

**LONDON
GYPSIES &
TRAVELLERS**

**Addressing racism
and inequalities faced
by Gypsy, Roma and
Traveller communities**

8th March 2022
Barking and Dagenham



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GYPSIES &
TRAVELLERS**

Introductions



LONDON GYPSIES & TRAVELLERS

Purpose of the session

- Provide an understanding of the racism, discrimination and inequalities faced by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people
- Give an overview of how the needs of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities could be met in the context of the Borough Manifesto
- Create an opportunity for discussion and reflection on the role of Councillors in promoting inclusion and anti-racism



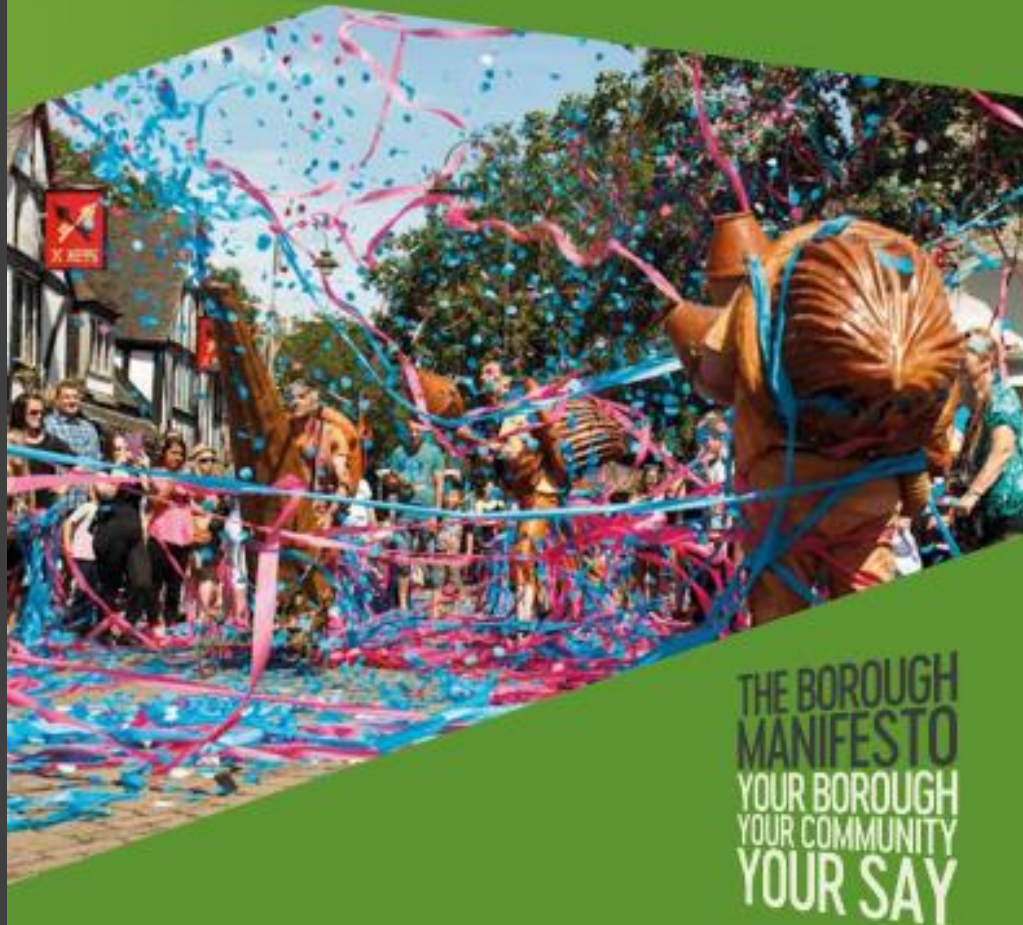
LONDON GYPSIES & TRAVELLERS

Agenda

- **Our starting point – Borough Manifesto**
- **Presentations on the themes: Community and cohesion, Fairness and Housing – Q&A**
- **Discussion – the role of the Council in implementing an inclusive vision**



Barking and Dagenham Together



THE BOROUGH
MANIFESTO
YOUR BOROUGH
YOUR COMMUNITY
YOUR SAY

- Barking and Dagenham Manifesto - One borough, one community. No one left behind
- Focusing on three themes: Community and cohesion; Fairness; Housing
- Exploring how these issues are experienced by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities
- Looking at ways to improve outcomes



Community and cohesion

We understand the importance of community and cohesion and are determined to make Barking and Dagenham a friendly and welcoming borough with strong community spirit.

To achieve this we will support the community to celebrate our history and heritage, through events and activities.

We will tackle extremism and hate crime wherever it occurs.



Gypsy, Traveller and Roma communities have been living and working in London and in Barking and Dagenham for generations

Add genocide of Gypsies to national curriculum, say charities

Forty groups call for 'meaningful change' after Jimmy Carr's joke about mass murder of Roma and Sinti people



Wreaths and flowers mark Roma and Sinti Genocide Remembrance Day on 2 August 2021 at the

Gypsy, Traveller and Roma communities share a long history of persecution and oppression in the UK and across the world

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people are affected by widespread negative public attitudes

'Death threats are a way of life': Gypsies and Irish Travellers and Muslims 'least-liked' in UK, survey finds

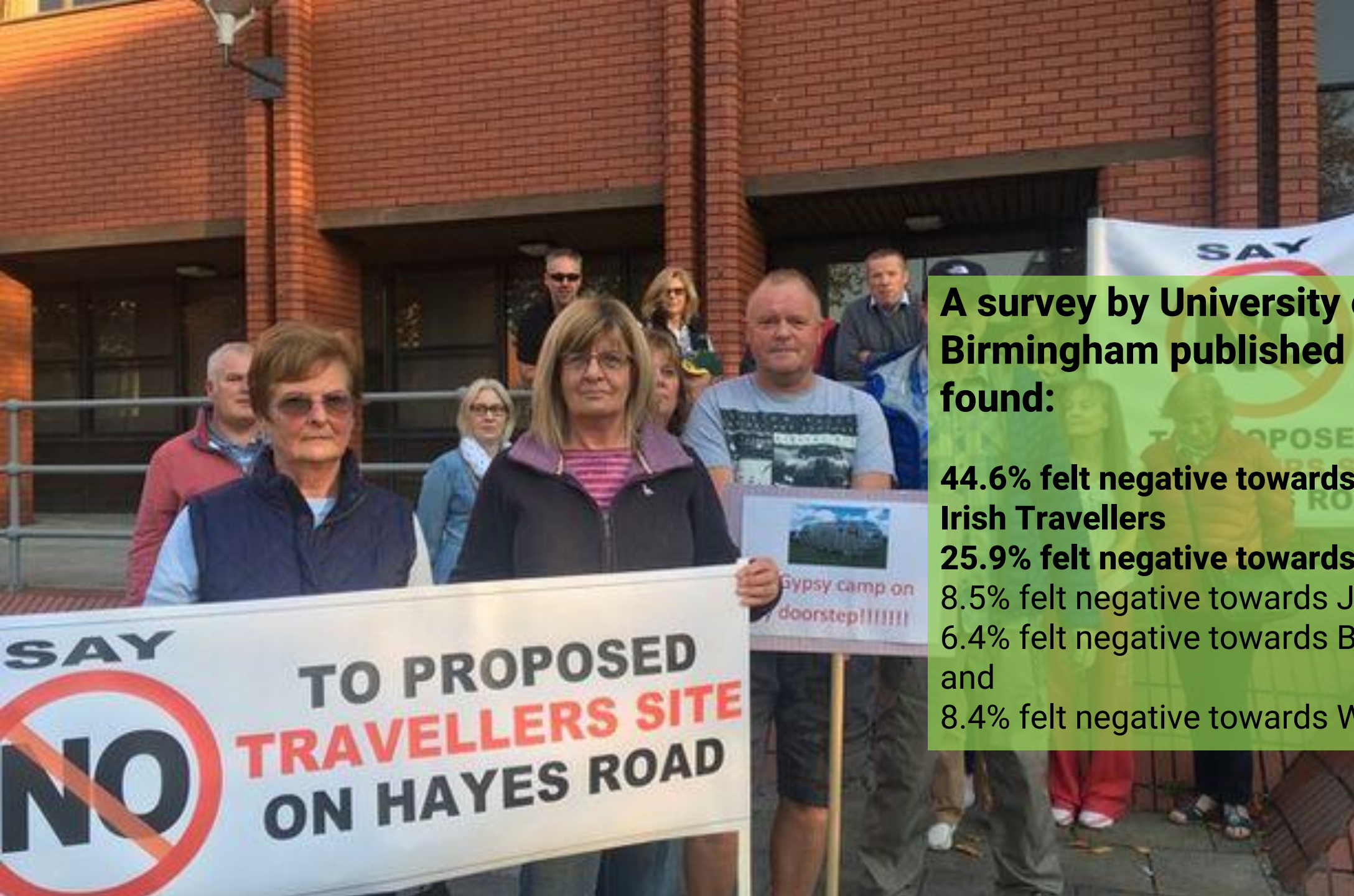
Abiline McShane, a British Romany Gypsy traveller, said she was not surprised by the findings - adding a drive-by shooting recently took place at a site and she often hears things like "let's blow them up in their caravans".



Lisa Dowd
Midlands correspondent @LisaSkyNews

Monday 24 January 2022 09:10 UK





A survey by University of Birmingham published in 2022 found:

44.6% felt negative towards Gypsies and Irish Travellers

25.9% felt negative towards Muslims

8.5% felt negative towards Jewish people

6.4% felt negative towards Black people and

8.4% felt negative towards White people

There is a crisis of misrepresentation of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people in the media.

Mapping media

1 story in a big national every **3** days!

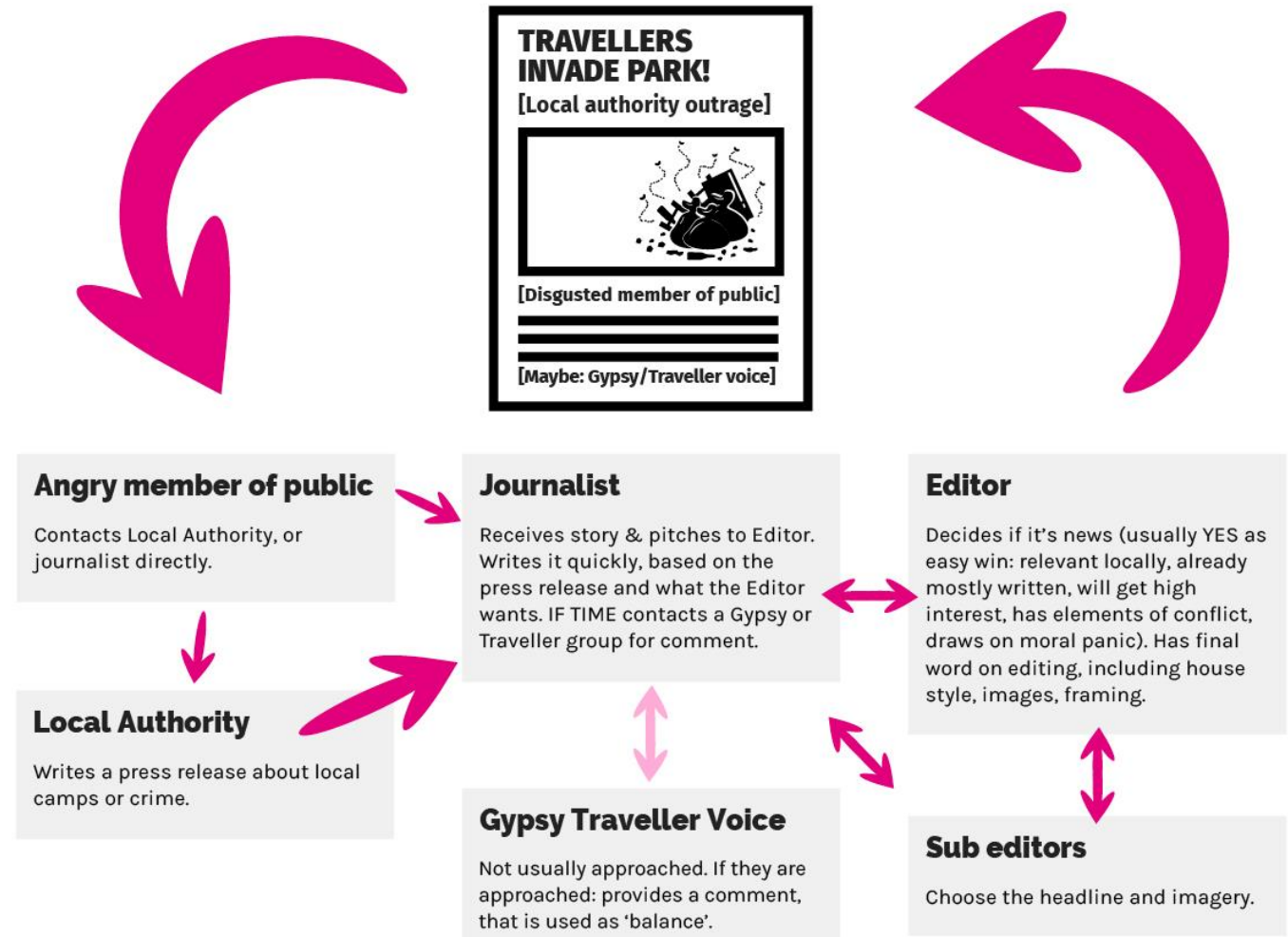
Channel 4 Dispatches report accused of 'dehumanising' Travellers

Ofcom receives hundreds of complaints about The Truth About Traveller Crime



Local authorities have a role in limiting harmful representations of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people

The harmful story cycle



There is a need to improve the Council's public communications.



Gypsy and Traveller sites

We aim to provide essential services to the Travellers and Gypsies in the borough, balancing their rights with those of anyone on whose land unauthorised camping takes place.

Gypsies and Travellers are protected from discrimination by the [Race Relations Act 1976](#) and the [Human Rights Act 1998](#).



Police involvement



Council owned land



Unlawful encampment injunction



Privately owned land



Questions and reflections

Fairness

Our diversity needs to be understood, embraced, and harnessed for the benefit of everyone. And to reap the benefits of diversity, our community must be united, not segregated.

Barking and Dagenham will be a place where everyone is valued and has the opportunity to succeed.



Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people are routinely refused access to public and private services

Pontins used blacklist of common Irish surnames to keep Traveller families out of holiday parks

EXCLUSIVE

The list was uploaded to the Pontins intranet under the heading "Undesirable Guests", instructing call handlers that people using these names were "unwelcome"



Pontins has signed a legally binding agreement with equality watchdog to address the issues raised by the whistleblower (Photo: Getty)

Public institutions continue to have discriminatory practices that target Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people

Travellers complain over Met officer's warning about funeral

Charity accuses force of blatant discrimination after email to firms in Barking and Dagenham



Met police said the complaint was received and it will be assessed. Photograph: Dominic Lipinski/PA

Scotland Yard has been accused of “blatant discrimination” after an officer warned local businesses of the risk of hosting mourners from the Traveller community attending a funeral.

Meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty is a way to ensure fair opportunities for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller residents

Those subject to the equality duty must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate **unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation** and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Women and Equalities Committee recommendation, 2019

We recommend that senior leaders in all public service bodies be trained in the Public Sector Equality Duty and that each body have a Gypsy, Roma and Traveller "champion", similar to the role that exists in the National Police Chiefs Council.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities have been 'comprehensively failed', say MPs

A report into inequalities faced by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people finds significant problems including acute discrimination.

By Katerina Vittozzi, Sky News reporter

Friday 5 April 2019 01:38, UK



**Recommendation from 2006 LGTU
report commissioned by Barking
and Dagenham**

***Allocation of a senior council officer at
Head of Service level or higher to
champion all Gypsy and Travellers issues
in the borough and ensure that appropriate
plans are implemented and monitored
across departments.***



GYPSIES and TRAVELLERS.
Report carried out for Barking and Dagenham Council
by the London Gypsy and Traveller Unit.
January to April 2006.

1st May 2006

INTRODUCTION

The London Gypsy and Traveller Unit (LGTU) has produced this report for the Corporate Equalities and Diversity department of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.

Questions and reflections





Housing

We understand that housing has a social and community purpose.

A mix of different types of homes bonds us together; it builds communities and helps working people stay in the borough and families stay near each other.

We will ensure Barking and Dagenham is a place with sufficient, accessible and varied housing.

Gypsy and Traveller Londoners are disproportionately affected by

- **A lack of culturally suitable accommodation**
- **Overcrowding** and need for family homes
- **Poor living conditions** and management of sites



A photograph of three young boys riding scooters on a residential street. The boy in the center is wearing a dark sweater with a brown diamond pattern and dark pants. The boy on the left is wearing a red shirt and a dark vest. The boy on the right is wearing a blue soccer jersey. They are riding on a paved road in front of a brick house with a black metal fence. A pink rounded rectangle is overlaid on the top left corner of the image.

The scale of accommodation need for Gypsies and Travellers in London

800 family pitches needed between 2007-2017

Only 10 new pitches delivered by local authorities as extensions to existing sites

Zero transit sites or stopping places for nomadic families



Impacts of the accommodation crisis include:

- Families stuck in temporary and emergency accommodation
- Pushed on the road side
- Evictions and displacement
- Family and community networks being damaged
- Loss of culture and identity
- Poor physical and mental health

Barking and Dagenham Local Plan

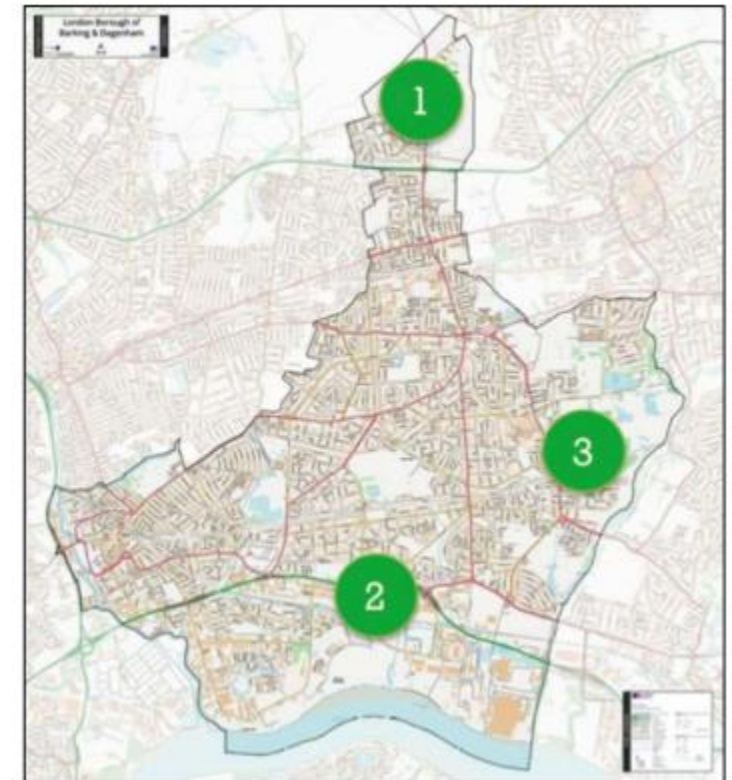
The Barking and Dagenham Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment identified a need of 24 pitches up to 2034.

This need will be met by

- a) **retaining and protecting** the existing Gypsy and Traveller site at Eastbrookend Country Park
- b) delivering a maximum of **12 pitches by expanding the existing public site** at Eastbrookend Country Park within the first five years of the plan period

Figure 24. Gypsy and Traveller site options

- Sites:**
- 1 Collier Row Road
 - 2 Choats Road
 - 3 Eastbrookend Country Park



What is needed to deliver the vision

- Political commitment to see this as a priority
- Building strong relationships and working in collaboration with Gypsy and Traveller families
- Strategic leadership and resources
- Championing good quality accommodation and site management

Places we're proud of



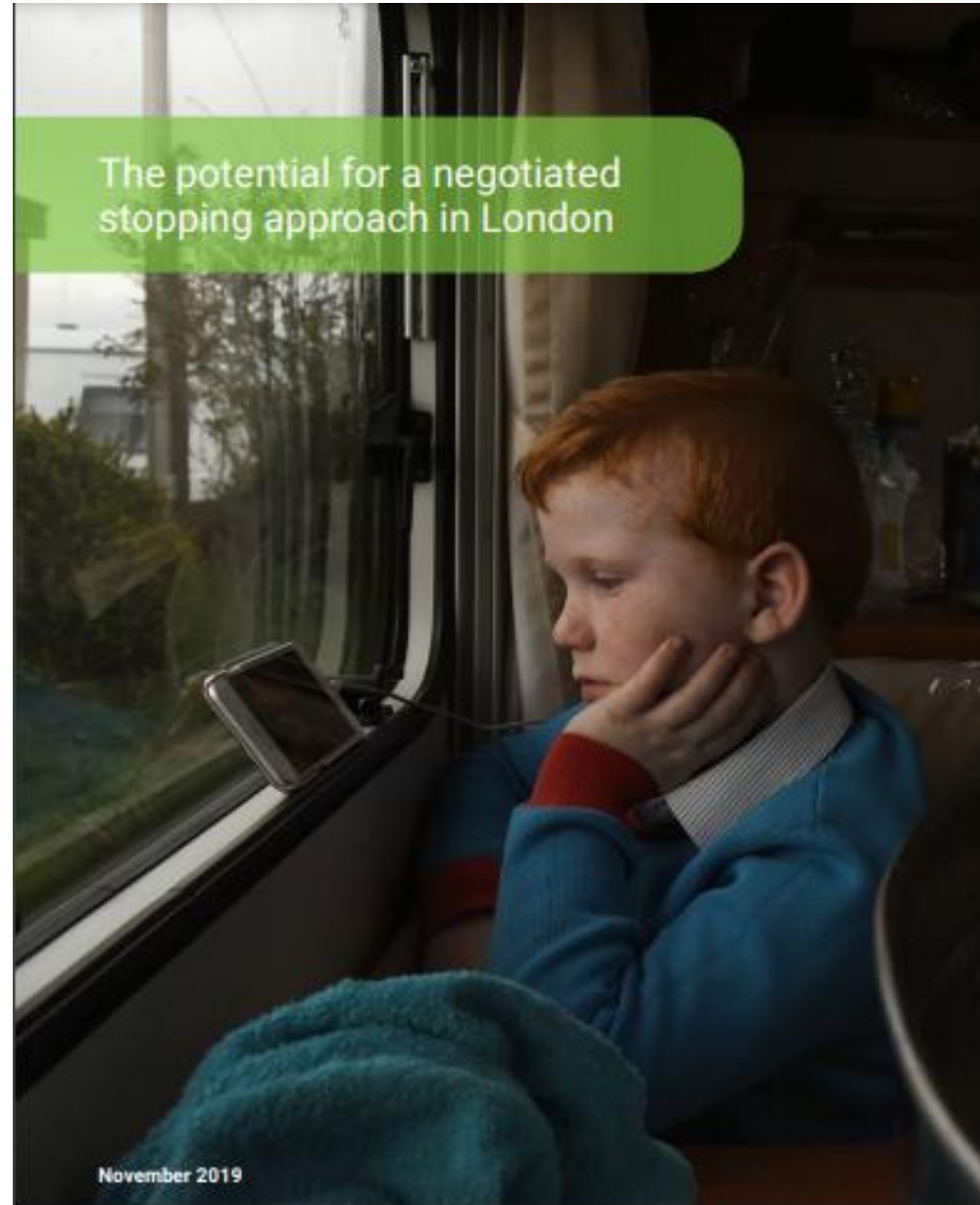
A short guide to providing and
managing sites for Gypsies and Travellers

Facilitating the nomadic way of life

Negotiated stopping approach

Provides safe and secure temporary stopping places and facilities for families travelling through an area

A way forward to achieve community cohesion





Questions and reflections



Human
RIGHTS

Discussion

What could Councillors do to ensure Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities are included in this vision?

- What roles could Councillors take as individuals?
- What needs to happen within the Council processes?

Addressing racism and inequalities faced by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities

Our call to action:

- Leadership on an anti-racist programme for Gypsy, Roma, Traveller communities – Establish Cabinet lead to follow through the commitments in the Borough manifesto working closely with the communities
- Deliver the new sites proposed in the Local Plan
- Maintain good quality of living conditions and management at the existing site
- Public communications – review council website and press briefings; promote stories of community cohesion



Resources

Reports

‘Media that Moves: Creating anti-racist representations of Gypsies and Travellers in the UK media’, LGT, Leeds GATE and PIRC, 2022

<http://www.londongypsiesandtravellers.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Media-That-Moves-Summary-Report.pdf>

‘The potential for a negotiated stopping approach in London’, LGT, 2019

http://www.londongypsiesandtravellers.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/LGT_report_28Nov_web.pdf

‘Hate: As regular as rain’, GATE Herts, 2020

<https://gateherts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Rain-Report-201211.pdf>

‘Tackling inequalities faced by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities’, Women and Equalities Committee, 2019

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmwomeq/360/full-report.html>

Report carried out for Barking and Dagenham Council by the London Gypsy and Traveller Unit, 2006

<http://www.londongypsiesandtravellers.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/GypsyandTravellerReportBarking.pdf>

‘Places we’re proud of: A short guide to providing and managing sites for Gypsies and Travellers’, 2021

<https://www.elimhousing.co.uk/media/1601/places-were-proud-of.pdf>

Resources

Videos

'Roads from the past' (Travellers Times) -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1bhBbMrF8Z0>

'The last nomads' (Drive2Survive) -

<https://www.drive2survive.org.uk/post/the-last-nomads>

'What is negotiated stopping' (Leeds GATE) -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oxw0i2t-Y4E>

Websites

Roma Support Group

<https://www.romasupportgroup.org.uk/>

Report Racism GRT

<https://reportracismgrt.com/>

Negotiated stopping

<https://www.negotiatedstopping.co.uk/>

Thank you!

It's been a long time coming...

londongypsiesandtravellers.org.uk
Facebook: LonGypsyTraveller
Twitter: @LondonGypsyTrav
Instagram: londongypsytraveller



...but I know a change is gonna come