that our group of campaigners was by far the loudest!

Accommodation Advice and Advocacy

London's housing crisis continues to have a huge impact on the Traveller community. A high proportion of families we support are in unsuitable and insecure accommodation due to soaring private rents, lack of social housing and the extreme shortage of available pitches. We are also seeing an increase in the number of families living on roadside encampments. Over the past year, 48% of work by our accommodation advice team has been with families threatened with eviction and homelessness. Our experience shows that with appropriate support, individuals gain the skills and confidence to navigate the system more independently thus avoiding further housing crisis. We provide this support through one to one advice sessions and through the HUB where community members can manage their affairs in a supportive environment.

Planning Policy Work

In July we held a half-day seminar to launch our report '*Planning for the Accommodation Needs of Gypsies and Travellers in London*', which covered our planning policy work over the last 4 years. The event brought together over 30 participants from the Gypsy and Traveller community, support organisations, local authorities and elected representatives. Participants discussed the challenges of providing culturally suitable accommodation in light of national policy and legislation changes, best practice examples of times when Gypsies and Travellers have taken part in planning processes, and the opportunities that exist to propose inclusive and fair policy ideas to the new Mayor of London.

Goals 2017- Homes

- ❖ Develop the HUB for independent use and to increase community involvement
- ❖ Campaign for the inclusion of GT accommodation needs in the London Plan and local policies

Work

Creating pathways into training, employment and supporting traditional skills

Step Forward Project

IT and literacy training

We have continued to run weekly training sessions in Basic IT and Literacy for women. As well as gaining these important skills, we have seen many of our trainees gain the confidence to take steps towards further training, paid employment and self employment.

A member of the Roma Community who attend our AGM last year was inspired by the women's achievements and wanted Roma women to get involved too. Hackney Council offered to fund a pilot course for Roma women, and this has proved to be a huge success. Our sessions always include discussion and tasks to improve people's skills in both speaking and writing. The women take part in the training with great enthusiasm and commitment. As a result one woman felt confident to take her 'Life in the UK' residence test, and was delighted to be successful.



Roma Women IT and Literacy Training

Practical skills and self employment workshops

This year we have worked with Sherrie Smith, a Romany Gypsy Florist, to introduce women to Floristry and self-employment. After a couple of taster sessions, Sherrie ran a six week course to equip a group of young women with some basic floristry skills as well as to give them an understanding of what is needed to start a business from home.



Floristry Workshop and Self-employment Workshop

Sherrie Smith led brilliantly artistic sessions where the women experimented with different styles and brought their own personal flair to each arrangement. They all produced beautiful work and showed interest and enthusiasm in how they could take floristry further. The business element of the course allowed them to develop greater understanding of market research, promoting products, and using social media to support your new business and sell your product. This combination of creative skills as well as business skills was hugely valued by the women. We are hoping to run more courses in 2017 and 2018 along the same lines.

Young people's training

The young women completed an 8 week OCN (Open College Network) accredited training programme covering employability and social skills. The aim of the project was for the young women to discover and recognise more about themselves, gain new skills and raise their confidence and self esteem. The programme involved exploring their own individual learning styles and strengths and weaknesses. They set personal goals, wrote CVs and role played interviews and presentations. The training enabled them to embrace choice, make decisions and pursue their aspirations.

'I learnt how to do a CV and write a personal statement; even though some of the things was hard I still managed to do them. I feel more confident now that I know a bit more about myself. I learned that I am very creative.'

Goals 2017- Work

- ❖ To develop practical skills training and support with self-employment
- ❖ To widen access to IT and Literacy training
- ❖ To develop the use of the HUB to increase employability skills

Young Voices

Creating a safe place where young people believe in themselves and make informed choices

Young People's Training

Democracy and Campaigning

As part of their social justice theme, the young women looked at the Housing and Planning Bill and its future impact on Gypsies and Travellers. This raised strong feelings and opinions which led to much discussion, exploring why the group believed the proposals were unjust. They considered what could be done about it by learning more about campaigning and looking at past social movements such as the Suffragettes, exploring what motivated these groups of people to get together to bring about social change. It was important for the young people to examine themselves and what might hold them back from standing up and speaking out on issues that concern them and their community.

The young people had the opportunity to witness campaigning in action as they took part in the 'Kill the Housing Bill' protest in March. They were amazed to be among the thousands of people marching to parliament. They absolutely loved it, quickly overcoming their reservations. They expressed a strong sense of pride, proudly waving banners as young Travellers, campaigning for their rights.



Kill the Housing Bill 13 March

Group Work

The girls group took part in an exciting project, 'Dragons Den meets the Apprentice'. Working in small groups they designed a product, undertook market research and planned activities to promote and market their products. The girls came up with a range of innovative ideas for their products. The four successful groups of finalists presented their products to our board of trustees in July, who acted as 'Dragons'. The girls all did very well and the Trustees were impressed with the quality of their ideas and their confidence levels when delivering their presentations.



Summer Programme



Summer Programme Cookery Workshop

Over 60 young people aged 8 to 14 registered onto our fun-packed two week summer programme in August. Activities were creative, educational and fun, ranging from drama workshops (delivered by Arcola Theatre), Street Dance, and visits to a range of museums and local community events. As always, the young people embraced all the new opportunities with great energy and enthusiasm

Goals 2017- Young Voices

- ❖ To establish the young Travellers' **BE Active** Project
- ❖ To provide mentoring for emerging young leaders

Equality

Strengthening the voice of London's Gypsies and Travellers to gain recognition and inclusion

London Gypsy and Traveller Forum

2016 London elections

The key focus of the London Gypsy and Traveller Forum this year was to seek dialogue with prospective Mayoral candidates and assembly members and support Gypsy and Traveller engagement in the 2016 London elections.

We developed a London Gypsy and Traveller manifesto, setting out the key collective concerns of the community. The manifesto was a culmination of the work of the London Forum members, covering the main themes of health, education, accommodation and employment. The manifesto put forward a number of recommendations and demands for the new Mayor and London Assembly to consider.



London Forum meeting prior to the Mayoral election

In March, prior to the Mayoral election, we held a Forum to present our Gypsy and Traveller manifesto to the representatives of the four main Mayoral candidates and ask them to respond. The discussion we prompted was lively and a good opportunity for members of the community to give evidence to politicians on their experiences. As a result, we produced a short film to raise awareness of the importance of voting and encourage more Gypsies and Travellers to have their say about the future of London. In the weeks leading up to the election, we shared the film - along with information about how to vote - through our social media networks, and during our training and accommodation advice sessions. The new London Mayor and his administration gives us a significant opportunity to increase the inclusion of Gypsies and Travellers in London-wide policy making.

Challenging the Mayor of Newham on racist remarks



Newham Travellers at a meeting with the Mayor

In September we finally welcomed an overdue public apology from Sir Robin Wales, the Mayor of Newham, in response to our complaint earlier in the year. We were shocked when in March an exchange of racist remarks about the Gypsy and Traveller community was reported between the Mayor and Deputy Mayor at the council's cabinet meeting. We supported Newham Traveller representatives to raise the issue at a meeting with the Mayor and he agreed to publicly apologise. We will continue to hold the Mayor to account on his commitments which includes the protection of the Parkway Crescent site, along with a full review of the accommodation needs of all Gypsies and Travellers living in the borough.

Goals 2017 - Equality

- ❖ Launch campaign to challenge prejudice and public perceptions
- ❖ Campaign for inclusion of GTs in the Mayor's Equality Framework and other strategies
- ❖ Work with the community on issues of gender equality

Finance - Summary Of Income And Expenditure

Here follows a summary of the London Gypsy and Traveller Units' financial activities for the year ended March 2016 taken from our signed-off audited accounts. Our full accounts are 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 2016

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted fund £	31.3.16 Total funds £	31.3.15 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations	2	7,255	310,246	317,501	316,737
Investment income	3	169	-	169	182
Total		7,424	310,246	317,670	316,919
EXPENDITURE ON					
Charitable activities	4				
Direct Costs		-	7,932	7,932	8,326
Support Cost		4,503	289,949	294,452	309,442
Other		-	6,960	6,960	7,764
Total		4,503	304,841	309,344	325,532
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		2,921	5,405	8,326	(8,613)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		38,196	68,527	106,723	115,336
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		41,117	73,932	115,049	106,723

CONTINUING OPERATIONS

All income and expenditure has arisen from continuing activities.

Staff

Celine Gleeson	Accommodation Advice
Clemmie James	Community Development
Debby Kennett	Joint CEO Community Development Coordinator
Fitzroy Campbell	Youth Worker
Ilinca Diaconescu	Policy
Geraldine Lindsay	Accommodation Advice
Lisa Smith	Admin Support
Lorraine Sweeney	Joint CEO Youth Coordinator
Mena Mongan	Admin from August
Shane Rowles	Resources
Sue Monaghan	Admin until August
Tracie Giles	Community Development



Staff away day September 2016

Volunteers

With many thanks to our volunteers this year.

Sara Pedro Rego
Kieran Devine
Nalder Edwards
Emma Milne
Bonnie Smith
Justine Ferreira
Anna Bazley

Financial Services - Malcolm Swallow

IT Services - Steve Rose

Sessional Workers - Philip Taitt, Cal McCullough, Jason McCarthy



Funders 2016 - 2017

BBC Children in Need
Irish Government Emigrant
Support Programme
LB Hackney
LB Tower Hamlets
Local Sustainability Fund
The Henry Smith Charity
The Mercers' Company
Trust for London
Tudor trust
Wakefield Tetley Trust



AN ROINN GNÓTHAÍ EACHTRACHA AGUS TRÁDÁLA
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE



the
Tudor trust

The
Henry Smith
Charity
founded in 1628


Trust for London
Tackling poverty and inequality

Supported by

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in Need
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& Wales no. 802052 and Scotland
no. SC156547

 Hackney

Board Of Trustees

Anthea Wormington (Co-chair)
Marian Mahoney (Co-chair)
Stephen Cottle
Paul Smyth
Mena Mongan until April 2016
Andy Wilson until March 2016
Sarah Taylor
Tunji Makanju from April 2016
Tessa Buchanan from July 2016
Claire Cooper from July 2016

THE WAKEFIELD & TETLEY TRUST

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