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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GYPSY AND TRAVELLER OFFICERS

7th National Conference

Delivering Services for Gypsies and Travellers

Increasing Inclusion and Improving Healthcare

Thursday 14th May 2009, Inmarsat Conference Centre, London EC1

Delegate Guide

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7th National Conference

Delivering Services for Gypsies and Travellers

Increasing Inclusion and Improving Healthcare

Foreword

Dear delegate,

Around a quarter of Gypsies and Travellers in this country do not have authorised sites on which to stop, and it has been suggested that as little as one square mile of land would resolve the problem. At the same time, Gypsies and Travellers experience extensive inequalities in healthcare and education that lead to shorter, more deprived lives.

For the seventh year running, Neil Stewart Associates have partnered with NAGTO (National Association of Gypsy and Traveller Officers) to bring together local authorities, health and education professionals, and other associated stakeholders. Delegates will discuss how more sites can be provided, services improved, and community relations bettered.

The event is supported by Communities and Local Government (CLG), Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), Department of Health and Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC).

Thank you for attending, and we hope you get a lot out of the conference.

Dion Watts
Account Executive

Research and Development – Local Government
Neil Stewart Associates

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7th National Conference

Delivering Services for Gypsies and Travellers

Increasing Inclusion and Improving Healthcare

Agenda

(Subject to change)

09:00 Registration, refreshments and exhibition

Session one: Setting the Scene

09:50 Introduction by conference chair
Bill Forrester, *Chairman*, NAGTO

10:00 Keynote Address:
Stuart Hoggan, *Director of Local Democracy and Participation*, Communities and Local Government

10:30 Comprehensive Area Assessment - How well do local public services meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers?
Joanna Dooher, *Head of Diversity*, Audit Commission

10:50 Interim Provision – filling the gap between accommodation needs assessments and local development frameworks
Cllr Richard Bennett, *Gypsy and Traveller Task Group*, Local Government Association

11:10 Responsibilities of the new homes and communities agency
Richard Hill, *Director of Investment and Renewal*, Homes and Communities Agency

11:30 View from the traveller community
Helena Kiely, *Youth Community Officer*, London Gypsy and Traveller Unit

11:40 Questions and Discussion

11:50 Refreshments, networking and exhibition

Session two: Improving Health and Social Wellbeing

12:15 Partnership working to improve the health status of Gypsies and Travellers
Raymond Warburton, *NHS Change Programmes*, *Equality and Human Rights Group,* Department of Health

12:35 Improving education and social inclusion
Sue Green, *Team Manager,* Durham Ethnic Minority & Traveller Achievement Service

12:55 View from the gypsy community
Joe Jones, *Chairman*, Canterbury Gypsy and Traveller Support Group

13:05 Best practice case study: Northamptonshire Countywide Traveller Unit
Steve Wilkinson, *Manager*, Northamptonshire Countywide Traveller Unit
Val Dumbleton, *Public Health Specialist for Gypsies and Traveller*
Northamptonshire Countywide Traveller Unit

13:25 Tackling inequalities for gypsies and travellers – view from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)
Emily Brothers, *Head of Policy for Communities and Local Government*
Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)

13:35 Questions and Discussion

13:45 Lunch, exhibition and networking

Session three: Delivering and Managing Sites and Services

14:45 Security of Tenure (Housing and Regeneration Act 2008)
Melanie Sturtevant, *Policy Adviser, Gypsy and Traveller Unit*, Communities and Local Government

15:05 Local authority partnerships with RSLs
Mellissa Marshall, *Traveller Liaison Officer*, Luminus Group
Kelly Bath, *Site resident,* Huntingdonshire Gypsy Site

15:25 Working together to get back to work
Carolyn Taylor, *District Manager for Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire*
Jobcentre Plus

15:45 Representing Dale Farm
Ruth Barnett, *Consultant*, UK Peace Federation

15:55 Questions and Discussion

Session four: Seminars 16:05 – 16:55

Delegates should choose to attend one seminar from the list of four below. Places are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis and are subject to maximum capacities. Afternoon refreshments will be served in breakout rooms.

1) Local conflict resolution best practice
Mark Watson, *Inspector*, *Head of Diversity Advisory Unit*, Cheshire Police
SEMINAR LOCATION: Alexander Graham Bell Suite

2) Ensuring access to specialist legal advice for gypsies and travellers
Chris Johnson, *Partner*, Community Law Partnership
SEMINAR LOCATION: Copernicus Suite

3) Site design good practice
Cllr Ric Pallister OBE, *Deputy Leader & Executive Member for Housing, Environmental Health, Social Inclusion & Benefits*, South Somerset District Council
SEMINAR LOCATION: Constellation Suite (Main Room)

4) Innovation in Gypsy & Traveller Site Provision
Caroline Keightley, *Team Leader, Gypsy and Traveller Unit,* Homes and Communities Agency
SEMINAR LOCATION: Isaac Newton Suite

16:55 Close of Conference

Speaker Biographies

Biographies are shown in alphabetical order by surname

Ruth Barnett
Consultant
UK Peace Federation

Ruth Barnett came to the UK with her brother from Berlin in 1939 in the Kindertransport. She has worked as a teacher, as a psychotherapist, and as an educator in many settings. She speaks with groups in schools and colleges about the Holocaust and in this way help us to prevent more atrocities. Ruth works with the Holocaust Education Trust to raise awareness of past and present genocides for diverse audiences. Her work has led her to become involved in addressing the many challenges faced by Travellers.

Kelly Bath
Site Resident
Huntingdonshire Gypsy Site

Kelly Bath has been a resident of the St Neots Caravan Park for 10 years. As an adult Kelly went 'back to school' in order to improve her life prospects. She was successful in winning a National Adult Learners award in 2007. She now works at the local primary school as a teaching assistant and runs the lunchtime "Travellers Club". She works tirelessly to improve the perception and understanding of Gypsy and Traveller culture, involving her three young sons in the Romany Theatre Company. She exposes them to various external activities in order to improve their life choices. She is working with Mellissa Marshall in Traveller education and the local Community College in an attempt to improve the take-up of High School vocational training by young people from the Traveller community.

Cllr Richard Bennett
Gypsy and Traveller Task Group
Local Government Association

Richard Bennett was trained as a schoolmaster and began his working life as a teacher of Chemistry. In 1987, he gave up teaching and began establishing himself as a successful businessman. He now owns a small chain of children's day nurseries. Also in 1987, he was first elected as a councillor. From 1991 – 2001 he was leader of the majority group of Reigate & Banstead Borough Council.

Since stepping down from the leadership, Richard has been very active at the LGA being:

A member of the Strategy & Finance Committee since 2001
Vice-chairman of the Urban Commission from 2001 – 2004
A board member of Lacors since May 2005.

Richard has also led 3 major projects for the LGA:

The first, which was published in July 2003 entitled 'Tackling Pockets of Deprivation', lead to a change in the way in which government funded areas of deprivation.
The second, published in February 2005, looked into the future of road pricing and is seen as a leading paper in the debate over how we tax the motorist and road usage.
The third, published in June 2006, investigate the current shortfall in provision for Gypsies & Travellers and is seen, along with the report from CRE, as leading the debate over treatment of unauthorised encampments and developments and the need to provide equally for all sections of society.

Richard was also a member of the CLG's Gypsy and Traveller Enforcement Task Group. He served as a councillor for 21 years and stepped down in May 2008 however he was reelected in April 2009.

Emily Brothers
Head of Policy for Communities and Local Government
Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)

Having worked in the equality field as a senior manager and board member, Emily Brothers has a breadth of leadership experience. Emily is currently EHRC's Head of Policy for Local Government and Communities – focusing on civic participation, leadership and performance. Emily leads EHRC's policy work on gypsies and travellers which has recently involved the publication of research findings and recommendations for meeting accommodation needs and tackling inequalities. Emily managed DRC's Leadership Strategy and a range of special projects – including the joint programme of work between British and Irish equality and human rights bodies. This collaborative work contributed to EHRC's creation in 2007. Prior to joining DRC in 2000, Emily was responsible for policy and development with GLAD from 1990 to 1994. Between 1994 and 2000, she was responsible for RNIB's UK-wide post-16 education and employment services

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Joanna Dooher
Head of Diversity
Audit Commission

As head of diversity for the Audit Commission Joanna's role is to ensure that the work of the commission is focussed on assessing how well local public services meet the needs groups and individuals who may be subject to prejudice and discrimination. Tackling inequality, disadvantage and discrimination is an underpinning theme of Comprehensive Area Assessment which is the Audit Commission's new product for assessing all public services in local areas. Joanna has had a long and wide ranging history of championing diversity and developing appropriate services for different communities; from homeless hostels to sports and community development, neighbourhood renewal and regeneration. Prior to coming to the Audit Commission, she was Head of Community Partnerships for Leicester City Council. She is the company director of the Emerald Centre in Leicester, which serves the communities of Northfields, Hamilton, the Irish Community and Gypsies and Irish Travellers.

Val Dumbleton
Public Health Specialist for Gypsies and Traveller
Northamptonshire Countywide Traveller Unit

Public health specialist for Gypsies and Travellers in Northamptonshire and works for Northamptonshire Teaching PCT, which has a service level agreement with the Countywide Traveller Unit. Val trained in Wakefield as an orthopaedic and general nurse, was staff nurse on male medical, and did a postgraduate course in burns at East Grinstead before becoming Sister of the burns unit in Wakefield. Val then trained as a health visitor at Leeds University in 1967/68 and remained as a health visitor until 1992 when she became responsible for health inequalities in travellers and other ethnic groups in Northamptonshire. Val did a module in genetics at Oxford University and was involved in the Sheffield research project in the status of health of Gypsies and Travellers published in 2004. Val now heads up health for Gypsies and Travellers in Northamptonshire and trains all the nursing students at Northampton University in their history and culture.

Bill Forrester
Chairman
NAGTO

Bill has been head of the Gypsy and Traveller Unit for Kent County Council since 1989, within the Adult Social Services Directorate. The Unit manages 8 local authority sites in Kent and manages the response to unauthorised encampments on County Council land in Kent. Between 2003 and 2005, Bill was on secondment to the office of the Deputy Prime Minister during their policy review on Gypsy and Traveller issues, which made big changes to law, policy and practice.

Bill chairs NAGTO, is vice-chair of the Traveller Education lobbying charity ACERT, and is treasurer and a director of the London Gypsy and Traveller Unit (LGTU). He has chaired the Neil Stewart Conferences on this subject for a number of years. He also manages day services for people with mental health issues, and has a keen interest in supporting those, who face barriers, to become more independent and, wherever possible, access employment.

Sue Green
Team Manager
Durham Ethnic Minority & Traveller Achievement Service

Sue has over 30 years teaching experience across all phase of education. Almost 10 of them have been working with Gypsy, Roma & Travellers. She has published work and has very recently co-written an education pack called '*Out of Site'*, for teachers and youth workers with Show Racism the Red Card. She is currently working part-time as team manager for Durham Ethnic Minority & Traveller Achievement Service. Sue also has a Consultancy & Training business called Sue Green Equality which provides Race Equality consultancy and training to a range of organisations and businesses.

Richard Hill
Director of Investment and Renewal
Homes and Communities Agency

Richard Hill is the corporate director for Investment and Renewal at the Homes and Communities Agency. He joined the organisation from the Housing Corporation, where he was director of Investment since January 2005. He successfully steered two investment rounds of the National Affordable Housing Programme during that period, and the £8.5 billion Programme for 2008-10 is set to deliver a further 145,000 homes.

His previous roles include head of strategy and policy at the health worker training body the NHS University and head of policy and public affairs at good causes distributor the New Opportunities Fund, a precursor to the Big Lottery Fund.

Stuart Hoggan
Director of Local Democracy and Participation
Communities and Local Government

Stuart Hoggan is the acting director for Local Democracy and participation in the Department for Communities and Local Government. Previously he was head of the Local Government Strategy and Research Unit where he has been responsible for the White Paper, *Communities in Control: real people, real power*; overall implementation of *Strong and Prosperous Communities - The Local Government White Paper*; central-local relations and the central-local concordat; the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the local governance research programme. Previously, he had a three-year secondment to Southwark Council, where he was head of policy and performance and subsequently a member of the senior management team of Southwark Health and Social Care. He previously held central government positions in water environment, sustainable waste management and housing.

Chris Johnson
Partner
Community Law Partnership

Chris Johnson is a solicitor and partner at the Community Law Partnership solicitors in Birmingham and the head of the firm's Travellers Advice Team (TAT). TAT has been in existence since 1995 and was set up in direct response to the provisions of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994. Since then TAT has advised and represented Gypsies and Travellers throughout England and Wales and has been involved in many of the leading cases in this area of the law such as the Porter cases and the recent decision in 2008 in Doherty – v – Birmingham City Council. This year TAT is involved in another House of Lords case involving wide Possession Orders and Injunctions (the case of *Secretary of State for the Environment – v – Meier and Others*). TAT runs the Community Legal Advice Funded Telephone Helpline which provides advice and assistance to all Gypsies and Travellers especially on accommodation issues and includes an emergency service. Chris Johnson writes articles and runs training courses on Gypsy and Traveller law and is co-editor with Marc Willers of Garden Court Chambers of the Legal Action book on the subject (*Gypsy and Traveller Law, second edition 2007*).

Joe Jones
Chairman
Canterbury Gypsy and Traveller Support Group

Joe has been an activist for many years on Gypsy and Traveller issues. Founder of Canterbury Gypsy Support and Youth Division, He has been instrumental in opening two youth clubs for Gypsies and Travellers, working with the youth, to encourage them to take the lead in their lives, working with schools, teaching children to engage with others about their culture. Joe works in partnership with housing association he is also a diversity trainer, with an extensive team in conjunction to this he is also an adviser to central and local governments, health authorities, police and fire service. He has been instrumental in producing many DVD's for training and awareness purposes, one of which won the Swale Film Festival Award in partnership with Open Productions.

Caroline Keightley
Team Leader, Gypsy and Traveller Unit
Homes and Communities Agency

Caroline is the Homes and Communities agency lead on Gypsy and Traveller Sites Grant. Her background is in social housing, working for both local authorities and registered social landlords. Prior to working for HCA, she was a civil servant working as member of the Community Housing Task Force, managing the New Deal for the Communities Programme, and working on the respect agenda. Most recently Caroline worked for CLG's Gypsy and Travellers Unit. Caroline is also a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Housing, and a Member of the Association of Project Managers.

Helena Kiely
Youth Community Officer
London Gypsy and Traveller Unit

Helena Kiely is an Irish Traveller and work's full time for the London Gypsy and Traveller Unit. Helena completed Primary school and went on to secondary school but unfortunately after just 6 months she left due to bullying. When Helena was 16 she decided she wanted to attend college. Helena studied Childcare for 1 year. She learned about The London Gypsy and Traveller Unit and decided to contact the organisation. She was employed shortly after and started her role as a youth worker. Helena has now been working full time for the past three and a half years. In that time most of the work she carries out is focused around Education for Travellers, as Helena believes that is where Travellers need the most help and without an education, Travellers are going no where fast. She has produced a DVD for the Department of Children Schools and Families called 'Meet your Neighbours' focusing on the role models in the Irish Travelling community. This DVD was completed for the Gypsy Roma Traveller month in June 2008 and was sent to all the TES in England it was broadcast in schools during June and will be used to focus on the positive side of Helena's community. Last year Helena completed a Module in Community Leadership at Birkbeck and she hopes to Study Social Psychology next year.

Mellissa Marshall
Traveller Liaison Officer
Luminus Group

Mellissa Marshall is the traveller liaison & support officer for Luminus Group, the Eastern region's premier housing provider. Mellissa was initially employed by Luminus to provide part-time site management to the St Neots Gypsy and Traveller site. Luminus Group are contracted to provide site management on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council. Mellissa also worked part-time as a Luminus Neighbourhood Warden in the St Neots area, which included the Traveller site. In 2005 she was recognised for her work on the Traveller site and awarded the ODPM "Warden in a Diversity role" award. In 2007 Luminus Group accessed Supporting People funding to provide housing related support to the site and for Travellers making the transition into bricks and mortar housing. This allowed Mellissa to work full-time on the site providing essential support, enhancing the Travellers quality of life and making a positive contribution to the community.

Cllr Richard Pallister OBE
Deputy Leader & Executive Member for Housing, Environmental Health, Social Inclusion & Benefits
South Somerset District Council

Richard has been the executive member for Housing and Social Inclusion since 2000 and is currently involved with the IDeA and PAS in their Strategic Housing Development programme for members. He has taken a particular interest in trying to solve the difficult issues surrounding Gypsies and Travellers. South Somerset owns and manages two Gypsy accommodation sites and, like many other authorities, is struggling with the task of establishing permanent and small-scale transit sites to meet established need. Involved nationally as a member of the LGA Gypsy and Traveller Task Group, Richard is also working with DCLG, GO and the IDeA to create a greater understanding of the Gypsy & Traveller accommodation issue amongst officers and elected members through sub regional training events. Breaking down the barriers through the uphill and difficult task of building a new sense of trust and understanding with the local settled communities is his aim.

Melanie Sturtevant
Policy Adviser, Gypsy and Traveller Unit
Communities and Local Government

Melanie Sturtevant has worked in the Gypsy and Traveller Unit at Communities and Local Government for the last two and a half years. In particular she is responsible for the Gypsy and Traveller Site Grant and the provision in the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 which will improve the security of tenure and other rights and responsibilities of Gypsies and Travellers on local authority sites. Melanie has worked in CLG and its predecessor department's for the past 12 years on a wide range of policies including private sector housing, decent homes, industrial pollution control and railways.

Carolyn Taylor
District Manager for Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire
Jobcentre Plus

Carolyn took up post as district manager on promotion and deputises for the customer services director for East of England region. In her previous role as benefit delivery centre manager she led all activities in developing Watford as one of 6 Benefit Delivery Centres in the region. She also managed Bedfordshire District leading its amalgamation with Hertfordshire in 2005. After a 30 year career in varied posts she has extensive operational knowledge and experience across the range of Jobcentre Plus business. She achieved NVQ level 5 and built onto that a focus of personal development, culminating in a placement on the Jobcentre Plus Emerging Talent Programme.

Raymond Warburton
NHS Change Programmes, *Equality and Human Rights Group*
Department of Health

Raymond has worked with the Department of Health on two occasions - from 1986 to 1990 and from 1996 to the present day.Since 2004, he has have worked directly on equality and diversity issues, he is currently head of programme management for the NHS Equality Delivery Team within the Department's Workforce Directorate. Raymond's main work covers the Pacesetters programme, the health of Gypsies and Travellers, and equality data. From 1999 to 2004, he led a policy section in the Department of Health that focused on various aspects of social care for older people and adults of working age. From 1996 to 1998 he was a social services inspector working within an older person's policy team at the Department. From 1986 to 1990, Raymond was appointed as social services inspector within the Department. His main role was to develop a set of key indicators for local authority social services.

Raymond has also worked in three local authority social services departments (SSDs). The most recent was Leeds SSD from 1990 to 1993, where he was assistant director for planning, equality and monitoring. He also led joint planning work with the local NHS. He worked for the SSD of the Royal Borough of Kensington from 1981 to 1986, where he led a policy and research team. Raymond worked for the SSD of Cambridgeshire County Council from 1978 to 1981 and has led work on policy research and monitoring. The main task was to introduce a Case Review System for social workers. He has also worked on research projects at the National Institute for Social Work from 1972 to 1978 and the Personal Social Services Unit at the University of Kent from 1993 to 1996 and has authored or co-authored a number of research publications.

Mark Watson
Head of Diversity Advisory Unit, Inspector
Cheshire Police

Mark Watson has been a Cheshire Police Officer for 26 years and has served in a variety of roles, currently as an Inspector. He works in support of neighbourhood policing and partnership working, and has been head of the Cheshire Constabulary Diversity Advisory Unit since September 2008. He has a specific interest in Gypsy / Traveller issues and is a member of the ACPO Gypsy & Traveller Working Group, part of the ACPO Race & Diversity Business Area. Mark was responsible for the establishment of the first Gypsy / Traveller Liaison Police Officer in Cheshire. The Force now has three such officers and in November 2005, Mark and his team won the award for "Outstanding Commitment to Diversity" at the Criminal Justice System's 2005 Justice Awards. He regularly works in addition to his role on an operational basis providing 24-hour cover for day to day response policing.

Steve Wilkinson
Manager
Northamptonshire Countywide Traveller Unit

Steve Wilkinson has 34 years service as a local authority officer, working at Coventry City Council and Northamptonshire County Council. Specialising in Gypsy and Traveller management, Steve had the responsibility of researching, writing and presenting the policy and protocols to Coventry's elected members, which were subsequently adopted by the authority. As a member of the CLG Gypsy and Traveller Advisory Group, his expertise is called upon to submit concepts and proposals in respect of national and local issues concerning the wellbeing and management of Gypsies and Travellers. Steve has been the manager of the Northamptonshire Countywide Traveller Unit (CTU) since its inception in December 2003. The unit delivers a holistic approach to all Gypsy and Traveller issues throughout the County. It is a unique initiative and is used nationally as a model of good practice. It ensures the rights and responsibilities of both Travellers and the settled community are respected.

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