

London Borough of Brent Gypsy, Roma & Traveller Inclusion Strategy 2009 – 2014 Index

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Vision Statement

Our borough's vision, as set out in Brent's Corporate Strategy 2006-2010 is that Brent should be a safe, clean, healthy place to live which provides opportunities for all within an inclusive community where everyone is welcome.

1.0 Background & Introduction

Brent is an outer London borough in the North West of London covering 4,325 hectares of land. It celebrates its cultural diversity and is proud of its multi-ethnic population being one of two boroughs where black and minority ethnic groups are in the majority. These population figures include, Gypsy, Roma and Travellers who live in a range of tenure types, settled housing and a Council owned authorised site with 31 pitches.

To ensure the delivery of a comprehensive range of services and in the spirit of joint working and partnership the Brent Traveller Interagency Strategic Group was established. Our external partners include:-

- Irish Traveller Movement in Britain
- Brent Irish Advice Service
- Metropolitan Police Partnership Team
- Primary Care Trust.

Council officers in this group are representatives of the following services:-

- Brent Housing Partnership
- Community Safety Team
- Corporate Diversity Team
- Corporate Regeneration Team
- Planning
- Policy & Performance Team, Housing & Community Care
- Ethnic Minority and Travellers Achievement Service.

The Strategic Group developed from a Traveller Interagency Forum which operated in Brent from about 2005 to 2007 with the aim of developing strategic partnership working to promote the inclusion of Gypsies, Roma and Travellers in Brent, in particular across the areas of health, accommodation and education. Regular meetings of the group will be scheduled to maintain progress towards achieving social inclusion of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community.

1.1 GLA Study of Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment

The GLA study indicates that by 2017 Brent is likely to need further provision both in terms of pitches and additional housing to accommodate people of Irish Traveller and Roma Gypsy origin (as shown below). It should be noted however that the survey emphasises that the figures quoted are evidence of projected need and should not be regarded as targets for new provision. Planning ahead, Brent, together with other boroughs in the West London Alliance are exploring the possibility of a sub-regional/regional approach to find the most appropriate solution both for the Traveller and the settled community.

Summary : Accommodation Required in Brent 2007 - 2017¹

	Base Nos - 2007	Minimum Need		Sub Total	Total	Maximum Need		Sub Total	Total
		Additional Need 2007 - 12	Additional Need 2012 - 17			Additional Need 2007-12	Additional Need 2012 - 17		
Unauthorised pitches	0*	-	-		0	-	-		-
Residential pitches	31	11	6	17	48	17	7	24	55
Traditional Housing	50	12	9	21	71	9	8	17	67
Total	81	23	15	38	119	26	15	41	122

*Although there are no unauthorised sites in the borough, there is over-occupation of the authorised site. There are 31 pitches on the site, occupied by 45 caravans.

Brent is one of the most densely populated boroughs in London with 61 persons per hectare, compared to an outer London average of 35.2. This figure was based on the demographic statistics provided by the 2001 Census, which gave the population of the borough as 263,466 and cited Brent as one of the most densely populated of the outer London boroughs at 61 persons per hectare. Since 2001 however, there has been a considerable increase, due to inward migration. The Office of National Statistics 2006 mid year estimate for Brent's population is 270,400, the GLA estimates our population as slightly higher at 272,252 (2006) but local research, commissioned by the Council, carried out by a demographic expert, Chris Mayhew, suggests that the true population of Brent is much higher at 289,100 as at 31st March, 2007².

Brent has very little land which could be viably used to provide a new low density single storey type Travellers site. Brent has 4,325 hectares of which 83% is "built up" and 16% is the "natural environment".

2.0 Purpose of the Strategy

Research shows that the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities experience multiple disadvantages, including barriers to accessing services, racism and marginalisation.

This strategy aims to provide an integrated local framework to promote community cohesion and to protect the rights and needs of both the settled and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. Creating and sustaining strong community cohesion will have benefits for both the Gypsy, Roma, Traveller and the settled communities.

¹ GLA Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment 2007

² Mayhew Associates, *Brent population estimation, household composition and change, 2007*

2.1 Aims

Our first Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Inclusion Strategy aims to develop and support the communities through:-

- Providing strategic leadership & co-ordinated service delivery to Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities through enhanced partnership working.
- Improving communication and consultation with the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities to encourage participation in decision making in respect of services.
- Improving and sustain effective management of authorised Travellers site.
- Mainstreaming Gypsy, Roma and Traveller needs into Council wide service planning.
- Creating enhanced access to all major services through improved analysis of service take-up and planning.
- Identifying additional provisions to meet future housing need for existing and incoming Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities to Brent/West London.
- Improving awareness of and access to Public Health and Social Services.
- Continuing to improve basic skills for adults, through training.
- Improve employment opportunities for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities by developing and building on existing skills.
- Maximising educational opportunities for all children from nursery to school leavers.
- Promoting peaceful co-existence between the settled community and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities by presenting a positive image of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities and culture.
- Improving services to the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities through exchange of good practice in other West London boroughs.
- Tackling crime and community safety issues impacting on the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community.

This strategy will be based on the following principles:

- equity – recognising the rights, needs and preferences of settled and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities;
- consistency – which recognises local circumstances across the borough;
- integration – agencies working together;
- clarity and transparency – for all communities and agencies about duties, responsibilities and operational arrangements;
- legality – recognising the current and changing legislative framework including the Race Relations Act, the Housing Acts, Planning legislation and the Human Rights Act and the Housing & Regeneration Act;
- participation – including settled and Traveller communities and all relevant agencies in planning and delivery;
- effectiveness – recognising capacity constraints and ensuring resources are used to maximum effect
- safety – recognising the need to ensure safety for the whole community.

Gypsies, Roma and Travellers are ethnic groups recognised by the Race Relations Amendment Act. They have a right to a nomadic life style, to equal access to services such as education, health and accommodation and to protection from discrimination and harassment.

All Gypsies, Roma and Travellers may be nomadic but the extent to which they travel varies. Although most families are now settled in housing or on long-term residential caravan sites, they may still travel for part of the year for work or for family occasions.

Travelling Showpeople face many of the same issues as Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities in terms of land shortage. They are self-employed business people who travel the country holding fairs. Most Travelling Showpeople are members of the Showman's Guild of Great Britain. This organisation was formed in the late nineteenth century, and requires its members to follow a strict code of practice relating to the use of sites.

In Britain in the 21st century, Travellers remain excluded and socially disadvantaged in every measurable criteria. Trevor Phillips as Chair of CRE compared their status to that of black people in the Southern states of America in the 1950s³. Indeed, the main problems identified in Brent are poverty, social exclusion and anti-social behaviour.

There remains widespread prejudice and deep misinformation about Gypsies, Roma and Travellers fuelled by media coverage that is largely negative and often sensationalist.

The purpose of this strategy is to work towards a cohesive society; to promote better understanding and be responsive to concerns and minimise misunderstanding within both the settled and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.

3.0 Communication and Consultation

The strategy will be supported by the Communication and Diversity Unit. The unit seeks to promote Brent Council's work with all ethnic minority groups including the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities and to ensure residents receive up-to-date information from Brent Council which affects them. Within the unit there is a Consultation Team which organises quarterly Area Forums for residents in Brent and a Communications Team which publicises Brent Council in the local, regional and national media. For example the Communications Team has issued press releases each year to promote the Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service's event in Brent for the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month.

In addition, the unit co-ordinates the production of The Brent Magazine (the Council publication for every household in the borough) and the Brent Council website. Both of these are important tools for distributing information to, and about, Gypsies, Roma and Travellers.

This strategy will improve communication and consultation by:-

- **participation by Gypsy, Roma & Traveller and settled communities**
 - this will be achieved by contact with Roma Gypsy families through the Ethnic Minority & Travellers Achievement Service (ETMAS) and the use of the Brent Traveller Interagency Group as a means of communication between Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities and elected representatives.

³ CRE: A Strategy for Gypsies and Travellers 2004-7

- **joint working between agencies including developing working protocols**
 - this will include continued joint working with the Police; and formalising links between statutory and voluntary agencies.
- **community cohesion and clarity of expectation**
 - we will ensure that both the settled and travelling communities are represented, advised and informed about decisions taken in respect of Gypsies, Roma and Travellers within a process that is overt and transparent;
 - we will at all times provide points of reference that will facilitate and enable robust communication between the settled and Travelling communities.
- **maintenance of evidence base**
 - we will continue to coordinate a local evidence base backed up by national data to improve and inform our local knowledge and awareness of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller households within the borough whether transient or permanent.
- **public advice and information**
 - we will continue to use public exhibitions and
 - we will consider how we can work with the media to provide a balanced and/or positive portrayal of all Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people.
- **Police operational protocols**
 - we will continue to liaise with the Police on a partnership basis, taking into account current circumstances;
 - we will continue to require that a named police community safety officer is nominated to work with the Gypsy and Traveller brief, ensuring continuity, at a sufficiently senior level to agree policy and supply strategic direction.

4.0 National and Local Context

Circular 01/2006 “Planning For Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites” (The ODPM Circular 01/2006) defined Gypsies, Roma and Travellers as persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependants’ educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, excluding members of an organised group of Travelling Showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.

Gypsies, Roma and Travellers are not a large ethnic group. In 2006 the national population was estimated to be between 200,000 - 300,000 by the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE). It should be noted, however, that the true size of the Traveller population is very difficult to estimate, owing to high levels of population mobility, and the lack of relevant ethnic categories within the Census. In 2006 the ODPM estimated that there were 15,000 caravans in the UK, 72% or 10,836 of these were on authorised sites⁴.

The Commission for Racial Equality and ODPM identified Gypsies, Roma and Travellers as some of the most vulnerable and marginalised minority ethnic groups in Britain. Gypsies and Travellers have traditionally been subject to racial harassment and violence as well as having poor access to services such as accommodation,

⁴ ODPM biannual count of Gypsy/Traveller caravans

health, education and employment. Gypsy and Traveller pupils are the group most at risk of failure in the education system⁵.

Brent's Gypsy, Roma and Traveller population is made up of Irish Travellers with approximately 180 residents, living on 31 pitches on the Council's Lynton Close site, 30 Irish Traveller and 20 Roma Gypsy households living in houses. In June 2005, there were 180 pupils from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families being educated in Brent, though numbers have now declined. The absence of reliable data on the size of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller population is mirrored in the lack of information about them in important areas such as employment and the provision and use of public services, including health services.

Some general background information on origins and lifestyles of the different groups is given below.

4.1 Irish Travellers

This group are an indigenous nomadic ethnic group in Northern and Southern Ireland and Britain. They have been part of British society for many centuries, pursuing traditional agricultural roles in rural Britain.

Employment patterns have now shifted to casual forms of building work, gardening, and scrap metal collection. The shift in employment patterns has meant that Irish Travellers have migrated to urban areas.

There are similarities with the Gypsy culture, and a shared nomadic way of life, but Irish Travellers are a distinct and separate group and recognised as such since 2000 for the purposes of the Race Relations Amendment Act. As in Gypsy culture, the extended family is the central organising unit. Their own language, Gammon or Cant, is still spoken. There is a reluctance to divulge this language to outsiders.

The age profile of Irish Travellers is very young, they tend to marry early. They have large families (average of 8 children). Irish Travellers are usually Catholic. Their faith is an important part of their culture and family life⁶.

4.2 Gypsies

Gypsies have been one of Britain's ethnic minorities for 500 years. They are descended from nomadic tribal groups who left Northern India around 1,000 years ago and moved westwards across Europe. The Romany language spoken by many Gypsies has its roots in Sanskrit.

Throughout their history Gypsies have followed a distinctive way of life as a nomadic people. They have remained separate from the house dwelling community, whilst maintaining links with it as a resourceful and versatile mobile work force.

Gypsies usually marry within their own group, but they have, over the centuries, linked in with other travelling groups such as various traders and craftsmen, entertainers, Irish Travellers and Scottish Travellers. The family is of central importance in Gypsy culture.

Their transport, living accommodation and means of earning a living have changed with the times, as house dwellers have also changed. Some have settled in housing,

⁵ CRE Gypsies and Travellers: The Facts

⁶ Centre for Irish Studies Report Room to Roam England's Irish Travellers; Dr Colm Power 2004

on private family sites, or on Council owned sites. They may travel a lot less than before, perhaps only seasonally over the spring and summer months. There are as many differences between individuals in families and extended family groupings as there are in any community. Gypsies have been recognised as a specific ethnic minority since 1988 for the purposes of the Race Relations Amendment Act.

4.3 Roma Gypsies

The Roma Gypsies became one of the peoples of Europe around a thousand years ago, when they first arrived in the Balkans. The current size of the European Romani population, around 8 million, is equivalent to that of an average European country. While human rights and socio-economic issues related to the Roma are increasingly becoming the focus of political debate and media coverage throughout Europe, their poor health status is rarely discussed and still awaits the attention of the medical profession. The Roma Gypsy community has been persecuted in Europe throughout history, whether through banishment, Roma Gypsy hunts or the Roma Gypsy Holocaust of the twentieth century. They have endured exclusion, containment and assimilation in Eastern and Central Europe.

Following the fall of communism there is now a growing sense of shared identity that exists among Roma Gypsy people. Following the enlargement of the European Community in 2004 and again in 2007 an increasing number of Roma Gypsy households have arrived in Britain.

4.4 Travelling Showpeople

Traditionally, most Travelling Showpeople travel for their businesses in spring, summer and autumn and spend the winter on sites which they either own themselves or which are publicly owned. However, many Travelling Showpeople now wish to have sites that can be used as permanent bases for their families so that children can have uninterrupted access to education, and older family members can access healthcare.

Many Travelling Showpeople have been displaced in recent years as their traditional sites are redeveloped. This has led to a shortfall of sites, and consequently to overcrowding on existing sites and unauthorised sites. Many Travelling Showpeople would like to buy land and develop their own sites, but this has often led to problems when families cannot obtain planning permission for land that they have bought.

Annual visits to Brent for fairs and circuses by Travelling Showpeople occur three to four times a year, usually for periods of two weeks, in the holiday periods when the borough makes available educational and health services during their stay, residing on the fairground site, usually located in one of the borough's parks.

5.0 Existing Provision of Services for Gypsies, Roma & Travellers

Brent's Corporate Strategy seeks to build a sense of belonging, promotes knowledge and understanding between communities and addresses social tension and conflict.

A Lottery-funded research project undertaken by the Centre for Irish Studies examined the experience of Irish Travellers in London and Manchester⁷. This study estimated that in 2003/04 the Irish Traveller population in Brent could have been substantially higher than it is today; there are approximately 180 people on the

⁷ Centre for Irish Studies Report "Room to Roam", Dr Colm Power 2004

authorised Travellers site and the GLA study indicates that there are 30 Irish Traveller and 20 Roma Gypsy households in housing.

The strategy will look at these communities separately initially, but most services are available to all and therefore, reference is made to the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community throughout this document (although in some instances the term “Travellers” is used to describe all three communities). There is a separate chapter on the authorised Travellers Site (5.3) as the needs of the households living on the authorised site and those living in housing, due to the different types of accommodation, are dissimilar.

5.1 Roma Gypsy Community in Brent

According to the London wide survey commissioned by the Greater London Authority (GLA) published earlier this year, Brent has the fourth highest number of Roma Gypsy families amongst the seven West London boroughs. However, according to our school records Brent is home to the second highest number of Roma Gypsy households in the West London sub-region. There are approximately 20 Roma Gypsy households with children in Brent schools. Lack of relevant ethnic categories within the Census means that at present our diversity monitoring form does not count people of Gypsy ethnic origin separately, so it is difficult to give an exact figure. The monitoring form needs to be reviewed so we are able to gain a clearer picture of the different ethnic groups in the borough and the services which need to be put in place to achieve harmonisation and integration.

Services which Roma Gypsy and Irish Traveller families are able to benefit from as tenants in temporary accommodation include floating support. This is provided through our Supported Tenancies Assessment and Referral Team (START) scheme to help maintain tenancies.

To help access employment for people in temporary accommodation, in addition to the work done by the Council's Brent In2Work, the Council funds a voluntary organisation which provides courses in literacy, computing, help with filling in application forms etc.

Roma Gypsy children are supported in schools through the Ethnic Minority & Traveller Achievement Service.

5.2 Brent's Irish Traveller Community

Major issues which affect the life of Gypsies, Roma and Travellers and where it is vital that local authorities and other statutory and voluntary organisations offer support and make services readily available are health, education (both formal and leisure activities which support further development and personal growth), employment and housing conditions.

5.3 Travellers Site

The authorised Council site is situated in the South-West of the borough, in Lynton Close. Management of the site is currently the responsibility of Brent Housing Partnership (BHP) which is an arms length management organisation which manages most of the Council's residential housing stock. The day to day management of the site however, is delivered by an externally tendered contractor.

The site is occupied exclusively by Irish Traveller households. There are 31 pitches but this is exceeded by both caravans and occupants. This causes overcrowding and raises many practical problems, including concerns of community safety.

Our long term aim must be to match the number of caravans/mobile homes to the number of pitches authorised for occupation on the site. NB This will require another site in addition to meeting any new GTANA provision.

Another barrier to effective management is the issue around communication between the Council, BHP, residents and the external provider currently managing the site. This needs to be improved by using a different approach (as described in Paragraph 3.0 Communication & Consultation) which recognises the specific problems surrounding Lynton Close.

5.3.1 Housing Services – Health & Safety

In the last 2 years, the Council has worked together with the externally tendered contractor to procure new mobile homes for all residents who wished to replace older caravans.

The utility blocks housing kitchens and bathrooms are modern and of a good standard having been replaced in the last 7 years. Where boilers needed to be replaced, the Council has installed energy efficient boilers.

To promote health and safety, the following initiatives have been put in place:-

- Smoke alarms fitted in all caravans and utility blocks by the Fire Brigade,
- The local Fire Officer visits the site on a regular basis and speaks to both parents and children about fire prevention,
- Monthly health and safety checks are carried out on all pitches by externally tendered contractor staff,
- Domestic Violence Counselling is available.
- A CCTV has been fitted near the site to stop the general public fly-tipping and dumping of abandoned cars on the access road to Lynton Close, so that perpetrators can be identified and unjust accusations on the Traveller community can be refuted.

In spite of these improvements, there are a number of health and safety issues which need to be resolved through improved management of the site, eg., poor drainage, accumulation of rubbish and a number of abandoned vehicles.

5.3.2 Planned Improvements to Lynton Close Site - CLG Grant

The Council bid for £46,050 to carry out certain improvements to the Travellers site in 2008/09 and was successful in obtaining £34,530 from the CLG with effect from September 2008 the balance obtained from a local contribution. Improvement work included replacing and updating three kitchens, the boundary wall of the site to increase visibility onto and off the site (improving security), reduce fly tipping onto the play area and around the site and reduce the number of abandoned vehicles on the access road by the general public. This improvement work has now been completed.

In line with recommendations in the Mayor's Draft London Strategy⁸ and the CLG

⁸ Published in November 2008

publication “Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites, Good Practice Guide”⁹ further resources need to be allocated to bring the Lynton Close site up to recommended standards.

5.3.3 Additional Provisions

Many of the following activities have previously been provided on the site although some of these have lapsed during the last several months due to some vandalism and anti-social behaviour. We consider it is important to re-establish the following provisions/activities for residents to help improve life chances and provide activities for all ages:-

- Participation by residents in establishing a Women’s Group,
- Nursery facilities on site,
- Attending youth clubs away from the site,
- Attending outreach sessions on site ranging from advice sessions, sport, driving theory lessons, help with academic work, mentoring and homework club.
- An education and resource centre on site where residents can use computers in an environment where they can learn various new skills.
- A youth club on site which opens five days a week where young people can get an opportunity to participate in life skill workshops, attend youth forums, day trips with other community groups and receive assistance with homework and preparations for GCSEs.
- Organise weekly trips to the local library with parents and children.
- Externally tendered contractor to work closely with Brent Council’s ETMAS Unit to achieve and sustain a consistently high attendance rate, by children from the site at local schools of.

5.3.4 Health

The Council works closely with the Primary Care Trust (PCT) to ensure adequate health services are delivered to Travellers on the Lynton Close site. The PCT have listed some of the key health issues below as identified by health professionals working with the Irish Traveller community on the Travellers Site:-

- high incidence of accidents
- high prevalence of depression, especially amongst women
- high rates of alcohol misuse
- long delays in seeking health care amongst men
- very low rates of breastfeeding
- broader issues relating to educational attainment, unemployment, environmental health, housing and community safety, all of which have a negative impact on health and well-being.

All residents are registered with a GP. The majority of families are patients of a 5 partner GP practice which makes itself very accessible to Travellers, within 5 minutes walking distance of Lynton Close. It also holds an open access clinic twice weekly for children, which is attended by the two Health Visitors who cover the area. Travellers, have access to the Health Visiting Service which provides an important link between the Traveller community and local hospitals. When Travellers attend local hospitals either for ante-natal appointments or as a result of accidents, a named Health Visitor is notified, so that any problems can be followed up. The external contractor on the Lynton Close site regularly liaises with Brent Health Visitors to organise visits and assessments for individuals on the site.

⁹ Published in May, 2008

5.3.5 Housing Support Worker – Supporting People

The Brent Supporting People Strategy identified that Brent had no Supporting People (SP) funded services for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, therefore a commitment was made in the SP Strategy to meet identified needs either locally or in partnership with West London. Consequently, a bid was agreed by the Supporting People commissioning body to fund a pilot short term contract from April 2008 for 1 year to address immediate needs. The contract will provide for 35 hours of support per week, at a cost of £51,000 for the year.

This is an additional resource to existing services funded from other council sources. The SP pilot will be contracted to BHP, with a sub-contract to the externally tendered contractor, subject to their SP accreditation. The housing support work will focus mainly on Travellers on the Lynton Close site but will not exclude Irish Traveller and Roma Gypsy households living in bricks and mortar housing. Once in place the Traveller Floating Support Officer's role will be to provide a culturally sensitive, housing related support and advocacy service to the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community who may have a range of support or social needs and who need assistance in maintaining their tenancies. The Floating Support Worker will develop support plans and reviews, maximise client income helping to reduce poverty and raising awareness of services available from statutory bodies, such as the local authority.

The Gypsy, Roma and Traveller service is subject to an SP strategic review within the SP Families Services Review and a report will be finalised in Spring 2009 . Once concluded and subject to the needs identified, the review may offer a longer term funding commitment.

5.3.6 Training & Employment

Brent in2Work Outreach service have visited Lynton Close to offer support and advice to the residents at Lynton Close. Visits to the site were made every 2 weeks and referrals were made for young men from the site to the Building One Stop Shop project, which focuses on helping clients in construction work. However, after clients received training they preferred to move to independent job search.

In 2008 Brent in2Work visited the Lynton Close site and found that a lot of women wanted to improve their basic literacy skills and were already working with officers in the Council's Ethnic Minority & Travellers Achievement Service (ETMAS). We could also explore using business support agencies in Brent to offer support on how to formalise their own business and linking this with numeracy and literacy skills, via employment support workshops. This may be suitable in providing a coordinated approach, similar to the model used by the Council's Language2Work. Links have been made with the external provider in Lynton Close to support individuals on the site.

5.3.7 Pitches - Allocation Policy

Lynton Close, a closed site to outsiders (in common with many similar local authority sites) is occupied by two Irish Traveller families and need/demand is generated from within as young people form new family units. There are very close family relationships between residents and any household outside the established group would not be welcome. Because of this, it is not practical to apply the Council's standard allocation policy to pitches. At present the site is overcrowded and there

are no vacancies. It is expected that the Council's housing allocation policy, including pitches, will be reviewed in the near future.

5.4 Health

Research funded by the Government and carried out by the University of Sheffield¹⁰ established the following:

- Gypsies, Roma and Travellers have significantly poorer health and more self-reported symptoms of ill health than other UK resident, English speaking ethnic minorities and economically disadvantaged white UK residents.
- Gypsies, Roma and Travellers have poorer health than that of their age/sex matched comparators.
- Self reported chest pain, respiratory problems, and arthritis were more prevalent in the Traveller group.
- Living in a house for Gypsies, Roma and Travellers is associated with long term illness, poorer health state, and anxiety. Those who rarely travel have the poorest health.
- The health inequality between Gypsies, Roma and Travellers and the UK general population is large. Reported health care problems are between twice and five times more prevalent than the wider population.
- There is an excess prevalence of miscarriages, stillbirths, neonatal deaths and premature death of older offspring.
- There are widespread communication difficulties between health workers and Gypsies, Roma and Travellers. This is often due to defensive expectation of racism and prejudice amongst Travellers. Barriers to health care were experienced, with several contributory causes, including reluctance of GPs to register Travellers or visit sites.

Poor access to health care is an almost universal experience of Travellers. Social exclusion experienced by Travellers is one of the most important factors influencing their health. The lack of a flexible approach within health provision to a nomadic lifestyle means that Travellers often miss out on basic levels of health care, especially in ante and post natal care and treatment of chronic illnesses.

Lack of education is another factor that can adversely influence health. Low literacy attainment is still a major problem for most adult Travellers, mainly because so few attended school on a regular basis, if at all. The low literacy level within the community leaves it vulnerable to information conveyed almost solely by television and the press. Professionals have an important role in dispelling myths and spending extra time in explaining medical matters clearly to a population with limited access to written information.

5.4.1 Local Provision – In Place

As most statutory bodies have linked their ethnicity categories in the past to those listed in the Census, information for all services is somewhat scant as demonstrated by the extracts below from a report produced by the Directorate of Public Health, Brent PCT in November 2005. The monitoring procedure needs to be reviewed so it will provide a firmer evidence base and enable proper planning for public services.

¹⁰ The Health Status of Gypsies and Travellers in England, 2004

5.4.1.1 Health Needs of Gypsies, Roma and Travellers and barriers to access – an overview

Evidence on the health status and health needs of Gypsies, Roma and Travellers is sparse. Much of the available evidence is derived from a handful of small scale, localised studies, although a large-scale epidemiological study was completed in 2004 by a team at the University of Sheffield on behalf of the Department of Health (please see 5.4 above).

Evidence shows that Gypsies, Roma and Travellers are some of the most vulnerable and socially excluded ethnic minority groups in Britain, and have significantly poorer health compared to the settled population, including other deprived and socially excluded groups resident in the UK.

5.4.1.2 Access to Health Services for Travellers in Brent – Current Picture

Brent PCT is committed to ensuring equity of access to health care (including preventive interventions) for all population groups. In Brent, there are examples of primary care and outreach services that have specifically been developed to meet the needs of Gypsies, Roma and Travellers. Child health clinics for Traveller families, and domiciliary visits are provided, with a particular emphasis on immunisation. A counselling service is also provided to Travellers in central Brent via the Brent SureStart programme.

A Traveller Health Access Project operated in Brent in the late 1990s, under the umbrella of the Brent Irish Advisory Service and funded by Lottery funding. BIAS reports that although the Traveller Health Access Project has now ceased, access to primary care and, in particular, GP registrations amongst Irish Travellers have improved dramatically.

The real challenge is to ensure that all primary and community health services are accessible to and sensitive to the needs of all Gypsies, Roma and Travellers in Brent. Previous research in Brent suggests that Gypsies, Roma and Travellers would value increased access to all services, in addition to dedicated services.

5.5 Employment, Community and Voluntary Sector Support Services

5.5.1 Employment

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities traditionally suffer from high levels of worklessness. Brent in2Work, a unit within Brent Council, takes a strategic approach to tackling high levels of unemployment in the borough by delivering a number of client driven employment projects and most importantly leading and coordinating the work of other employment providers in the area. To this end, Brent in2Work now supports almost a thousand local residents, including people from the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, into work each year and works with over forty local employers. Brent in2Work leads the effort to reduce the high levels of unemployment and economic inactivity that are prevalent in the most deprived neighbourhoods in Brent.

Brent in2Work have set up a range of projects which are targeted at helping residents who have to overcome specific barriers (so are hardest to help) to find sustainable employment. These projects range from:

- **The Outreach Services-** based in our priority areas of Stonebridge, Harlesden, Church End and now South Kilburn. Targeting the hard to reach, specialist outreach workers work closely with individual clients to develop personal action plans and then refer clients to suitable local provision to overcome their barriers to work. Brent In2Work also work closely with a number of Registered Social landlords providing outreach support to unemployed and economically inactive tenants.
- **Language 2 Work-** supports ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) clients with a language barrier through an eight-week intensive job-focused programme which is delivered in a nurturing environment . The project goes beyond traditional ESOL training to provide an innovative work focussed ESOL programme, utilising the skills of TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) teachers to concentrate on those language skills that would be most useful in the workplace.
- **Recruitment and Training Service-** delivers training to Brent job seekers that is customised to an individual employer's specific requirements and equips successful candidates with the skills needed to contribute to an employer's business from their first day in work. It specialises in the retail, leisure and hospitality sectors.
- Brent in2Work also provides training and brokerage in the construction industries for West London residents, particularly those who are hardest to reach. It runs a variety of projects including CSCS (Construction Skills Certification Scheme) health and safety qualifications, funding for training courses to develop skills linked to needs/shortages, and workplace skill training.
- The Local Government Workshops project helps Brent's unemployed residents through the recruitment process of local government. Working with the Council's Human Resources department, this project provides workshops and support which has enabled residents secure work placements within the Council, focussing on those areas which experience recruitment difficulties.

Brent in2Work will continue to work in partnership with providers of other services to support individuals in the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community.

5.5.2 Community & Voluntary Sector Support Services

External agencies have offered advice surgeries on the Lynton Close site throughout 2006-07 and continue to offer advice at their premises for the whole Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities in Brent. The agencies include:-

- Citizens Advice Bureau,
- Community Police
- Fire Service
- Environmental Health Officers
- Brent Irish Advisory Service
- Irish Traveller Service.

5.6 Educational/Sports Activities

The Education Act 1996 places a statutory duty on all local authorities to make education available to children. This duty extends to all children residing in their area whether permanent or temporary.

The law requires local authorities to have arrangements in place for the placement and admission of “vulnerable children”, taking into account any Special Education Needs they may have. Attendance at a school or other educational establishment is compulsory. Traveller parents have a duty to ensure their child’s attendance. All Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils have the right to education whilst in the borough and to have access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. National figures show that school aged children from Gypsy, Roma and Travelling families of Irish Heritage are the lowest achieving groups in schools, with high levels of exclusions and Special Educational Needs. There is evidence that a significant proportion drop out of secondary education. Gypsy, Roma and Traveller school aged children’s educational achievement in Brent is better than some national Gypsy Traveller averages but below average within the Brent population.

Regulation 9(1) of the Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2006 allows dual registration where a pupil can be registered at two or more different schools in circumstances where a pupil has no fixed abode for the reason that his/her parent is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require him/her to travel from place to place.

5.6.1 Local Provisions - In Place

The EMTAS in the Council’s Children & Families Department actively supports children of Roma Gypsy and Traveller origin from an early age. Maximising achievement and promoting inclusion are at the heart of the Council’s shared endeavours to improve the life chances of Brent’s children and young people.

5.7. Housing

5.7.1 Local Provisions - In Place

According to our records Brent has 30 Irish Traveller and 20+ Roma Gypsy households in traditional housing.

Most households are in temporary accommodation, though some maybe in the private rented sector. Support to maintain tenancies is provided where necessary through advice agencies and also the Council's Care and Support Unit.

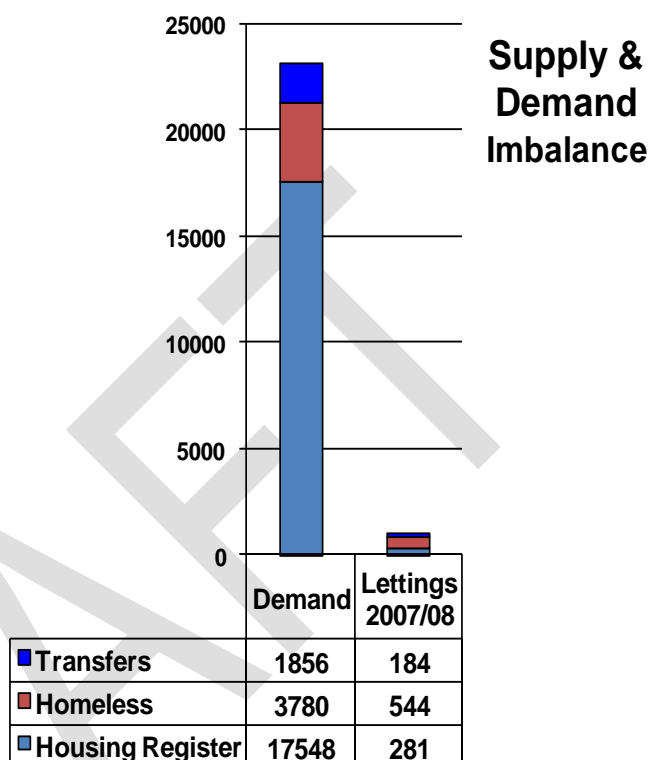
5.7.2 Supply and Demand

There is a significant mismatch in the supply and demand for housing, as the chart demonstrates.

In a typical year we will let just over 1,000 properties. However, each year more people apply than we can accommodate, and this has been a trend over many years. There are currently just over 23,000 households seeking housing through the Council. A simple mathematical calculation would indicate that it would take 23 years to house all of the households awaiting housing. However, the reality is that many of these households will never be rehoused in the social rented sector.

Our lettings policy is largely needs led, following the criteria set out in the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002). The supply and demand imbalance is such that even high need households can face a long wait prior to rehousing. Waiting times for rehousing in high need groups vary from 3 to 10 years: generally the larger the household the longer the wait.

We operate a Choice Based Lettings system – Locata. Within this system households are encouraged to make realistic choices depending on their relative need and the likelihood of a property of the right type coming up. The system produces good outcomes in terms of high satisfaction levels amongst those that get rehoused. However, it does not produce additional supply and a clear manifestation of this is the large number of people who bid that do not receive an offer of accommodation.



The backdrop of a massive mismatch between the supply and demand for permanent homes and constrained choice, is also applicable to the availability of land in the borough and therefore pitches for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families. However, the projected increase is an indication and we are exploring the possibility of meeting future need by exploring this issue sub-regionally.

As with all households the Authority will attempt to find a solution that fully meets the needs and wishes of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families. However, as with the wider supply and demand housing problem the ideal solution may not be possible. For instance, in the event of a sudden crisis leading to homelessness, it will be necessary to provide emergency accommodation, which is likely to be in a bed & breakfast hotel. If a duty arises under the homelessness legislation an offer of accommodation will need to be made in the future. It is likely that such an offer will be made of a traditional 'bricks and mortar' home.

5.8 Tackling Crime, Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and Community Safety

The key priorities of the Council's Community Safety Plan 2008-2011, which cover all communities in the borough, focus on:-

- tackling and reducing violence in all its forms,
- increasing confidence by providing reassurance, information and dealing effectively and positively with anti-social behaviour at a neighbourhood level, and
- the medium to long term prevention of crime by focussing on young people and those who are most at risk of being perpetrators or victims.

The Plan's implementation and progress is monitored by the Brent Community Safety Partnership comprising of the Metropolitan Police, Brent Council, the London Fire Brigade, Brent Teaching Primary Care Trust, National Probation Service, Metropolitan Police Authority, Brent Drug and Alcohol Action Team, Partners for Brent and the British Transport Police.

The implementation of the Plan is underpinned by a strategic assessment of crime carried out every six months which looks at victim and offender profiles. It also produces an analysis of crime hotspots, crime rates and crime types.

In addition, a number of groups have been set up by the Council where crime and ASB issues relating to the whole community, including Roma Gypsy and the Irish Traveller Community are discussed. These are:-

- the Brent Anti-Social Behaviour Action Group (BASBAG) a multi-agency panel, to provide a balanced approach to anti-social behaviour throughout the borough. The partners involved are the Police, Brent Housing Partnership, the externally tendered contractor, some Housing Associations, the Youth Offending Team, a representative from Children & Families, the Probation Service, and the British Transport Police.
- the Hate Crime Case Panel (convened when necessary)
- the Brent ASB Youth Panel and
- the Housing Crime Focus Group.

In respect of the Roma Gypsy and Irish Traveller communities the particular issues which are of relevance and need to be tackled include:-

- the high percentage of young males not getting into full time work and links to crime,

- under reporting of crime by these communities,
- alcohol related disorder,
- hate crime and
- domestic violence.

The objective of the Council's Community Safety Plan is to support these communities as victims as well as offenders. Victims are made aware of available services and issues of reporting and accessing reporting crime and community safety issues are raised with appropriate partner agencies. Other issues which need to be addressed are:-

- literacy levels impacting on the community accessing services especially where it relates to ASB, crime and victim support,
- designing out crime – current site and any possible future sites,
- ensuring that other relevant Council strategies take into account the needs of these communities, ie Parenting Strategy, Children's Plan, Older Peoples' Strategy and how this will be tracked as a part of the review of this strategy.

5.9 Ethnic Monitoring

The Census is a basic source of information used by all statutory agencies. Gypsies, Roma and Travellers have never been separately identified in the Census categories. There is therefore no clear information on the size of the national population or the location of the Travelling communities across the country.

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 (RRAA) requires public authorities to actively promote equality of opportunity and promote harmonious co-existence between persons of different racial groups. The Act also requires local authorities to carry out impact assessments on services provided to the community. The impact assessment process is used to plan improvements as part of the Council's Single Equality Scheme.

Gypsies, Roma and Travellers should be recorded in all standard ethnic origin monitoring to help agencies gauge how they are delivering services or complying with statutory duties to different ethnic groups. Without this we cannot properly estimate the need for either specific or general services to these communities. This at present is not being carried out consistently either by the Council or other statutory partners as has been demonstrated on several occasions in this strategy. It is a gap which needs to be addressed.

It is an expectation of the RRAA that consultation is conducted with the groups affected. It is therefore our intention to discuss the draft strategy, action plan and proposed methods of monitoring with members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community, the Brent Traveller Interagency Strategic Group and other stakeholders.

5.9.1 Local Provisions in Place

The Council takes its responsibility under the RRAA seriously, particularly given the demographic and multi-ethnic make up of the borough. There is a dedicated Corporate Diversity Team which is supported in all service areas, usually with a Diversity Group which is made up from representatives of component units. Monitoring, according to Census categories has taken place against Council services provided to the public. This however, does not provide us with a clear indication of the size of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller population in the borough, though school roles indicate that the majority of Travellers in Brent are of Irish origin (mostly

residents at the Lynton Close site) with some Polish and Romanian Roma Gypsy families living in private rented and temporary accommodation.

To remedy this and to get a clearer picture of services provided to the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, the Council needs to review the standard monitoring form which will have a separate category for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller service users.

The Council celebrates the cultural diversity of the borough and actively promotes community cohesion. A number of events are held throughout the year in which the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities participate. Some of these are listed below.

- **Respect Week**

To promote good relations between different cultures and racial groups, the Council holds a Respect Week each year in July to celebrate the cultural diversity of the borough in which the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities are also represented.

- **The Traveller and Gypsy Culture Month**

The Traveller and Gypsy Culture Month, held in June, for the past 6 years has won praise both from a senior officer working with Travellers in the Department of Education and Skills (now Department for Children and Families and Schools) and a senior Ofsted Inspector. They have recommended this as best practice and the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Culture Month is now celebrated as a national event.

The event is organised by the Ethnic Minority Travellers Achievement Service (EMTAS) to raise awareness and celebrate the culture of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, throughout the borough's primary and secondary schools, in the Town Hall and at the Council's Staff Development Centre. It is usually opened by the Mayor and events include exhibitions, entertainers and musicians.

- **Youth Forum**

The Youth Forum was set up by Brent Housing Partnership and Brent Youth Partnership in March 2005 and is open to everyone aged 21 or under, living in council housing (including residents on the Travellers site which is managed by BHP) and Genesis Housing Group, including Pathmead. Pathmead manages the majority of privately leased properties used by the Council as temporary accommodation where some Irish Traveller and most Roma Gypsy families are housed, therefore the Youth Forum is accessible to these households also .

The forum is held annually and offers a chance for young people to influence decisions that will affect their lives, such as improving housing conditions, facilities for young people, employment opportunities and the environment. It also offers information on skills for jobs and skills for life. Some of the activities have included making CDs, computer training, documentary film-making, urban dance, art projects and sports. A number of young people from the Lynton Close site have participated in this forum.

In addition, the Council runs topic specific user consultative forums which provide an opportunity for the Council to gain first hand knowledge of residents' opinion about the services provided. The user consultative forums are advertised in libraries, One Stop Shops, in the Brent Magazine and on the internet and invite participation from

all Brent residents including the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community. The Council's user consultative forums are the:-

- Black and Minority Ethnic Service User Consultative Forum
- Brent Disabled User Forum
- The Pensioners Service User Consultative Forum
- The Voluntary Sector User Forum
- The Private Housing Forum.

6.0 Resources

Dedicated funding for the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community by the Council is difficult to isolate, but is in the region of £1.1m per year, based on:-

- the management and maintenance of the Lynton Close site,
- Supporting People funding
- housing households in temporary accommodation
- supported housing services
- education - Ethnic Minority and Travellers Achievement Service.

In addition, the Council funds partially/wholly many voluntary sector agencies, for example the Citizens Advice Bureau, the Brent Community Law Centre, and many Black and Minority Ethnic organisations which provide advice throughout the borough to residents. These services, which include advice on debt, housing issues, immigration, etc, are accessible to all residents of Brent and are free of charge at the point of delivery.

The Council provides funding to voluntary organisations through various sources (some of which are held within individual departments and are 'commissioned'), for example, Supporting People funding. Through the Voluntary Sector Team we provide 'Main Programme Grant' (MPG) funding and the Edward Harvist Trust (EHT) funding. However, analysis of MPG and other grants, such as EH suggests that there is no take up by voluntary organisations for services specifically to the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.

The Voluntary Sector Team also provides funding advice to voluntary organisations to assist them in securing resources from other charitable trust sources.

7.0 Legislative Framework & Local Policies

Our strategy and our aspirations for the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities are supported by a number of developments at a local, national and European level.

There are a range of factors that have contributed to and driven the development of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Strategy. These include:-

- Central government policies including the ODPM Guidance for local authorities Circular 01/2006 on "Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Sites" set out a directive to "create and support sustainable, respectful and inclusive communities where Gypsies and Travellers have access to suitable accommodation, education, health and welfare provision" to "reduce the number of unauthorised encampments and the conflict and controversy they cause" to "offer alternative provision to campers"; to "increase significantly the number of Gypsy and Traveller sites in appropriate locations with planning permission"; and to "recognise, protect and facilitate the traditional way of life of Gypsies and Travellers, while respecting the interests of the settled community.

- The ODPM Guidance “Local Authorities and Gypsies and Travellers; a guide to responsibilities and powers” published in May 2007 sets out the objective that Gypsies and Travellers and the settled community should live together peacefully. To achieve this, both must respect the rights of the other and both must discharge their responsibilities to the other. This includes making adequate provision for authorised sites, ensuring respect for the planning system and property rights and prompt and effective enforcement action taken against problem sites; the small minority who indulge in anti-social behaviour must be dealt with promptly and effectively.
- The Travelling Showpeople Guidance Circular 22/91 which is being revised see “Consultation on Revised Planning Guidance in Relation to Travelling Showpeople, CLG, 22/07
- The Housing Act 2004, and the ODPM planning circular (Circular 01/2006), placed a requirement on local housing authorities to assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and to produce a strategy to meet these as part of the wider Housing Strategy. In London, this has been collectively undertaken by all the boroughs through the London Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment, 2008.
- The Human Rights Act 1998 incorporates the European Convention on Human Rights into British Law. The Act requires local authorities to consider the implications of taking enforcement action against Gypsies, Travellers and local residents, and to consider whether the action is necessary and proportionate in the circumstances. The Act stresses Gypsy and Traveller rights to family life.
- The Race Relations (Amendment Act) places a general duty on statutory authorities to eliminate unlawful discrimination, and to promote equality of opportunity and good race relations when carrying out their functions. Both Gypsies and Irish Travellers are legally recognised to be ethnic minorities against whom discrimination is unlawful.
- S77 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 enables local authorities to direct unauthorised campers to leave a site. If campers fail to comply with this, then local authorities may use S78 to obtain a court order to evict them. In addition the Police have power, under S61 to direct trespassers to leave land, and further powers under S62 to direct trespassers to leave land and direct them to move to a more suitable pitch, where one is available.
- The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 includes measures to tackle anti-social behaviour, littering and fly-tipping. Part 7 introduces a new police power to evict unauthorised campers.
- Every Child Matters and the subsequent Children Act 2004 aim to improve the well-being of children and young people from birth to age 19 and people with disabilities up to the age of 25. The aim is for every child, whatever their background or circumstances, to have the support they need to be healthy, happy and safe, to achieve economic independence and to make a positive contribution to society. The framework stresses the inclusion of Gypsy and Traveller children.

- Caravan Sites Act 1968 – Gypsies and Travellers currently occupy pitches on local authority sites under the Caravan Sites Act 1968 (CSA 1968). The CSA 1968 provides limited protection from eviction and harassment. In particular, in order to evict a Gypsy and Traveller from one of their sites, a local authority need only give 28 days' notice to terminate the licence. If the resident does not leave the authority can seek a possession order from the court. The court does have the power to consider the reasons for the eviction and if proved consider whether it is reasonable to grant the order. In 2004, in the case of *Connors v United Kingdom*, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that the lack of procedural safeguards of eviction on local authority Gypsy and Traveller sites breached Article 8 of the European Convention of Human Rights, which provides a right to respect for private, family and home life. Amendments made to the CSA 1968 by the Housing Act 1964 now enable the courts to suspend a possession granted in respect of a local authority site.
- Housing & Regeneration Act 2008/Mobile Homes Act 1983
Section 318 of the 2008 Act amends the definition of “protected” site” in section 5 of the Mobile Homes Act 1983 (MHA 1983) to remove the exclusion for local authority Gypsy and Traveller sites. However, this amendment has not yet come into force. Once this amendment is enacted this will extend the same security of tenure for the Gypsy/Traveller community living on authorised local authority sites as the rights enjoyed by residents on privately owned sites, under the Mobile Homes Act, 1983. The Government is carrying out consultation regarding this change to the law and the consultation document is entitled “Implementing the Mobile Homes Act 1983 on local authority Gypsy and Traveller sites”. The consultation period expired in December 2008 and the Government’s response is awaited. The consultation sought views on three issues: (i) whether some of the provisions of the MHA 1983 need to be amended for local authority Gypsy and Traveller sites; (ii) how the law move from a position where existing residents have licences under the Caravan Sites Act 1968 (CSA 1968) to agreements under the MHA 1983; and (iii) the other transitional provisions that may be needed in applying some of the provisions of the MHA 1983 to existing residents who have licences under the CSA 1968.
- The report of the Local Government Association Gypsy and Traveller Task Group, June 2006 sets out a number of recommendations that focus on:-
 - Understanding accommodation needs,
 - Site provision,
 - Design and management,
 - Enforcement against unauthorised encampments and developments,
 - Resources and refurbishment,
 - Site management and the role of Council leadership.
- The Draft London Housing Strategy, November 2008 in which the Mayor encourages boroughs to protect existing Gypsy and Traveller pitches, refurbish existing sites where needed and address the identified requirements for the provision of new sites.

7.1 Local policies

All policies and practices of statutory agencies are as relevant to Gypsy/Traveller community as they are to settled communities. There are some policies which have a specific relevance to Gypsies and Travellers and these are listed below:

- Brent's Corporate Strategy 2006-2010
The Corporate Strategy states that Brent is an inclusive community welcoming to all.
- Brent's Supporting People Strategy 2005-10
The SP Strategy states that the housing support needs of Travellers on a West London basis should be considered.
- Children and Young People's Plan 2006-2009
Commitment to promote equal access, participation and achievement for all children and young people.

Commitment to consultation with BME groups prior to making decisions on service delivery.
- Homelessness strategy
Now a statutory requirement to assess accommodation need for homeless families and publish a strategy on how to meet that need.
- Housing Strategy 2009 - 2014
This document will give an overview of needs, resources, priorities and objectives.
- Planning policies: Local Development Frameworks, Districts and Boroughs
Allocation of pitch numbers and sites to meet assessed need.

The Local Planning Authority (LPA) is advised by Government planning guidance, particularly Circular 01/2006 Planning For Gypsy and Travellers Sites, to consider the specific needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in its development plan. The Brent Unitary Development Plan (UDP, 2004) provides policy criteria to assess the suitability of proposals for new sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

The London Plan (Consolidated, 2008), which forms part of the Borough's development plan requires an assessment of each borough's Gypsy and Travellers accommodation needs and their available site capacity. The London Gypsy and Travellers Accommodation Assessment (2007) will inform the next review of the London Plan which will set pitch/site provision targets for each borough to be implemented in their Local Development Framework (LDF), the new spatial planning system which will replace the UDP).

The Brent LDF will comprise a number of Development Plan Documents (DPD) which will be prepared over a number of years, commencing, with the overarching Core Strategy. This recognises the specific spatial planning requirements for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in a policy setting out the criteria to be employed in determining the suitability of any future Travellers' site proposals. The Sites Specific Allocations DPD which identifies sites suitable for housing, only a few of which might be able to accommodate caravans and mobile homes as most of Brent's potential housing capacity will be implemented in mixed use developments (flats over commercial and retail.) The subsequent Development Policies DPD will provide any further policy criteria to assess the suitability of proposals to

provide new sites as may be required by a revised London Plan (expected 2011).

- **Single Equality Scheme**
Single Equality Scheme demonstrates how Brent Council will meet its service and employment obligations to our employees, stakeholders and the wider Brent Community.
- **Community Safety Plan 2008-2011**
The main priorities of this plan are to:-
 - tackle and reduce violence in all its forms,
 - increase confidence by providing reassurance, information and dealing effectively and positively with anti-social behaviour at a neighbourhood level, and
 - the medium to long term prevention of crime by focusing on young people and those who are most at risk of being perpetrators or victims.

8.0 The Media

The media is the primary source of information for the general public. It is the first place people see or hear news that is unsolicited, and is usually the first choice for people who want to find out more. Good, trustworthy information must be supplied in order to build a relationship that is mutually beneficial – particularly with the local media. We will be assisted in this by the Council's Communications Team which works closely with Brent Housing Partnership's Communications Officer and the organisation responsible for the management of the Lynton Close site.

The Communications Team will work more closely with the local press to encourage the media to produce information that is balanced, correct, factual and evidence based about Gypsy, Roma and Traveller issues. The Communications Team will also promote the publication of positive stories about these communities.

9.0 Key Issues and Service Barriers

A number of national studies, conferences and consultation exercises involving Gypsies, Roma and Travellers and service providers highlight the communities' low level of awareness of, and access to, public services. The communities also demonstrate poor health and low levels of educational achievement.

To finalise Brent's strategy, we will undertake consultation with professionals, representatives of resident Gypsies, Roma and Travellers, communities and voluntary support groups once the survey currently being carried out by consultants to assess the needs of Gypsies, Roma and Travellers in West London is available. The survey and the subsequent consultation will inform the final strategy, further identify key issues for the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities in Brent, highlight service barriers and therefore determine the action plan.

10.0 Monitoring Evaluation and Review

Procedures will be introduced to monitor the delivery and impact of the Strategy. Regular monitoring will help establish progress in meeting objectives, highlight areas that have worked well and areas that need to be reviewed to achieve improvement.

Draft 6 – July 09

Monitoring reports will be prepared by the Council and discussed by the Brent Traveller Interagency Strategic Group.

To demonstrate the commitment of the Council to progress this agenda, the action plan will be reviewed every two years by the Brent Traveller Interagency Strategic Group, under the leadership of a member of the Council's Corporate Management Board. This will help compliance with Government guidance and legislation and will reinforce good practice as it emerges.

DRAFT

Appendix 1

Draft Action Plan for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Inclusion Strategy in Brent 2009 – 2014

Aims	Outcome	Action	Resources	Time frame	Lead Agency
1. Provide strategic leadership and co-ordinated service delivery to Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities through enhanced partnership working.	Measurable improvement in customer satisfaction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A pilot SP funded housing support service is to be established quickly to address immediate needs. (for further details see 5.2.1 above) 	SP budget	2-3 months	Council/ BHP
	Focused, clear direction & improved service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular internal and external quarterly meetings to be set up to promote co-ordinated activity. 	Existing resources	Immediately	Council
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CMT member to be appointed to co-ordinate Gypsy, Roma and Traveller policy across Council service areas and act as lead contact with the Strategic Traveller Inclusion Group. Ensure inclusion of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller needs in all Council policies. 	Existing resources	2-3 months	Council
2. Improve communication and consultation with the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities to encourage participation in decision making in respect of services.	Higher level of engagement with the Council through shaping appropriate and culturally sensitive services for and by the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide adequate support for the Strategic Traveller Inclusion Group. 	Existing resources	Immediately	Council/ BHP BIAS ITM Police PCT
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify Gypsy Roma representatives so they are included in participation and decision making through improved ethnicity monitoring and analysis. 	Existing resources	6-12 months	

Appendix 1

Aims	Outcome	Action	Resources	Time frame	Lead Agency
3. Improve and sustain effective management of authorised Travellers site.	Improved relations between residents and Council/BHP/externally tendered contractor. Improved customer satisfaction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review contract • Complete tendering process for external provider 	Existing resources		Council/ BHP
4. Mainstream Gypsy, Roma and Traveller needs into Council wide service planning.	Improved access to services, such as employment, training, health and housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include in LAA where appropriate. • Ensure Gypsy, Roma and Traveller needs are covered and addressed in general equalities training, eg Customer Care training. • Create closer partnership working between all relevant Council departments - meetings to take place at least twice/ year. 	Existing resources		Council Council – Diversity Team Council/P &P Unit?
5. Enhanced access to all major services through improved analysis of service take-up and planning.	Improved life chances for children and adults in the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community through better living conditions, improved health, training, employment and education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordinated approach to service provision with internal and external partners. • Revise ethnicity monitoring form to include Gypsies/Travellers and encourage all service areas of the Council to follow corporate guidance. • Monitor and analyse service take up of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community. 	Existing resources Existing resources	6 months 4 months	Council PCT BIAS ITM Police

Appendix 1

Aims	Outcome	Action	Resources	Time frame	Lead Agency
5.1. Identify additional provision to meet future housing need for existing and incoming Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities to Brent/West London	This would create more harmonious living conditions and improved ability to manage sites more effectively. The Tenant Participation Compact will also give recognition to rights of Travellers living on the Lynton Close site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify Council lead and resources • Develop a local Tenants Participation Compact similar to the compacts introduced in September 2007 for settled residents. • Review policy of pitch allocation for applicants. • Review management practices so there is a consistent approach when dealing with site issues. • Consult with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community and settled residents. 	<p>??</p> <p>Existing resources</p> <p>Existing resources</p> <p>Existing resources</p> <p>Existing resources</p>	<p>6 months</p> <p>12-24 months</p> <p>6 months</p> <p>2 months</p> <p>?</p>	<p>CMT</p> <p>BHP</p> <p>HRC/ BHP</p> <p>Council/ BHP</p> <p>Council/ BHP</p>

Appendix 1

Aims	Outcome	Action	Resources	Time frame	Lead Agency
5.2. Improve awareness of and access to Public Health and Social Services.	Reduction of health inequalities in the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create better communication between Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, Social Services and PCT. • PCT to develop specific strategies on health promotion and target Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities 	Existing resources ??	6 months	Council PCT PCT
5.3 Continue to improve basic skills for adults, through training.	This will maximise life skills, employment opportunities and closer involvement of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community with settled residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Extend opportunities offered at the Education & Resource Centre operating on Lynton Close site. •Consult Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities about their learning needs and appropriate methods of course delivery. •Develop plan based on findings and identify resources to deliver relevant training. 	Existing resources Existing resources	12 months 18 months	BACES
5.4. Improve employment opportunities for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community by developing and building on existing skills.	Increase employment levels amongst the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Work with employers to offer apprenticeships and work placements for school leavers in the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities and integrate as fully as possible with mainstream provision. •Quantify levels of worklessness amongst the Gypsy and Traveller communities. •Identify and target individuals where possible, who are workless and draw up personal action plans to overcome specific barriers to find sustainable employment. 	Existing resources	12-18 months	Council – Brent In2 Work Jobcentre Plus

Appendix 1

Aims	Outcome	Action	Resources	Time frame	Lead Agency
5.5 Maximise educational opportunities for all children from nursery to school leavers.	School leavers will improve life chances by either continuing in further education or taking up vocational training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote full engagement with schools through improved attendance. • Provide regular after-school opportunities and mentoring support for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children. • Build on the nursery provision already offered and develop comprehensive nursery education for all children on Lynton Close site. • Identify funding 	<p>Existing resources</p> <p>Existing resources</p> <p>Existing resources</p>	<p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>) 12-24</p> <p>) months</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p> <p>)</p>	Children & Families
6. Promote peaceful co-existence between settled community and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities through presenting a positive image of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community and culture.	Community cohesion and harmonious relations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage representatives of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities to actively engage with the Council's BME Forum. • Continue with the highly successful "Traveller Cultural Month", usually held in June organised by the Council's Achievement & Inclusion Service to promote cultural awareness of Travellers in Brent schools. • Extend the "Traveller Cultural Month" to raise profile of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities amongst the general population and service providers. • Continue promoting good relations between different cultures at the Brent Respect Festival at which the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities are represented. • Brent Youth Forum includes representatives of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. • Encourage balanced press coverage of GR&T issues 	<p>Existing resources</p> <p>Existing resources</p> <p>Existing resources</p> <p>Existing resources</p> <p>Existing resources</p>	Ongoing	Local Strategic Partnership /Children & Families/ BHP/ Communications Unit

Appendix 1

Aims	Outcome	Action	Resources	Time frame	Lead Agency
7. Improve services to the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community through exchange of good practice in other West London boroughs.	Improved services delivered more efficiently and effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all relevant sub-regional funding for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities is bid for. • Encourage the development of regional/sub-regional policies to promote improved access to services for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community. 	<p>Existing resources</p> <p>Existing resources</p>		Council/ BHP/W London Alliance
8. Tackle crime, ASB and Community Safety	Peaceful co-existence within the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community and with the settled community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit bid for funding to utilise the powers promised under the Housing & Regeneration Bill to tackle anti-social residents via Family Intervention Projects. • Take appropriate enforcement action when breaches of licence occur on the Travellers site, working in liaising with externally tendered contractor and where necessary, the Police. 	<p>Existing resources</p> <p>Existing resources</p>		Commtty Safety/ ASB Team/ BHP/ Council
9. Include, as separate categories -Gypsies -Roma and -Travellers	Increased customer satisfaction resulting from better access to public services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of ethnic monitoring • Encourage statutory and other partner organisations to amend and monitor suggested categories. 	Existing resources		Diversity Team