

# Travellers and Gypsies: Generations for the Future

A report of the consultations with children and young people on the Welsh Assembly Government's draft Gypsy Traveller Strategy

February 2010

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**Save the Children**  
Achub y Plant

**Welsh Assembly Government Consultation on Gypsy Traveller Strategy  
Draft Report from the Children and Young People’s Consultations  
February 2010**

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For Save the Children Wales

Foreword: Save the Children.....	3
Acknowledgements: Ear 2 the Ground .....	3
Notes on text: .....	3
Consultation process .....	4
Who took part? .....	5
How old? .....	5
Where were the children and young people living? .....	6
House or Site?.....	7
Male or Female?.....	7
1. Identity.....	7
2. Education: inside school.....	8
2.0 Context .....	8
2.1 Bullying and discrimination .....	11
2.2 School Attendance and Attainment .....	14
2.3 Gypsy Travellers in the Curriculum.....	17
2.4 Parental Trust in School .....	18
Education inside School: Goals (recommendations drawn from young people’s feedback).....	21
3. Education, Jobs and Training .....	22
3.1 Barriers and success in accessing training and work .....	23
3.2 Traveller Education Service.....	25
Education, Jobs and Training: Goals.....	26
4. Being treated fairly .....	27
Being Treated Fairly: Goals.....	34
5. Participation .....	35
6. Health .....	40
7. Sport.....	43
8. Where you live.....	48
8 A) Living in a council house or flat.....	48
8 B) When you are travelling or living on an unofficial site .....	51
8C) When you are living on a site.....	53
8D) When you are living on your own land or in your own house.....	64
9. What name for the new plan for Gypsy Travellers in Wales?.....	66

## Foreword: Save the Children

Save the Children Wales have been working with young Gypsy Travellers in Wales for a number of years, and were pleased to be commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government in September 2009 to carry out the consultation work on the draft Gypsy Traveller Strategy with young people from across Wales. In association with Save the Children, Cath Larkins and Trudy Aspinwall from Ear to the Ground were commissioned to carry out this work, supported by Kathryn Kendall, the Programme Officer for Gypsy Traveller work at Save the Children. Through questionnaires, consultation events and targeted workshops, the views of young Gypsy Travellers across Wales were gathered and analysed. The results are presented in this report. Their insightful ideas will provide much for professionals and duty-bearers to consider, and we will work to ensure that as well as influencing the WAG strategy, these findings have wider reach across the sector.

Save the Children would like to thank Ear to the Ground for their work on this report, and the Travellers Education Services and other professionals who supported the information gathering. Most importantly we would like to thank the young people who fed their views into the Gypsy Traveller Strategy for their time and enthusiasm, and trust that their participation in this consultation will result in tangible positive changes to their lives.

Save the Children is the world's independent children's charity. We're outraged that millions of children are still denied proper healthcare, food, education and protection. We're working flat out to get every child their rights and we're determined to make further, faster changes

## Acknowledgements: Ear 2 the Ground

This report has been written by Cath Larkins and Trudy Aspinwall of Ear 2 the Ground for Save the Children Wales.

The questionnaire and subsequent consultation themes and questions were developed by the Cardiff Young Researchers Group who have also produced a Young Peoples Summary and accompanying video on the main messages from the consultations.

The Young Researchers group are:

Nicole, Patrick, Sophie, Minnie and Babe with support from Val Hawksworth, Cardiff Traveller Education Service.

With thanks to Kathryn Kendall at Save the Children and all the workers who supported and encouraged young people to complete a questionnaire, come along to a consultation day or meet us at schools and their homes around Wales.

The biggest thanks go to all the young people who shared their ideas, time and experiences with us.

## Notes on text:

'Direct quotes, verbal or written, from young people are shown throughout like this in single quotes'

**Questions from researchers in bold like this**

*Names of places or people are anonymised and in italics like this – Town X or Mrs P*

## Introduction

This report represents the views collected from children and young people in the course of Ear2theGround's Consultation on the Welsh Assembly Government draft Strategy for Gypsy Travellers: A Road Less Travelled.

The report is split into chapters according to focus of the strategy and into sub-sections according to the views expressed during the consultation. The consultation took place from October to December 2009 and involved over a hundred Gypsy Traveller Children and Young People from 14 Local Authorities in Wales.

At the end of every chapter of this draft report there are **Goals**, drawn directly from the young people's ideas, for the changes they would like to see planned for by the Strategy.

## Consultation process

This consultation of children and young people took place through a triangulated process of peer-designed questionnaires, consultation days and targeted events to create a dialogue between different perspectives of individuals and groups of Gypsy and Traveller children.

We initially worked with a group of young researchers to draw out from the Strategy the focus for the questionnaire; our aim was to ground the research in a Gypsy Traveller young person perspective rather than impose the WAG perspective. The dialogue process between the questionnaire writers, the questionnaire respondents and the face-to-face participants aims to allow the exploration of a variety of Gypsy Traveller children and young people's standpoints, so that the consultation is more representative<sup>1</sup>.

Whilst we believe the process of dialogue and the combination of qualitative and quantitative data makes this report more valid, we do not claim that the results can be generalised to represent the opinions of **all** Gypsy and Traveller children.

In exploring the figures drawn from the 65 questionnaire responses, for example, we are very cautious in interpreting the data. We are assuming that the Gypsy Traveller population in Wales aged 5-22 years is roughly 1200 (that is 80% of the 1471 estimated population of children and young people). With these sample assumptions we can have 95% confidence that in a similar survey, figures of 50% could vary by plus or minus 12%<sup>2</sup>, and figures of 10% could vary by plus or minus 7%. The questionnaire was also written in a way that favoured positive responses, that is ratings of importance rather than bad ideas, because the contents of the questionnaires were drawn from the Young Researchers suggestions of good ideas.

As a very detailed interpretation of the figures is not possible within the confines of this report, for quick comparison we suggest robust conclusions can only be drawn where there is a 24% or more discrepancy between '*very important*' ideas and '*bad/not important*' ideas and from consistent or repeated comments in the qualitative research to draw conclusions. For ease of comparison, in the tables throughout this report, we highlight in **bold positive positions** (where there are 24% or more questionnaire respondents who think an idea is '*very important*' than those who think it is a '*bad/not important*'), we also mark in *italics* the occasional *negative position* (where there are 24% or more questionnaire respondents who think an idea is '*bad/not important*' than those who think it

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<sup>1</sup> This process of Formative Dialogue Research (see Searching Together (2008) Save the Children Norway)

<sup>2</sup> Based on confidence test used in the Funky Dragon questionnaire report "Our Rights Our Story"

[www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm](http://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm)

is 'very important'). In the 'Where you live' section, we raise this interval to 29% in the section on official sites and 44% in the council houses and unofficial sites sections. This is to reflect the choices respondents made about only answering some of these subsections. Other specific interpretations, drawing on further figures, are indicated in the main text and we suggest individuals may also choose how to draw their own conclusions from the data and use this report to stimulate and progress discussions.

## **Who took part?**

It is difficult to say exactly how many children took part in the consultations as some children who took part in the face to face consultations also sent in questionnaires. However, based on the figures for participation in different activities; we think it is reasonable to assume that over a hundred individuals have taken part.

**The Questionnaire Research Group was attended by five young people.** This group was convened by the researchers pro-actively contacting (Cardiff) TES to offer the opportunity to young people who had been previously engaged with Save the Children programme work.

**The Regional Consultation Days were attended by thirty-two children and young people.** Invitations were sent out to each of the 22 Unitary Authorities, TES, Education, Local Authority and/or Lead Contacts from a WAG list inviting workers to support young people to attend.

Two Consultation days were held, one in Swansea and one in Wrexham. The north Wales day included a larger ratio of workers to young people and some workers attended without bringing along young people. Consequently we ran a 'workers only' discussion group on this day which was written up separately and referenced as appropriate in the main text of the report.

Attendance from more local authorities at the regional consultations days may have increased with additional funding for planning time, a longer lead-in time to the consultation and an updated contact list that named **all** the workers who worked directly with Gypsy and Traveller children and young people.

**The Target Consultation Events were attended by twenty-nine children and young people.** These were visits and workshops run by the researchers either in schools or where children and young people were living. These locations were chosen after consultation with Save the Children on groups that were not already engaged, were unable to attend the consultation days or where we were informed of particular local issues.

**Questionnaires were completed and returned by sixty-five children and young people.**

As with the regional consultation invites, questionnaires were sent out to contacts in each of the 22 local authorities. Significant efforts were then made to follow up and identify the relevant workers and encourage the completion and return of questionnaires. Some local authorities did not respond at all and the contact list was inappropriate or incomplete in some places e.g. Environmental Health or Housing were lead contact agencies on list with no direct contact with young people.

Overall we made every effort within the timescales and resources available to us to include as many Local Authorities to support young people to participate, including offering site visits and amended questionnaires to some groups.

**On the basis of these figures we can say that Gypsy Traveller children and young people contributed to this report on one hundred and thirty-one occasions.**

## **How old?**

The children and young people who participated were aged 5 to 22 with the median age of questionnaire respondents being 11½.

Ages	Young Researchers	Questionnaire	North Wales Regional Consultation	South Wales Regional Consultation	Carmarthenshire Consultation	Welshpool Consultation	Newport Consultation	Total
5		2			2			4
6		4			4			8
7		7			1	1		9
8					1			1
9		8	2		2			12
10		6	3		2			11
11	1	8	1	4	1			15
12		9	1	5	1			16
13		6	0	3	2	1	1	13
14		3	1	3	1			8
15	2	4	0	4		2	1	13
16	2	1	2	3		1		9
17		3		3				6
18						1		1
21		2				1		3
22		1						1
Blank		1						1
	5	65	10	25	17	7	2	131

### Where were the children and young people living?

Children and young people who took part in the consultations were living in a total of 14 Local Authorities in Wales, although some of them mentioned also living in areas of England. The figures below show how these responses were distributed across different local authorities according to the participation opportunities.

Local Authority	Questionnaire	Consultation Days	Targeted Event and Researchers	Total
Bridgend	17			17
Blaenau Gwent		2		2
Carmarthenshire	6		17	23
Cardiff	2	4	5	11
Denbighshire	1			1
Flintshire	13	6		19
Merthyr		4		4
Neath Port Talbot	1	3		4
Newport			2	2
Powys	3		7	10
Pembrokeshire	15	3		18
Swansea		6		6
Torfaen	4	3		7
Wrexham	3	4		7
<b>Totals</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>131</b>

### House or Site?

The children and young people who participated in all the events were living variously in houses, on sites and travelling. We have no exact figures for this from the face to face consultations but the questionnaire respondents were roughly evenly split between houses and sites.

How are you living?	Total
House	29
house and pulled down	1
house and site	6
Site	27
Travelling	1
(blank)	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>65</b>

### Male or Female?

In the regional consultations there were more girls than boys, but the targeted events and questionnaire responses were fairly evenly split.

Gender	Total
Female	27
Male	25
Unknown	13
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>65</b>

## 1. Identity

Questionnaire respondents were given the choice of the following identity categories, drawn from the research group members' discussion of the WAG proposed categories:

Welsh Gypsy  Irish Traveller  Romany Gypsy  Welsh  Or write in another name

All of the children were contacted through Gypsy Traveller services and almost all of those we consulted during this project described themselves as Gypsy, Romany, Traveller or both Gypsy and Traveller. For some of them, these identities intersected with definitions of nationality and nine times a child did not name themselves as Gypsy or Traveller but just gave their nationality: Welsh. Responses to the questionnaire show how these identities were spread with, unsurprisingly, the identities that could just be ticked having a much higher response level than those which required writing an additional name.

Number of Respondents	
1b Describe yourself	Total
Welsh Gypsy	21
Irish Traveller	17
Romany Gypsy	11
Welsh	9
English Traveller	3
Gypsy	1
Welsh Romany	3
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>65</b>

### Identity Goal

Explore and consult further on including the other options these children and young people have used, potentially allowing for different combinations of British national identities, especially the expression of 'Welshness'.

## 2. Education: inside school

Following the advice expressed in face-to-face consultations we have divided the Education theme in two, dealing with issues related to school first, and going on to look at education, jobs and training outside of school (although, from good practice examples around the country we know that children may also access training through school).

### 2.0 Context

As expressed in the young researcher's questionnaire, some Gypsy Traveller children have a really good time in school and some are doing really well but others experience some problems. Education was seen as important, as described below in one group discussion:

'Education is everything – you wouldn't be able to get through life without education. The main problems I have is my reading – I'm getting really worried about it, I've only got another 7-8 months before I leave and I want a choice about what work I do – its difficult to have a choice if you cant read'

Many recognised the consequences of not going to school:

'I f you don't go to school you don't learn'

Some questionnaire respondents wrote of having no problems, liking school, neither being treated as an outcast nor bullied, with comments such as these from the questionnaires:

'School is good'

'I like school'

'I have no problems with education. I am very popular in school and I really enjoy it'

'I have no problems with any of it as I went through education and I now have a full time job within education'

'Teachers help us'

And good experiences were described in some face-to-face consultations:

**What's good about school?** 'Doing work, playing with friends'

**What helps you with education?** 'Powys Training comes out – teachers come out and they bring the library. School is good'

In the face-to-face consultations there were still problems to solve around attainment, discrimination, and being listened to.

'We are frightened because we can't read.'

'I n school we are outcasts'

'Lack of fairness at school = Teachers: when we have a fight they say we start it'

The themes of attainment and bullying and discrimination were repeated in the questionnaire responses:

'Worried about not being able to read'

'Problems with bullying - name calling - to be treated equally'

More children have said that bullying is getting better than getting worse and a number of them said they had never been bullied.

Has bullying changed recently?	Total
A lot better	30%
A bit better	15%
No change	44%
A bit worse	2%
A lot worse	9%

We are please to note that where a change is noted, it is more likely to be positive than negative<sup>3</sup>. However the on-going experience of bullying, or bullying worsening for some, remains a matter of concern. The case study reinforces this:

'My sister was in *school x* and it was really bad – bullying was so bad at one point she had all the school on to her calling her Gypsy and that.

The head teacher advised calling the police cos he didn't know what else to do. She was moved to a unit, she lost out on loads of education because of it. What they are doing is really hurting her'

Unsurprisingly therefore, there were also comments about attitudes towards school, and parents concerns and willingness to allow children in the school environment

'I don't like going to school'

'Drugs, fighting, bullying, children getting hurt'

'I was not allowed to go to the comp'

Gypsy Traveller culture not always being understood:

'When I am working with Dad, do people take it seriously?'

'When in high school we found it hard to attend, we found it hard to fit in with our culture. But further education was very successful'

And cultural expectations and roles:

'Secondary – no one will go there because they have to help their mam, dad - looking after' (younger siblings)

<sup>3</sup> As this data has been completed largely in schools, often with the assistance of teachers who at times exerted a clear positive spin influence on the data given, the validity of these figures is therefore debatable.

One group talked about the culture that can develop amongst some Gypsy Traveller pupils that can prevent attendance:

'Some Travellers don't think it's cool to go to school or try to learn'

'I listened one day but I was shut out like the boring one'

One group of younger children outlined their problems with school:

What are the problems?

'Country children laughing and giggling at you'

'Children don't play football "Go and play with your own friends. Go back to your own dump"'

'Don't pay attention!'

'Reading is hard!'

'When you are being picked on ...you don't work well'

And a list of solutions suggested demonstrates the complexity of changes needed:

Solutions:

'Classes for Travellers! But only if *Teacher X* or *Worker Y* is there!'

'Make it the law and enforce education!'

'Stop bullying'

'Secondary - if friends and family go to secondary then trust is built up'

'Student council - help Travellers to get on'

### **Do these problems link to the focus of the Strategy?**

As with the strategy, this consultation confirms that some Gypsy Traveller children are having positive experiences of education but that there is room for improvement with regard to:

1. Bullying and discrimination
2. Supporting attainment and attendance
3. Attitudes towards school
4. Understanding of Gypsy Traveller Cultures
5. Being listened to

Possible actions towards improvement on each of the first four of these themes are explored in more depth in the subsections below, with recommendations for consequent changes or additions to the strategy at the end. We consider the issue of being listened to across each of these themes where it arises, and separately in the chapter on Participation.

## 2.1 Bullying and discrimination

From these questionnaire responses we can see that these children are both proposing taking responsibility for doing something about bullying themselves (suggestions 1 and 2) **and** asking for support from workers (suggestions 5 and possibly 3).

2c. What do you think would help you deal with bullying?		Bad idea	Not important	Don't know	Fairly important	Very important	Blank
1	<b>Stick up for yourself and not stick it</b>	5%	8%	5%	6%	<b>71%</b>	6%
2	<b>Talk to the teacher or manager</b>	3%	3%	12%	22%	<b>55%</b>	5%
3	Get someone from Traveller Education to talk to a teacher or manager	5%	17%	14%	17%	42%	6%
4	<i>Get the police involved</i>	40%	9%	11%	12%	17%	11%
5	<b>Teachers who do something when you get bullied.</b>	3%	6%	6%	15%	<b>60%</b>	9%
6	<b>If everybody treated us equally.</b>	2%	3%	6%	6%	<b>63%</b>	20%

There was strong support for changes in attitudes towards greater equality although a high number of respondents also left this blank. Although the previous Case Study has shown that children sometimes have to contact the police, 40% think this is a bad idea, but perhaps that reflects the level of bullying they have experienced as well as their attitudes towards the police.

In face-to-face consultations similar themes arose: sticking up for themselves and telling teachers, but the paramount concern was that teachers actually **do** something when bullying is reported. The Strategy suggests that all schools should have an anti-bullying policy that mentions Gypsies and Travellers but there was some division about the helpfulness of this, as shown in this group discussion:

'Yes, we have got a policy – I wouldn't want a special mention – it puts words in their mouths to chuck at you –likes if they put up loads of signs - I knows all the rules – do the teachers do anything? – No not always – in the end you give up and do it yourself'

'Confidentiality slips ---- by informing that they are being bullied'

Again this comment reflects the Strategy's concern with making anti-bullying policies effective and below we list their compiled suggestions for what might help:

'Teachers should sort it out or listen'

### What would help make bullying policies work better?

A main / named teacher to talk to who:

'Understands Gypsies'

'Knows that Children are too scared to say to their teachers cos they hardly know them'

'Should talk to them and ask them themself (teachers should talk to the bullies!)

'Accepts that some teachers don't listen 'they told me to go away'

'Show bullies the worst possible consequences of bullying someone, and talks about what might happen if their behaviour continued'

'Bullies don't get on trips or on the football team'

'Victims should tell the teachers'

'Give prizes if they don't bully'

Children in one group talked about how their teacher had made all the difference to their experience:

'If it wasn't for Mrs R.....'

Raising awareness in a fun way to police, teachers and children, such as:

'Event to show how Gypsy Travellers lives'

'Children and teachers learn about being a Gypsy - make the children talk'

'Boxing club helps - help interact'

'Having more Travellers in schools'

A safe space to be:

'The Traveller's room was mainly for us but now it's used for Polish people too - we can go in there to calm down or if we are angry, it's good'

Dealing with wider issues of bullying:

'Outside school too'

'From adults too'

'Stop teachers bullying'

Bullying between Travellers:

'I get bullied in school because I am a Traveller but Travellers is bullies sometimes too'

Encouraging Peer/Self support by supporting children to:

'Be proud of who they are'

'Tell a buddy''

Talk to youth worker, teacher'

'Need to respect – when Travellers go into school they are not always respected or they think they will not be respected and expect people to treat them badly, so they don't respect people first'

'Always stick up for themselves'

'Treat each other equally'

Several children in one group were 'buddies' in their school but had mixed feelings about the effectiveness of some schemes:

'Buddying – the buddy book – does it really work?'

Enabling children to not go to mainstream school or to change school if necessary by:

'Mobile education centre on sites'

'If bullying doesn't stop, ensuring they can go to another school or don't go to school until it is sorted out'

Two groups discussed bullying and what helps them and their schools prevent it:

### **Group 1 – over 16s**

'We didn't get bullied – we didn't have a problem'

Why not?

'We have friends there all the way from primary school'

'What helps is someone to talk to - youth workers – like *Youth Worker Y* but now only see her....(less)'

'There should be a full time youth worker for Travellers'

'If it wasn't for *Teacher X*, because of *Teacher X* and *Teacher Y* they pushed us – we wouldn't be in school at all'

'I now regret not going full time to school'

'Bring back *Youth worker X!*' (Has left post)

'Young people should interview for workers like we do'

### **Group 2 – under 16s**

'There is no bullying in our school – everybody respects us for who we are'

'Bullying policy works well in the school and the teachers will deal with the bullying'

'If the pupils don't respect the school how are they going to respect other people?  
And if they don't respect the school they get isolation and if they still don't  
respect the school they should get excluded'

'Buddying schemes are a good way; there are good initiatives in schools to stop  
bullying. School counselling service, mentors, transfer to a new school to get a  
fresh start'

One young person commented that what was needed was:

'More discipline towards Travellers'



## 2.2 School Attendance and Attainment

The young researcher's group, when they explored the Strategy document, accepted that going to school is difficult for some children and made some suggestions for what might help, that were tested in their questionnaire. Below are the questionnaire responses to these suggestions.

2d. What would help you go to school more?		Bad idea	Not important	Don't know	Fairly important	Very important	Blank
1	<b>Make learning fun</b>	2%	2%	9%	25%	<b>51%</b>	12%
2	Give us free transport to go to school	6%	18%	9%	14%	40%	12%
3	Make sure we are not beat up	8%	12%	12%	12%	40%	15%
4	Give jobs to Gypsy teachers	9%	17%	17%	14%	42%	2%
5	<b>Have school where there are more Gypsy and Traveller children</b>	6%	8%	9%	9%	<b>49%</b>	18%
6	Have a special Gypsy Traveller unit in or just outside the school	8%	8%	6%	14%	46%	18%
7	<b>Make sure the school anti-bullying policies talk about us and that they work.</b>	5%		28%	12%	<b>40%</b>	18%
8	<b>Give us teacher friends. Sometimes teachers can be really nice to you even if they are not your teacher and that really helps.</b>	2%	5%	9%	26%	<b>43%</b>	15%

9	Teach everyone and us about our culture, like Appleby the same as Ramadan, they should all learn about our culture.	17%	8%	6%	11%	43%		15%
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All of their suggestions were popular but there was significant reticence from some about learning about Gypsy Traveller culture, which will be explored in sub section 2.3. The support for the other ideas also suggests that: making learning fun, having school with more Gypsy and Traveller children, making sure anti-bullying policies work and having friendly teachers would support school attendance.

Although there was less confidence in the idea that there should be jobs given to Gypsy teachers<sup>4</sup>, there was none the less 56% who thought this was a good idea compared to 26% who thought it was not important or a bad idea. Some reticence may be because of wording (the suggestion named only Gypsy Teachers, not Traveller teachers) or because children and young people lacked the experience of having a Gypsy or Traveller teacher in some areas. In the face-to-face consultation, where we were able to give information to young people who had not realised that Gypsy or Traveller teachers already exist in some schools, the idea of having Gypsy or Traveller teachers was favoured. Linking again to the section above on bullying, these comments from the targeted consultation give us an idea of why Gypsy Traveller Teachers might help.

How about giving jobs to Gypsy teachers?

'That would be good'

'Better to have a Traveller teacher, I would know they know what it feels like when you are getting bullied, or you're getting skitted – they knows what you feels like inside – if someone calls you a dirty Gypsy they are bullying the teacher as well and then they would do something about it'

Similarly, although transport did not come out as a strong issue in the questionnaire, it was significant in the face-to-face consultations, giving some ideas on what works well in current practice and of parental support.

'We get free transport – taxi from site '

'My mum's my alarm clock – I wouldn't go nearly so often if she didn't wake me up!'

The face to face consultations also produced new ideas on what might help attendance that relate to developing better or closer relationships with parents; this issue will be explored more in sub section 2.4:

'Have a designated teacher for the Travellers'

'Better information sharing with and from the school'

<sup>4</sup> If we had written 'Gypsy or Traveller' teacher instead of 'Gypsy' teacher the answer may have been different.

One young person said they felt put on the spot by teachers who would ask them questions after a period of absence or when their siblings were absent – young people wanted teachers to talk directly to their parents instead:

'Not so many questions to the children'

Or improvements to the curriculum, facilities and timetabling and speed of teaching:

'Children would go to school more if they learnt things that they wanted to learn about'

'It would help me if we could go to school 3 to 4 days a week and do things that we like doing'

'It would be good if they had a Gym here'

'Speed of teaching'

'Extra time reading because I love it'

Other comments highlighted the importance of choice in relation to how education is provided, with some favouring education inside school and others emphasising training. With some asking for:

'Education inside school'

And others saying:

'We need to say education not school. That means training that's happening outside school, not coming in to school'

or

'Build schools on site'

Children talked about the benefit of services especially tailored to their needs, 60% favoured this idea as they felt more supported and understood. However, there was not always support for the separate education of Gypsies and Travellers, as this interview extract reveals:

'Instead of putting us in a different class, they should put us all into the same classes as Gorgias so we can learn the same as they are learning. They are separated. They get no homework. They do maths but not much, not comprehensive level. They need comprehensive curriculum stuff like science. At the learning centre they should be doing those lessons, the same lessons. Or they should come up to the comprehensive once a week for those parts and do a good lesson'

One group had 3 priorities for increasing attendance:

1. 'Vocational training should start earlier in Year 9'
2. 'Teachers who explain things better and learning coaches – can help explain, talk to teachers and explain long words'
3. 'One day a month parents could come into school- this would help trust more'

And another group:

1. 'Funding for keeping full time worker for Gypsy Traveller children – keep same person- keep the continuity'
2. 'Train young people that teachers do something, in the same way for everybody to be youth workers'
3. 'Make sure bullying policy works'

## 2.3 Gypsy Travellers in the Curriculum

The Strategy discusses the possibility of including Gypsy and Traveller culture in the school curriculum and so this was explored in the research group.

2e. What Gypsy and Traveller things should everyone at school learn about?		Bad idea	Not important	Don't know	Fairly important	Very important	Blank
1	Our history and about Gypsies in the holocaust	14%	3%	7%	25%	37%	14%
2	Our background, the different beliefs and languages we have	17%	6%	9%	15%	38%	14%
3	Different Gypsies and Travellers and the differences between ourselves	9%	6%	8%	21%	35%	20%
4	<b>That they should not treat us unfairly</b>	2%		1%	15%	<b>68%</b>	15%

There was marked support for pupils to learn that they should not treat Gypsies and Travellers unfairly, 83% thought this was fairly/very important and this was backed up by comments:

'All children should be taught that everyone is the same no matter what background they come from and nobody should be seen as *different*'

'We want to be treated the same as everybody else'

'They should be taught if they call Gypsy and Travellers names they will get beaten'

The questionnaire responses show how, although there is some support for their first three ideas there is not a clear 24% margin, it is not unequivocal so we cannot say, from the questionnaire, that there is clear support for any of the group's suggestions. Some of the face-to-face consultations show why the teaching of Gypsy Traveller culture and history was more problematic for some, and the complexities this issue throws up:

### Should they teach about Gypsies and Travellers?

'No: because they'll never learn everything but they'll think they know and they'll try and say what is right and wrong for us'

'Yes: Should do – teach for history Gypsy and Traveller culture, give people an idea about who we are, the programmes (TV) make us out to be bad people'

'Yes: because we should learn about Gypsies because we learn about Victorians'

And this division was repeated in a second targeted consultation.

### **Should they teach about Gypsies and Travellers?**

'Yes: Teach everyone about our culture, like Appleby - Appleby is the best, horses and that – I goes to everything I can, horse fairs'

'No: I think if they teach it just gives them a chance to provoke you (then you fight back) – and our language is secret – it's like a code – loads of black people have a code too and that's theirs'

And in a questionnaire

'I don't think that other people should learn about us because they think that they know everything and if you said something to someone, they try and tell you that it's wrong'

One comment from the second group however, suggests how this teaching should be done, if it is to occur:

'Gypsy and Traveller teachers would be able to know what our culture is – teach it properly - know what is about and can explain it better' **(than a Gorgia)**.

A second comment from a questionnaire gives an alternative approach:

'Have a Class Assembly on Traveller history - call older children that are no longer in school to help'

The questionnaire respondents also gave other ideas on the content of this sort of learning.

'How different our culture is and how we are losing our way of life. Parts of Romany languages. Teach different instruments we play. How we don't let our children run out – we have stricter rules'

'Other sports Travellers play - boxing, horseshoes'

## **2.4 Parental Trust in School**

Some families are very active in their support for their children's education:

'In my family – I missed 3 years of education, at the time I never thought about it, but we moved around so much and got moved on and moved on I could never go to

school – so my family they decided to go into a house so I could go to school and they put me in a house - we were ordered off where we were, so I started going at 9 years old at school. Here we are treated the same - we are treated no different'

From the questionnaire, we can say reducing parental concern about drugs is the most important factor in supporting parents to trust school more.

2f. What would help Parents trust school more?		Bad idea	Not important	Don't know	Fairly important	Very important	Blank
1	<b>If they weren't worried about drugs</b>		2%	14%	23%	<b>48%</b>	14%
2	If there were free school dinners in high school	5%	17%	14%	26%	23%	15%
3	You need to encourage parents to realise that school is important and that without qualifications you don't get a good job	14%	8%	9%	14%	41%	15%

The suggestion that parents should be encouraged to understand the importance of school was also favoured, but not as clearly. Stronger support for this idea came from the face-to-face consultations, for example:

'My mum stopped school when she was 11. They had to do what their parents did. My Gypsy family haven't hardly got an education. My parents want me to have the chances they didn't have. ... Reading and writing is the most important thing in the world now for getting a job'

And

'Well some have never been to school so they don't know what's it like and they don't think it is important'

And

'Because of our parent's religion we can't do things. That shed is our parent's life. They don't understand'

The theme of culture and understanding was also touched on in responses to open questions on the questionnaire:

'I f teachers understand about absences to do with culture'

'Schools don't understand (that) lots of parents don't read and write'

'Schools need to understand about absences through travelling'

'I f there were more children from the site at the same school'

'School listened to us'

Further ideas from questionnaire open questions that bullying is significant and parents need reassurance:

'Parents would trust school more if they never had anything to worry about'

'It would be better if they didn't worry about their children being bullied in school'

'Parents should know that bullying isn't an issue in their child's school'

'Trust that they are going to be looked after'

The face-to-face consultations also generated examples of what does or could help make a difference, and these echoed the suggestions in other sub sections above such as more openness from and contact with schools:

### **What would help parents trust school more?**

'Parents should come in for a day every month so they can get a picture of what we do in school'

'Opening up schools (secondary) to the community so that parents have more confidence'

More understanding and valuing Gypsy Traveller life:

'Educate pupils and teachers on the Traveller culture to stop bullying'

'Better information sharing between school and home'

'A designated teacher for Travellers'

'Everyone needs to learn that we're the same as everyone else and not poor living on the streets'

Changes in flexibility and school organisation:

'More sports in schools'

'Be able to have more days in school'

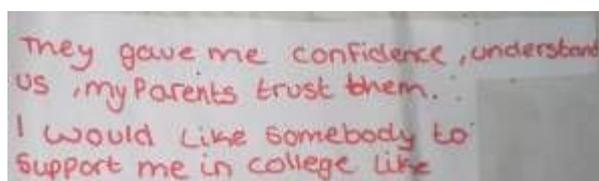
'Teachers to be more flexible'

'Better (bigger) classrooms with more teachers'

'Different location of classroom'

'Better mix of people'

The importance of **having people in school that parents and children trust** was emphasised:



'Mrs X needs to be Traveller teacher in every subject in every year! We all say yes!'

'If people could be trusted in school'

## **Education inside School: Goals (recommendations drawn from young people's feedback)**

One goal is in common across all sub sections of education in school namely to build on the positive experience of some schools and teachers and:

- 1 To end bullying of Gypsy and Traveller children.

### **Goals on anti-bullying policies**

This cross cutting goal would be helped by

- 2 A main / named teacher to talk to who understands.
- 3 Raised awareness in a fun way to police, teachers and children.
- 4 Dealing with wider issues of bullying (from adults and outside school too)
- 5 Encouraging Peer/Self support
- 6 Enabling children to not go to mainstream school or to change school if necessary.

### **Goals on developing parental trust.**

In line with the Strategy, but with some additional focuses, the children's suggestions for improving trust from parents recommend

- 7 Encouraging parental understanding of the importance of education and developing schools' understanding of Gypsy Traveller cultures.
- 8 Flexibility in schools' location, organisation and curriculum.
- 9 Named teachers in schools and education officers outside school who develop relationships with parents.
- 10 Reassuring parents (where honestly possible) about drug taking cultures in comprehensive schools.

### **Goals for improving attendance and attainment**

Further improvements in children's attendance and attainment at school could be achieved by:

- 11 Promoting non-discriminatory attitudes between children and having understanding /friendly teachers
- 12 Improving curriculum, facilities and timing so that education is more child-centred, fun and more relevant to children's interests and speed of learning.
- 13 Provide choice in education so Gypsy Travellers can go to school together in larger groups, or choose to be educated in schools, special units and work/training placements.
- 14 Providing continuity of support for pupils through their school life – ensuring funding is long term

### **Goals for Gypsy Travellers in the Curriculum**

Because of the tensions on whether and how aspects of Gypsy Traveller culture should be taught and the risks of further bullying if these are not dealt with sensitively:

- 15 Ensure that anti-discriminatory attitudes are taught in schools in a way that includes that Gypsies and Travellers being treated equally and fairly.
- 16 Consult more widely with Gypsy Traveller children and young people on the appropriate format and content for any mandatory curriculum content on Gypsy and Traveller cultures.

### 3. Education, Jobs and Training

The Strategy asks about role models and talks about work so our questionnaire sought to learn if children and young people knew of examples of Gypsies and Travellers who have good jobs. 62% of the questionnaire respondents said they knew of Gypsies or Travellers who have good jobs. The list of occupations also showed the variety of Gypsy Travellers lives:

'Just because we are Gypsies it don't mean that we can't work anywhere'  
'Gels (girls) work in shops and boys work with wood, building and plumbing'  
'Scrap block paving, trees'  
'Teaching'  
'Cleaning trailers'  
'Manager of fast food (McDonalds)'  
'Pipe fitters'  
'Hairdressers, beauticians, teachers, secretaries'  
'Housekeepers, Learning Support Assistant'  
'Welder, varied manual work, buys and sells caravans and inherited business'  
'One is training to be a lawyer and another to be an artist'  
'Healer, Preacher, Waitress'

And some examples of exceptional achievements

'There's a dancer who's a Gypsy - we went to see him - good on him I say'  
'Shane Ward - winner of X factor - he's a Traveller'  
'Boxers - Billy Jo Saunders'  
'Footballers'

The questionnaire responses and face-to-face consultations gave ideas on work motivations and **aspirations** like:

'I t would be better if we had a job because you can buy things for yourself and you don't have to ask your mam and dad for money all the time'  
'I would like to work in Tescos'  
'I want to be a boxer'  
'When I grow up I want to be a footballer'  
'I want to do building - I have work experience - don't want to go to college want to go straight into work and learn at the same time'  
'I 'm going to be a millionaire'

Sometimes these aspirations also reveal the anxieties young people feel about getting work:

### **What would help you get a job?**

'Jobs is the biggest thing I am worried about – I don't like going to college, I want to go out [*to work*] and learn at the same time'

One young person talked of the difficulties in being able to imagine doing the kind of work she wanted:

'I want to work in an office but the way I see it now I'll be minding my children and cleaning: but I don't want to do that!'

### **3.1 Barriers and success in accessing training and work**

Participants repeatedly spoke of discrimination as a barrier to Gypsy Travellers' in work settings. This might help explain some of why it is difficult to imagine doing the jobs they might aspire to, as reflected in this group discussion:

'We do want jobs'

'They won't give you a job if they know you are from the X *Site*'

'My brother is a bricklayer – no one will take him on'

'They just give you a slap in the face'

'The Job centre? They don't offer anything – the country people they don't like us and they don't understand us, if you live with your family it affects your benefits and they send you down for jobs you can't do'

'I'm bullied on my training scheme by other workers. The manager don't do nothing'

'If bullying and racism isn't stopped and Gypsies fight back they will get a criminal record and it is hard enough to get a job as a Gypsy as it is!!'

Some react to this discrimination by not naming themselves as Gypsies:

'Filling in the forms – I wouldn't put Gypsy – I put British Other'

A second barrier is the impact of a wider lack of jobs and placements:

'Jobs? – There's nothing in town'

'Are there any jobs? – Not really – some jobs in the factories – I want a mechanics placement – can you get me one?'

'I'm looking for work, I went to Beauty College, I'm looking for a placement – I've been looking for 2 years'

In other areas, however, young people talked of themselves and others getting jobs, and the (possible) knock on effect of this in improving relationships between communities. For example this questionnaire response identifies a possible benefit:

'Being able to get jobs would help other people to realise Travellers are good people who work hard'

Following in the footsteps of your elders also increases confidence:

'I'm dead nervous, I'm doing 15 GCSEs I might not get into college because I'm a Gypsy - it helps that older girls are there'

And this example from a consultation day shows how that works in practice:

### **What Works for Gypsy Traveller Young People? Employment**

WHAT HAPPENED WAS ... 'My friends are getting jobs in local shops near the site. The girls are good at hair and beauty and almost every hairdresser has a Gypsy girl working in it. There are men working in petrol too'

IT'S GOOD TO DO STUFF LIKE THAT BECAUSE... 'It helps Gypsies and Gorgias get on together and work together. And once some Gypsies get a job they can help others Gypsies get jobs. People trust us more when they can see it's working alright with Gypsies working somewhere else'

BUT IT WOULD BE EVEN BETTER IF.... 'Everyone around the country had the same chances'

Education workers discussed the issues in their own group on one of the consultation days which backed up young people's experiences:

<b>What works?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Different experiences for every young person</li> <li>• Vocational opportunities – good experiences although detrimental effect on core subjects</li> <li>• Vocational training needs to start in Year 9 - Very good link to get young people in to education</li> <li>• Work experience credits from working with family</li> </ul>

One group of young people discussed education, jobs and training in the form of a solution carousel:

<b>Problems</b>	<b>Solutions</b>
Teachers not listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solution to be listened to</li> <li>• Teachers who treat us fairly like they'd want to be treated</li> </ul>
Bullying and us getting blames -	Listen to our point and not ignore it
No chance of jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working hard</li> <li>• Getting training, get help from</li> </ul>

	Travellers Ed and from careers Ed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning coaches</li> <li>• Placement schemes</li> <li>• Work experience</li> <li>• Work based training</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some gorgers don't like us so there's little chance of jobs</li> <li>• One shop in ten chuck us out because we're Travellers</li> <li>• Gorgers take a pick at us and some of us will hit them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train people to not discriminate</li> <li>• Talk to the council</li> <li>• Being polite helps get us jobs</li> </ul>
We get into trouble for calling on peoples doors	Have to be a regular- people need to know you

### 3.2 Traveller Education Service

Reflecting the comparatively high percentage of questionnaire respondents who did not reply to this question, we suggest the role of the Traveller Education Service was not always known or clear to participants. Not all of the children and young people we met with had encountered a Traveller Education Service or knew that this was the service their accompanying workers belonged to. The figures may also be expressing self-reliance, such as in this comment in the questionnaire box for what the TES should do to help get you a job: 'I will get my own job!'

For those who did respond to the tick box questions, there was strong support for the young researchers' ideas on their role should be to give Gypsy and Traveller a chance to get a job.

2h. What do you think the Traveller Education Service could do for you?		Bad idea	Not important	Don't know	Fairly important	Very important	Blank
1	Give us a job	2%	5%	15%	13%	29%	37%
2	<b>Give us a chance to get a job</b>	2%	2%	8%	8%	<b>44%</b>	37%
3	Organise work placements in places like McDonalds, Tesco, Primark, Marks and Spencer's, The Assembly, Housing	2%	8%	15%	6%	27%	42%

There was less support for the other ideas, although taking only those who answered the question, 70% thought it was *very* or *fairly important* to give them a job! In the answers to open questions some respondents also made suggestions about how Gypsy Traveller Services could support access to work and training:

'Gypsy club in school or the youth club at village hall'

'Give us a chance to get known for working hard'

Some of the young researchers also talked very positively about placement and work opportunities with the Welsh Assembly that had been set up with support from TES. In contrast a group of young

people with no support from TES were all struggling to find work placements after completing college courses; this is further noted in the next section.

The questionnaire also asked 'Would it help you get a job if there were more services run for and run by Gypsies and Travellers?' and this was thought *fairly to very important* by 68% of respondents who answered the question.

### **Education, Jobs and Training: Goals**

So that children and young people can have more confidence in pursuing their aspirations and that relationships between communities can be improved:

- 17 Challenge discrimination in the labour market, work and training places.
- 18 Traveller Education Services should arrange more work/training placements for young people and more jobs and training placements should be created, including in services like education, health and housing.
- 19 The Careers Service should receive training and review their services to Gypsy Traveller young people
- 20 Share examples of Gypsy Traveller success at work more widely (within and outside the Gypsy Traveller community).
- 21 Provide for more Gypsy school/youth clubs.
- 22 Ensure children and young people know about the TES or equivalent services

#### 4. Being treated fairly

Some young people in the Young Researchers group considered themselves 'settled Travellers' and didn't have any big troubles with Country People / Gorgias. Some of them talked about problems with Internet sites, like the *Sun* newspaper website and *Urban Wikki* that 'talk about us like we are liars and thieves and bad people.' So the questionnaires asked others about their experiences and for ideas on what could lead to improvements. *Being treated fairly* was also chosen as a top 3 priority for discussion in the face to face consultations.



The mixed experience of some getting on fine with Country People / Gorgias and others experiencing problems was repeated by questionnaire respondents. The positive side of getting on is shown in comments like:

'I get's along with everybody'

'I don't have no problems with them'

'I've got good friends all over the place'

'Not much problems. Some Gorgias are OK people'

'In the area I live in there is no conflict with Country people due to understanding our culture and being accepted for who we are'

Others described problems, like those already mentioned in the previous two sections:

'It's hard because they call us Gypo or Pikey. Some understand, some don't. Lots talk behind our backs'

'Country people think we are thieves and rob banks'

'Racism'

'I have no problems with getting on with Gorgias but I do hear people judging Gypsies because of the way they dress, talk and act'

'Sometimes called names or hit because people know'

And direct discrimination in terms of provision of goods and services:

'If we want things Gorgias won't give it even though we pay'

**What do you mean?**

'They wouldn't let us hire a limo or a room for a party when we give them our address'

The targeted consultations highlighted some of the differences these children felt between themselves and Gorgias:

'Our life is different, they are brought up different'

'Gorgias are Gorgias, Gypsies are Gypsies, you shouldn't change who you are'

Gorgias try to talk like us but they get it wrong, they can't talk proper'

'Gypsies rule!'

One young person though commented:

'When we go into town no-one realises'

This last comment is in marked contrast to the two groups who talked about feeling that people *did* mark them out as Gypsies or Travellers, although they could not always identify why, and consequently they were treated unfairly:

'In the shops they follow you around'

From one group there was hesitation about trusting Gorgias:

'Other Gypsies understand us'

'You can always trust Gypsies but don't let Gorgias into your life. Talk to them but don't get too close'

'No - My mum's a Gorgia and so is my Nan!'

But where children had families with non Gypsy Traveller members mixed the issue was not so clear cut – as seen in the final comment above.

Rather than family ties, the Young Researchers, in line with the Strategy, suggested that more *Trust* *Respect* and *Safety* would help improve relationships between Gypsy Travellers and Gorgias and there was strong support for each of these ideas from the questionnaire respondents.

3b. What do you think would help improve relationships between Travellers and Gorgias?		Bad idea	Not important	Don't know	Fairly important	Very important	Blank
1	<b>If there was more TRUST</b>		3%	6%	31%	<b>40%</b>	20%
2	<b>If there was more RESPECT</b>	0%	2%	3%	23%	<b>52%</b>	20%
3	<b>More Safety</b>	2%	5%	2%	17%	<b>42%</b>	33%
4	<b>Have an Inspector for Gypsies and Travellers to check up on Health Services, Education, training and employment providers and Councils, to make sure they are doing the job properly</b>	8%	6%	17%	8%	<b>39%</b>	23%

There was also support for the idea of an Inspector or a Commissioner who would check services for Gypsy Travellers were being delivered properly and their rights upheld which were backed up by comments such as:

'It's a good idea to have an inspector check on us, because I can tell them problems and they can relate to me'

Another saw the need for a Gypsy Traveller '*Champion*'

'Access to rights - being treated fairly, someone who can sort things out'

Face to face consultations suggested that better integration and mixing socially, getting to know people in town through youth clubs, for example, helped everyone:

'We go to youth club - it gets us off the site, there's pool, computers, table tennis, football - it's on from 7-9pm and it's for everyone!'

But also that:

'Travellers need to work in youth clubs - more young people would go'

'Need Travellers to work in youth clubs and to make sure all are treated the same'

And some children talked about mutuality:

'Help each other more, get to know each other, become best friends'

'You and us need to understand each other'

'We have to respect them for them to respect us'

The questionnaire also suggested that mixing more with Country People /Gorgias would help. Opinion was divided on this suggestions but more respondents thought this was a *fairly/very important idea* than those thinking it was a *bad idea* or *not important*. This difference in opinion may relate to where children live, as this comment suggests:

### **Mix with country people more?**

-yes, especially when you are in house you don't see other Travellers

There were repeated suggestions for developing Gorgias understanding and learning about Gypsy Traveller culture, like:

'People like teachers, job centre workers, the council - they should all be trained'

'Having an accessible community centre, with Traveller information on walls, so people can know about us and our culture'

'If Gorgias learned about our culture AND the way we live and how we work as a family'

In section 2 above, however, we have highlighted some children and young people's concerns about sharing information about their culture.

There was support for Gypsy Travellers participating in Gorgia culture, being more visible, with 84% of respondents who expressed an opinion thinking it was *fairly to very important* to “Have Gypsies and Travellers on TV, on X-Factor, as news presenters”.

<b>3c. What do you think would help improve communication?</b>		Bad idea	Not important	Don't know	Fairly important	Very important	Blank
2	Mix with Country People / Gorgias more	18%	11%	3%	17%	29%	22%
1	Have our own radio station and talk about the things we want to	8%	11%	18%	14%	28%	22%
3	<b>Have Gypsies and Travellers on TV, on X-Factor, as news presenters</b>	6%	5%	8%	15%	<b>43%</b>	23%
4	Build our own websites and have our own TV channel	9%	9%	14%	17%	28%	23%
5	Use Savvy Chavvy internet site	8%	3%	37%	11%	15%	26%
6	Use Traveller Times internet site	5%	3%	11%	31%	26%	25%

The idea of developing Gypsy Traveller’s own radio, TV and internet sites met with more mixed responses, but of these the internet was most favoured. One established internet site had markedly more support, with 76% of those who answered the question rating it as *fairly to very important* to Use Travellers Times internet site. Savvy Chavvy is apparently less well used. It’s important however to remember that not all young people have access to the internet – even through school some sites are blocked:

‘Some websites are blocked for us at school – I didn’t think we could look at Trav Times’

Some of the reasons for their hesitation about TV and Radio may relate to this comment, about how knowledge can be used against Gypsies and Travellers:

‘Own radio station – yes

BUT

If they know more about us they’ll provoke us’

Young People in one North Wales group had 2 proposals for pro-actively changing attitudes and promoting integration:

‘Make a documentary – us Gypsies being good not bad, on TV they showed Roman Catholic Gypsies in Spain, it’s disgusting, robbing and all that’

**What would you show people?**

‘Good things like football, running, Everton Boys football’

**What would you do?**

‘Make a community hall for Travellers, you could bring a friend along and meet your cousins – get more Travellers and Country People to mix’

A group of workers met parallel to the young people's discussions on one consultation day; some of their ideas on this issue are reproduced here:

Problems	Solutions
Lack of understanding of Gypsy and Traveller issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Going out and talking to people</li> <li>• Enabling people to have their say</li> <li>• Inclusion for everyone - whatever your background</li> <li>• Educating settled community</li> <li>• Having accessible community centres and resources for Gypsy Travellers</li> <li>• More good news stories - local press</li> <li>• Integrated events</li> <li>• Museums involvement - telling stories</li> <li>• Diversity Day</li> </ul>

## Police

Some of the Young Researchers had experienced problems with the police and didn't feel treated fairly. Others had had no experiences they chose to share. The questionnaire therefore drew on the solutions proposed by those who had had negative experiences and tested these ideas through a survey.

Up to 49% of the questionnaire respondents did not answer questions on this theme. This no-response level, higher than for any other question in the first half of the survey, can be accounted for by young people's choices and the fact that some workers chose not to even ask these questions, perhaps finding them too leading or too sensitive. The results below therefore draw only on those respondents who did answer, and the figures are consequently subject to a wider margin of error<sup>5</sup>.

3d. What do you think would help improve relationships with the police?		Bad idea	Not important	Don't know	Fairly important	Very important	Respo use level
1	<b>The police should have warrants before they get into your trailer</b>	2%	11%		4%	<b>82%</b>	69%
2	<b>The police should treat us a bit better, we are not dogs, Not man-handle or touch you</b>	3%		5%	3%	<b>88%</b>	65%
3	The police should have meetings with us when they are not in uniform, so we can get to know each other in a more relaxed way.	12%	12%	7%	23%	47%	64%
4	<b>The police should be trained by Gypsies and Travellers, about our culture and how to understand us better.</b>	2%		2%	21%	<b>74%</b>	65%
5	<b>The police should do something when people throw eggs at our homes</b>	3%	6%	6%	21%	<b>64%</b>	51%

<sup>5</sup> Roughly + or - 15%, making only differences of over 30 % significant.

Despite the wider margin of error in these figures, there was strongest support for the four highlighted suggestions (1, 2, 4 and 5) being very important: warrants; no man-handling; training on Gypsy Traveller cultures and doing something when eggs are thrown. The other suggestion, informal meetings (not in uniform), was none the less *fairly to very important*.

In line with the Strategy's commendation of the police for making progress in the treatment of Gypsy Travellers, two groups of young people talk about police from across Wales and sometimes England, coming into their school or site – the 'Have a Cuppa with a Copper' scheme and receiving training to promote their understanding. This initiative was applauded and young people we spoke to would like it to happen elsewhere in Wales.

Alas, their comments suggested that negative experiences are still widespread. These are comments from young people in South Wales:

**Police?**

'Are not fair'

'Do what they want'

'When we call them they don't come'

'We want to be treated the same as the rest'

**What would you like to change with the police?**

'Don't know how to change it'

'More police on sites to be trained to be aware of the difficulties we face'

And from North and Mid Wales:

'They stop and search you, in town, what's in your bags especially in *Town X* because we're Travellers'

'They come to the site to have a nosy'

'But we won't let them in to the trailers, they won't listen to us'

'They don't like us. There's 5 or 6 who don't like me'

As well as issues of mistrust and lack of understanding from police in town and on sites, some young people were unhappy about the way they were moved on.

'It ain't fair the police don't give you time to move on'

'-I ts just move, move, move, once my dad was only given 2 hours to think of somewhere to go'

'It all depends on what police it is'

'Some police can be demons'

**What would you like to change with the police?**

'Treat us like normal people, don't treat us like different people, we're all human'

One group prioritised discussing the police and coming up with solution:

Problems	Solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police hovering over the site</li> <li>• If a bike or something silly goes missing they blame us, dogs and cars too</li> <li>• When men go scrapping<sup>6</sup> people think yours robbing</li> <li>• When we are travelling they look on the back of the trucks</li> <li>• People in the shops don't trust you, they're always following us and not allowing us to go in they tell us only one at a time</li> <li>• People pretending to be stacking shelves actually watching</li> <li>• Police comes down to the site without a warrant</li> <li>• Police coming on to the sites in too many cars for minor incidents</li> <li>• Takes numbers of cars on sites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solution – training, getting them (Police) into school</li> <li>• Reporting discrimination, something needs to happen</li> <li>• Understand we'll stick up for our own</li> <li>• Training to Young People, police, community = myth busting, like <i>PC X</i></li> <li>• Making links with YOTS</li> <li>• Young people to know their rights</li> <li>• Police should come to student centre or somewhere like this to learn</li> <li>• Young people with help from a youth worker to do training</li> <li>• Getting the community beat managers and the PCSO's involved</li> </ul>

Another group analysed their position and possible solutions:

Problems	Solutions
Mistrust Lack of respect	= integration through activities or play groups
Discrimination by coppers and council	Change laws Liaison from our community
Going out Racism – does happen! Violence Mistreatment all these lead to secluded/misunderstood	Better security

<sup>6</sup> Working on collecting scrap metal

## **Being Treated Fairly: Goals**

Many children and young people had experiences of being treated fairly and got on well with members of Gorgia/Country People communities. This positive experience for some could be encouraged for others by:

- 23 Developing mutual trust, respect and understanding through opportunities for Gypsy/Travellers and Gorgias/Country people to get to know and mix with each other in activities like youth clubs.
- 24 Support/encourage Gypsy Travellers to train as Youth Workers
- 25 Training teachers, Job Centre workers and the council on fairer attitudes to Gypsy Travellers.
- 26 Supporting Gypsy Traveller children and young people's access to mainstream media and Internet sites like Travellers Times.
- 27 Improving Police–Gypsy Traveller relations through training, delivered by Gypsy Traveller young people and their workers.
- 28 Creating an Inspector or Commissioner for Gypsy Travellers who will check up on services and ensure Gypsy Traveller rights are upheld.
- 29 Educating Gypsy Traveller children and young people on their rights

## 5. Participation

We described participation as being listened to, a chance to get involved, to have a say and to change things. When talking about this theme some of the young researchers said “If you live on the sites you are more of an outcast” but others felt that they were participating very fully in school and community activities.

This range of experience was repeated in responses to the questionnaire asking what problems young people had with being listened to.

Some children and young people, notably in Pembrokeshire and Wrexham felt very engaged:

‘I don't have problems with being listened to. You have a choice in taking part in things. I am a Grand Council member of Funky Dragon and I get my voice heard and I have joined the steering group’

‘Going to Welsh Assembly’

‘We have had our voices heard’

‘We have our say’

In other areas too some children talked of having “no problems” with participation and being listened to:

‘People do listen to Travellers in *School X*. Some of my friends are on the school council and I'd like to be myself’

However one young person was aware that this experience of participation was not generalised:

‘I personally do not have any problems with the above but I know that there are a lot of Gypsies that do and I don't agree with that sort of treatment’

This perspective, that participation is varied and limited for many, is confirmed by other children's comments about the problems they have experienced:

‘Most people don't know anything about Travellers and they need to. We should do more about Travellers in school’

‘People think we are jokes but we're not’

‘Teacher don't listen’

‘The council don't listen to us at all. We've asked for compensation cos we've been forced to move off the site. I t was either a house or living in fights and screams when you go down there at night. Someone jumped in on my cousin in her tourer and the police didn't do nothing’

‘We don't get listened to much by the council’

The young researchers gave suggestions about what might help promote participation and all the opportunities they listed were viewed as *fairly to very important*. Among these, the ‘where we live/on site’ initiatives and schools councils ideas had a clear margin of respondents seeing judging these ideas very important.

4b. What do you think would help you be listened to, have choices and take part in things?		Bad idea	Not important	Don't know	Fairly important	Very important	Blank
1	<b>Youth workers who go out to where we live to get us involved</b>	6%	6%	8%	28%	<b>28%</b>	25%
2	A website where young people can find out what is going on and participate	3%	15%	8%	28%	20%	26%
3	Gypsy and Traveller young people who go out and talk to others	3%	8%	20%	15%	28%	26%
4	More public transport so we can get to events	2%	6%	20%	20%	20%	32%
5	<b>More Gypsy Travellers on school councils</b>	2%	8%	12%	14%	<b>34%</b>	31%
6	The confidence to go out and do things	3%	2%	22%	11%	32%	31%
7	<b>Youth centres on sites, where they give you training and certificates</b>	3%	6%	8%	15%	<b>37%</b>	31%
8	More Gypsy Travellers should join Funky Dragon – the Youth Parliament in Wales	3%	14%	3%	20%	29%	31%
9	Have our own groups to get our views across	5%	8%	5%	22%	29%	32%

The face-to-face consultations repeatedly led to suggestions that Gypsies and Travellers should have their own groups to get their views across, at a national level and their own local groups in some authorities, especially where Gypsy and Traveller young people had not yet participated in mainstream opportunities.

There was some feedback from workers during the face-to face research that "it's always the same young people that get invited to be involved in things" and this was confirmed by young people, many of whom had never been asked to formally participate before:

#### Who/where do you get a say? Who comes to talk to you?

'No-one'

'You're the first, the council come sometimes like, *Miss X and Miss Y*, but they won't give us proper answers'

'No, don't participate in groups'

'Not heard of youth forum or school council'

For these young people the local and own groups approach was also seen as the way to start:

#### How about groups to meet with other Travellers?

'Yes, we'd like to have groups'

'Keep separate to start off, we could meet anywhere in *Town B*, we don't drive'

'Need transport to national events'

'They (other Gypsies) know what you are going through – country people doesn't'

An annual national event was also strongly supported at the regional consultation days:

'Have a meeting once a year where all the Gypsy Traveller children from all over Wales get together. Like what we did in Cardiff before'

'But don't just limit it to one or two people from each area'

'It could happen at the same time as an all Wales Traveller Education Service Meeting'

'More meetings to talk about our rights'



Another group with experience of being involved discussed how to support and increase participation along the same lines:

'Once a year everyone could get together – young people like at the Welsh assembly'

'Like once a month adult workers get together and meet once a year too, could have a children and young people forum at the same time'

'We could use Save the Children Funding Pot for participation – young people can apply for funds'

'The Big Yak – some of us have been involved – it helped that workers went along with us to the Open Evening for the Youth Forum (this could move to participation)'

'Go to Funky Dragon'

It was noted by this group though that very few young people had easy access to the internet, accessing information about Youth Forums, Funky Dragon etc was therefore limited to the direct contact and outreach from Funky Dragon workers. Support from known workers was also seen as particularly important in giving young people the confidence to attend forums initially. The consultation days were both attended by Funky Dragon workers to give information and encourage young people to become involved. Young people we met with at schools or on sites were generally not aware of Funky Dragon or Youth Forums and some requested that we make contact on their behalf.

Also, one young person mentioned problems that arise from peer pressure as well suggesting there are mixed views within the Gypsy Traveller community on getting involved:

'Travellers need to let other Travellers take part in things'

A group discussion stressed the need for action to result from their participation:

'Yes but its all talk and no action - We want all action not talking!'

And another group talked of the need to be listened to and change the opinion of politicians:

'The government should change their opinion, David Cameron for instance - he doesn't like Gypsies'

'I don't know who my MP is I wish they would come down and speak to us'

'They should speak to us and handle us. Like the problem of moving - why don't they make a site?'

'It just causes problems when they should be solving problems'

One group selected these elements of the Basic Entitlements to make a poster showing the importance of claiming rights and of children and young people being given the choice of whether to participate.

'Rights - make sure you are able to claim them'

'It's your right to have a voice and a choice even if you don't make the decision'



## **Participation: Goals**

Many young people talked of positive experiences of being listened to and having influence. Goals identified that would help spread this experience to all Gypsy Traveller children and young people who wish to take part are:

- 30 Send youth workers out to meet with Gypsy Traveller children and young people where they live
- 31 Set up Gypsy Traveller children and young people's groups in which young people can work towards training and certificates
- 32 Promote Gypsy Traveller representation on schools councils.
- 33 Use peer-led approaches
- 34 Set up a national annual event at which groups of Gypsy Traveller children and young people can get together, be heard **and have influence**.
- 35 Encourage politicians to meet with and respect Gypsy Travellers and support their political participation.
- 36 Wales wide and local participation structures i.e. Funky Dragon and Youth Forums to undertake increased outreach to Gypsy Traveller communities to encourage increased participation.

**Save the Children will feed the views from this report into the project plan for the Travelling Ahead project.**

## 6. Health

The Young Researchers group agreed with the Strategy's focus on health and whilst talking about their own experiences they suggested some of the problems they thought it is important to solve: "We have no health care" "We have a lot of health problems" "There is no follow up care"

In particular the Young Researcher group had varied experiences of health care depending on whether they lived on a particular site or in a house.

They put these ideas in the questionnaire and asked: "What problems do Gypsies and Travellers have with doctors and other health services?"

Eighteen children and young people wrote in response to this question and of those, 8 said they had no problems. Two young people said they had the same sort of health problems that may be reported by anyone in Wales, for example

'Same as anyone'

'Hard to get an appointment, 3 hours at A&E'

'Problems with appointments - sometimes it can be up to a months wait'

'I'm too scared of the dentist. I'm scared of needles'

'Doctors say they will contact you in a few months with information and then they don't'

'They won't come out. Don't even bother going to the doctors, go straight to hospital'

But in some cases, experiences of delay were related to being a Gypsy / Traveller, either because of cultural issues in approaching services:

'The men work hard and don't go'

Or because of lack of cultural sensitivity and accessibility in service provision:

'Lots of leaflets are no help because we can't read them'

'Respect for our culture and when someone is ill: let the whole family visit'

'We need transport for my Nan'

One respondent to the questionnaire reported direct discrimination:

'We are made to wait longer to be seen in A and E'

One respondent reported very positive health experiences:

'I have good health. I have a nut allergy and they saved my life'

In the face to face consultations many young people also suggested that they experienced no particular problems, and this theme was only a priority for discussion in one regional consultation session. For one group, who largely experienced no real health problems, the lack of transport links none-the-less made accessing health services difficult.

Two groups made comments about health problems arising from poor housing conditions:

- 'A 21 year old is on incapacity benefit due to depression'
- 'I t's all youngsters here – everyone is ill – cold sheds cold showers'
- 'I t's cos of the new sheds – we're waiting to hear'
- 'There's Weil's disease because of the rats and the rivers'
- 'The location of the site is a **(health)** risk'

One group talked about the impact of travelling on accessing health services and experiencing risk:

- 'When we went away on holiday dad had a bad tooth but had no-one to go to'
- 'Travelling to places with viruses might put you at more risk'
- 'Difficulty with getting records to doctors when travelling'

One of the young researchers was shocked to hear the health statistics for Gypsy Travellers, specifically the lower life expectancy for adults, which suggests that health education may be an area that would impact on awareness and attitudes of young people about their own and their community's health. When asked about waiting times for accessing services, only 21 out of 65 questionnaire respondents replied stating a time. Of these, 10 waited an hour or less and 2 had waited 12 months or more. The remaining 9 had waited between 1 day and 2 weeks, but the sample is not large enough to draw any statistical conclusions.

One child responded with feeling:

5b. How long do you have to wait to see a doctor? 'Ages'

Although all the Young Researchers suggestions were rated as *fairly-very important* by a majority of respondents, suggestion 3: building more sites and pitches to enable access to health care, was by far the most popular idea.

**Tick the blue boxes**

5c. What do you think would help improve Gypsies' and Travellers' health?		Bad idea	Not important	Don't know	Fairly important	Very important	Blank
1	Better Public Transport. Then we could get to the doctors.	5%	25%	11%	14%	20%	26%
2	Gypsy and Traveller young people should train everyone working in health. Then they would improve their attitudes and understand our culture.	5%	8%	9%	32%	19%	28%
3	<b>Build more sites and pitches. Then we could stay in one place and use health care services more easily.</b>			6%	20%	<b>46%</b>	28%
4	Provide more and better sports activities. Then we would be healthier.	2%	11%	5%	32%	23%	27%
5	Crack down on obesity. Then we would be healthier.	5%	5%	23%	15%	22%	31%

Of the other ideas Gypsy Traveller young people training health professionals and better sports were more supported, although these tended to be rated *fairly* rather than *very important*. One TES service is currently developing plans to deliver training from young people to health workers.

There was significant hesitance about the need for transport, with more nearly as many respondents thinking public transport was a *bad* or *unimportant idea* as those who thought it useful. Closer examination of these figures shows that although there was no significant difference in response according to whether children were living in houses or on sites, age may be a factor in this split: only one primary aged child thought public transport important. This might be because people have their own transport:

'We've got a car so transport not a problem'

Other ideas to improve health were suggested by 10 questionnaire respondents and some addressed one of the problems listed above, namely housing conditions:

'Parks on site for younger children'

'Places to work on sites'

'Parks for healthy play'

'Better conditions generally'

Whereas, others talked about the benefits of awareness, diet and sport:

'More awareness about healthy eating'

'A class so younger children could learn'

'Eat fruit'

'Healthier diet and more sports activities'

'Being involved in football helps - I'm at Everton waiting to hear if I've got a place in the Academy'

'There should be a Travellers Team'

'They should have more boxing clubs!'

'Football'

## **Health: Goals**

Many young people identified no need for improvement and had experienced good (and sometimes life-saving) services; but some identified the following additional goals:

37 Improve access to health services by building more sites and pitches.

38 Improve conditions on sites with poor facilities, including places to work on site.

39 Provide better sports facilities and opportunities, including play facilities on sites.

40 Raise awareness about healthy eating.

41 Make sure health information is accessible: spoken as well as written.

42 Ensure health staff have Gypsy Traveller awareness training to improve cultural sensitivity, understanding and anti-discriminatory practice.

## 7. Sport

Sport is not currently addressed in the Draft Strategy but we were asked to consult on the issue with young people as to whether Sport should be included and what views and ideas young people had about sport.

The Young Researchers Group thought that “at the moment the Assembly plan doesn’t say anything about sport but we thought it was important” and included two questions in the questionnaire to find out what sports activities young people already engaged in and what they would like to be able to participate in.

Evidently sport plays a part in many young Gypsy Travellers lives and not just in the stereotypical sense of having a strong tradition in boxing. From the questionnaire responses to “what sports do you like doing?” the most popular sports currently engaged in were **football, boxing, rugby and swimming, followed by netball, skipping and horse riding**. One young person even mentioned ‘egg and spoon races’! In addition to the sports identified above, the most often mentioned activities in the questionnaire that young people *would like* to be *able* to do were **dance, kickboxing and skiing/snowboarding**.

In the consultation days one group listed a wide range of sports activities they wanted an opportunity to do:

Keep fit	Basketball	Baseball	Football
Rugby	Ballet	Running	Swimming
Dance	Hockey	Jogging	Kickboxing
Walking	Boxing	Athletics	Cricket

Overall, the activities represent a wider range than those already engaged in and also a larger number of sports/activities traditionally participated in by girls or by both genders – suggesting that girls as well as boys would like to access a wider choice of sports.

Group discussions reflected a wish for more opportunities in sports activities:

‘Show jumping and cross country in school’

‘Training 4 times a week’
‘We would like dance classes’
‘Swimming lessons’
‘We would like a girl’s football team’
Should put the girls in athletics – there’s loads of girl boxers and champions as well and kick boxers’

In the questionnaire responses and the consultation days sport was clearly identified by the young people as an important part of their lives – over 80% of questionnaire respondents answered the questions on sport and several of the groups identified sport as a priority issue they wanted to discuss. Only one respondent stated a negative view:

‘Very silly questions to ask people – there’s more problems than sports’
--

A gender analysis of what questionnaire respondents wanted to be able to take part in echoes the suggestion above that girls as well as boys would like to access a wider range of sports. Some of the sports they wanted to take part in may reflect gender stereotyped aspirations. For example only girls talked about wanting to take part in dancing; only boys want to take part in motorbike racing and

American football. But the opportunity to take part in rugby was much more requested by girls than by boys, and girls also asked to be able to do boxing and kick boxing.

In the face to face discussions sport was clearly a subject that young people, and boys in particular, were enthusiastic to engage in, and achievement in sport was noticeably an area where Gypsy Traveller young people felt some confidence and pride in their lives – several young people had reached impressive levels in their field.

Achievement in sport was an area which had a positive impact on young Gypsy Travellers group identity – sports personalities were often mentioned as role models or people who held good jobs. Knowing about successful footballers, dancers and boxers clearly encouraged young people to take up these activities.

Involvement in sport was also identified as a way in which relationships with non-Gypsy Travellers could be positively developed, and integration where desired, could be achieved i.e. attending clubs, joining teams:

‘By going to sports clubs like through kick boxing I got to know loads of people’

Ideas for improving living conditions on sites and access to services often also mentioned sports activities and facilities as a way of achieving this:

‘More space on site to play with more equipment’

‘Would like to build a 5 a side pitch on some astro turf’

‘More space to play sports and equipment’

So involvement in sport can be seen as a cross cutting issue contributing to self esteem, identity, aspirations, better health, better living environments, improving access to services and community facilities, and the potential to increase participation in education and wider civic society.

The Young Researchers came up with a number of suggestions to improve participation in sports activities and these were tested out in the questionnaire. All of their ideas received some support but particularly the premise that everyone needs exercise and the development of outreach programmes.

<b>7c. What do you think would help improve sports activities?</b>		Bad idea	Not important	Don't know	Fairly important	Very important	Blank
1	Sport should be in the new plan for Gypsy Travellers	5%	2%	15%	28%	29%	22%
2	<b>Everyone needs exercise – it's mental, physical and social</b>	3%	3%	8%	11%	<b>51%</b>	25%
3	<b>Young people could train as sports leaders and go out to where we live</b>	5%	3%	12%	18%	<b>34%</b>	28%
4	<b>School sports programmes like the 5x60 scheme should go to all schools and out of schools round the sites as well.</b>	2%	2%	20%	15%	<b>34%</b>	28%
5	Youth clubs could run different sports and change them every day or every week	5%	3%	11%	23%	29%	29%
6	The youth workers could go out to the	3%	3%	15%	34%	15%	29%

	young people and tell them to come along to do sports						
7	Have free leisure passes in the summer	5%	2%	15%	28%	29%	22%

The ideas that the Strategy should include Sport in the new plan and that everyone should have free leisure passes were only seen as *fairly to very important* in the questionnaire, but these ideas were strongly supported in face to face consultations.

In terms of increasing participation in sports activities, some young people felt they did not have equal or enough access to opportunities in sport:

‘On the site we don't really get the opportunities’

‘There should be boxing and a gym’

‘There should be sport for Travellers to do’

‘My youth club goes ice skating. We could do more activities’

Sometimes this was about what was offered in the school system:

‘If you go to school, sport is part of the curriculum but we should learn other sports as well’ ‘Horse riding should be like after school, an hour's lesson’

‘Learn really properly, but at *Comp X*, where you are not in a special Gypsy Centre. We learn a different thing when we learn bareback’

Making sport affordable was important, and 89% of those who answered the question on the questionnaire thought that it was very important to have free leisure passes in the summer:

‘Sports should be free all year’

‘Give us free swimming lessons without writing’

‘Swimming and free passes in the summer’

One young person suggested that parental attitude affected which young people got involved in which sport

‘Parents can be protective about what we do – my mum is – other people got different strategies’

Both the questionnaire and the consultation days support the suggestion that peer-led and outreach programmes and activities could increase access and take up of sports amongst young Gypsy Travellers.

47% who answered the question thought it was very important that school programmes such as the Sports Council for Wales 5x60 exercise scheme should take it out to sites.

‘Gypsy and Travellers to go round schools more and teach, such as dancing’



One group listed their problems with sports and their solutions:

Problems	Solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I want to do kick boxing</li> <li>• I can't play kick boxing because I doesn't know where they are</li> <li>• Boys do more sport than girls do</li> <li>• Can't go swimming cos mam doesn't have the time and money to take me</li> <li>• Not enough room to play on the site</li> <li>• Nearly all sports can cause injuries!</li> <li>• Problem is that people quit the team when you join</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information</li> <li>• Vouchers for swimming</li> <li>• Phone the council and ask them to make the field into a park</li> <li>• You have to make friends</li> <li>• Youth club because there is some space but it's there is rocks in the way - &gt; move the rocks!</li> <li>• We made our own gym (out of gas bottle)</li> </ul>

## **Sport: Goals**

- 43 Include 'Sport' in the new plan for Gypsy Travellers in Wales
- 44 Sports development officers to include Gypsy Traveller communities in their planning and development of services
- 45 Encourage / set up opportunities for Gypsy Travellers to teach sports activities in schools – e.g. support Gypsy Travellers to gain sports leader qualifications, invite sports people/dancers into schools or onto sites to teach/workshop
- 46 Set up dance opportunities
- 47 Ensure existing sports programmes and outreach programmes include Gypsy Travellers and sites in their services
- 48 Ensure take up of free swimming/leisure centre passes for all Gypsy Traveller young people (via TES? Outreach from leisure centres?)
- 49 When developing new sites or refurbishing sites - plan for space and facilities for sports
- 50 Each site should have good, safe play facilities – i.e. space, equipment
- 51 Offer young people opportunities to do sports activities alongside participation/consultation activities as a positive way to encourage involvement
- 52 Support young people to join sports clubs or to join existing teams (and set up their own)
- 53 Support and encourage girls to participate in sports activities

## 8. Where you live



Both the questionnaire and the consultation day themes looked at the issue of accommodation. As we know, young people who took part were living in a wide range of accommodation at the time from houses to sites, both official and unofficial.

The questionnaire allowed young people to answer questions based on the type of accommodation they were currently living in, or had experience of. E.g. some young people live in houses but also have experience of travelling in the summer months – others previously lived on an official site but their families have now moved on and may be living in houses, their own land or on unofficial sites. For this reason we treat the figures in this section differently from other parts of the report and explanations are given with each table of figures.

"I was born in a house in *Town B* then I moved to the site when I was 3 months old"

**'Where you live'** was a priority issue for a number of the young people's groups who had clear opinions about their needs and right to good accommodation

'Everybody needs to live somewhere safe and clean'

'Proper facilities – toilet, bath, water, concrete'

'Drainage'

'More houses and slabs for when people visit'

'We should be able to have space for our families to stay and visit'

'The government needs to provide somewhere safe to live'

'We love to live!'

### 8 A) Living in a council house or flat

The Young Researchers group didn't themselves highlight problems to do with living in council accommodation specifically but they were aware other young people have raised issues.

They said in the questionnaire "*We didn't talk about these problems, but some other children have said these are the problems*":

"We are not allowed to park our trailer outside"      "We are not allowed to travel"

"We are not allowed to keep our animals"

Despite over 55% of questionnaire respondents who took part were living in a house at least some of the time, there were almost no positive comments about house dwelling with the exception of two comments:

'I live in a house for part of the year – I like it in the winter'

'A house is warmer in the winter'

In stark contrast young people's comments in the questionnaire about problems living in a council house of flat revealed much about why offering permanent housing to Gypsy Travellers is not considered an option. A number of young people talked about the *feeling* of living in a house environment:

'We don't like living in a house'

'I feel closed in'

'It's too closed in and we are not used to it'

'They feel closed in and quite warm because of the central heating'

'Our parents do not like living in a house'

'Like a prison – closed in by 4 walls'

'A house is like a cage and it's too warm'

Some young people mentioned the poor quality of the houses they lived in:

'Back garden is like a jungle'

'It smells of rats'

'It's next to the scrap yard. Industrial. Needs a bus stop'

Living in a house was clearly not the first choice for some young people and their families:

'We would rather live on a site'

**'(I'd rather live on a) site-** nothing to do here, boring. You can hang out with your friends'

'We would like to move back to the area of our old site'

'Very boring'

The loss of community and belonging was strong:

'Not being close to other family members'

'We miss our families being close'

'We can't just go to someone's house/trailer because it is too far'

'Too far from family'

'We are not used to being with the local community'

'We're closed in, we used to have fields all around us our families, we feel like we're suffocating. We used to be all in one place so if we wanted a bowl of sugar we could'

There were concerns about acceptance, safety and conflict with the non – travelling community:

'Having bad neighbours'

'You could be put next door to bad people (drugs etc.) It's Important to house Travellers near each other'

'Don't get on with country people very well'

'Gorgias not agreeing with having lots of vehicles around and scrap'

'People don't like horses'

'A lot of the time neighbours complain about the Gypsy children playing outside and also about the vans and Lorries being parked on the drive'

'Gorgias don't like the way we are'

'You don't know who you are living by – who to trust'

And evidence of discrimination and ill treatment from neighbours were clear negative issues for the young people about living in a house:

'Problems with neighbours - people are racist'

'Abuse from other tenants'

'Get called names'

'The Gorgias are sometimes racist against Gypsies!'

The impression gained from young people's discussions was that whilst living in a house did have some advantages in terms of education, transport, and stability i.e. not being moved on all the time, these advantages are outweighed by the negative experiences of living away from the Gypsy Traveller communities and families; and that living in a house effectively means curtailing much of the 'traditional' way of life for Gypsy Travellers.

'I live in a house and I really miss the site – as soon as I am married I will be moving onto the site – I live next door to my cousin but the council doesn't always let you do that'

'I miss talking to Travellers; it's the loveliest feeling in the world – waking up to all Travellers around you. When I get married I'll be back on site as soon as I can'

Two young people talked about how council policy and allocations process does not take account of Gypsy Travellers' need to be housed close to other family members:

'My sister was waiting for a house but she kept getting offers miles away from where our mum was living'

'The council lack understanding with the reasons for living close to family relatives -so the council shouldn't pressurise people and not have to take the first housing opportunities'

In the questionnaire 72% of respondents who answered the question felt very strongly that the council should be more flexible and allow for families to leave their houses for a period of travelling and 76% that they should be allowed to park trailers outside their houses. One young person commented:

'If you want a house it's hard to get one!'

8Ab. What do you think would help improve things when you are living in a house?		Bad idea	Not important	Don't know	Fairly important	Very important
1	The council should allow us to pull away and not give our house to someone else while we are away.			16.0%	12.0%	72.0%
2	The council should allow us to park trailers outside.			4.0%	20.0%	76.0%
3	You should be able to get an appointment to see your doctor the same day		12.0%	4.0%	8.0%	76.0%

This perspective was backed up by comments, such as:

'You should be able to have summer in the trailer and a house in the winter – but what about your valuables – I know someone they were only away for 2 weeks and they came in and took everything – and the neighbour said I don't know where they've gone and they took the house away – so you can lose your house, it isn't fair - I t's just like having a holiday, no different....'

Many of the suggestions though for improving things while living in a house were actually about ensuring that families could return to live together, either on sites in trailers or in 'houses' on a site such as the site developed in Bristol:

'We would like to be back on a new site with just our families'

'We would like a site like they have in Bristol, with small houses instead of trailers'

'We would like a park nearer our houses'

'We would like to live in a chalet or the same as the Bristol site'

**Out of all of this the most important things are:**

1 We all want to live on a site with our families.

2 We would like all sites to be like the site in Bristol.

## 8 B) When you are travelling or living on an unofficial site

The Young Researchers said "We didn't talk about any problems, but some other children have talked about problems of getting clean water and being moved on." Only a small number of the young

people who took part were actually travelling or living on an 'unofficial' site when they took part in the consultations but many had previously experienced this way of life.

When asked "What problems do Gypsies and Travellers have when they are travelling or living on an unofficial site?" The lack of stability, being moved on and the role of the police in this was mentioned by many:

'Being moved on from a good stopping place, being spied on by the police'

'Moved on, too much hassle'

'They get moved on'

'You get chucked off straight away by the police'

'Getting moved on by the police and council'

'Police coming all the time, moved on all the time'

'Getting towed off places when you travel'

'Moved on all the time by police'

Problems with health and safety, and environmental issues were also raised:

'Danger to the children'

'Water'

'Rats'

'The site is in the wild, we should have a bus stop'

'No facilities - toilets'

'Traffic, noise, smell of gas'

Some young people also recognised the negative image that could result from travelling and staying in unofficial stopping places:

'Newspapers and TV putting you in the papers = bad publicity'

And the how the settled community sometimes reacted with violence:

'If we pull down in a field or something gorgers stones the trailers and motors'

But there were young people who also missed the freedom and space they had:

'We all live in houses now - we'd like to live back on the site, but in a house with our own garden - we felt sad about leaving.- when we were there we played on quads'

Of those who answered the questionnaire, being given more notice by the police or the council prior to being moved on, had the most support as one way of improving things when you are travelling or living on unofficial sites. Over 80% who answered the question thought this was *fairly* or *very important*.

8Bb. What do you think would help improve things when you are travelling or living on unofficial sites?		Bad idea	Not important	Don't know	Fairly important	Very important
1	Give us more notice before we have to move			16%	7%	<b>77%</b>
2	Mobile clinics and mobile doctors should come and visit us.	7%	10%	7%	13%	<b>63%</b>
3	If you're travelling you should be able to take your health records with you.	14%	5%	5%	24%	52%

Mobile clinics were also strongly supported. Over 75% who answered the question thought that being able to carry your health records with you when you are travelling was *fairly or very important*, whilst there were 14% who thought this was a *bad idea* these were mainly made up of young people who also lived in houses.

Some young people talked about the lack of stopping places when you are travelling and thought there should be more temporary and transitional pitches:

'More temporary stopping places for everyone'

This was also mentioned as a problem when people travelled for family gatherings:

'More temporary stopping places - it's also a problem for weddings and funerals and visiting family - each site has a different policy'

One young person suggested that *getting inspectors to visit* was a possible solution to the problems Gypsy and Travellers experienced on unofficial sites and whilst travelling. Another asked that:

'People should give us a chance and treat us equally'

### 8C) When you are living on a site

Around half the young people who took part in the consultations were living on a site. We have seen in the previous section how many house dwellers continue to relate to the way of life of living on a site. Whilst many young people expressed preferences for living with their family and wider community over living in a house there is no doubt that discussions about living on a site generated many more issues and problems for which solutions need to be found.

The Young Researchers talked about problems on one site:

"This site's like luxury compared to ours!"

"Now we've not even got the play bus"

"Ambulances won't come out to us"

"You can't get to the doctor 'cos there's no bus"

"I can't get to the club after school"

We know from the previous section that many young people experience living in houses as a closed in feeling, lacking the safety, support and sense of family and community that a site gives you. Unlike the house dwelling population young people did have some positive things to say about living on a site.

'You can trust people on the site'

'Trust around us'

'Friends and family there'

'You can play on skateboards/motorbikes'

In one group of younger children the importance of play and family came through strongly:

### **What do like about living on your site?**

'Going outside to play'

'Playing with my sister'

'Playing with my doll'

'Watching cartoons'

'Going on my motorbike on site'

'Going to 'town' to see our Nan'

'Seeing family'

'My dog'

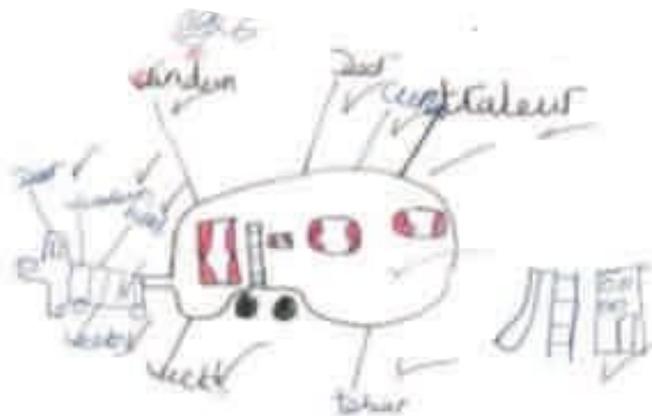
'Riding horse'

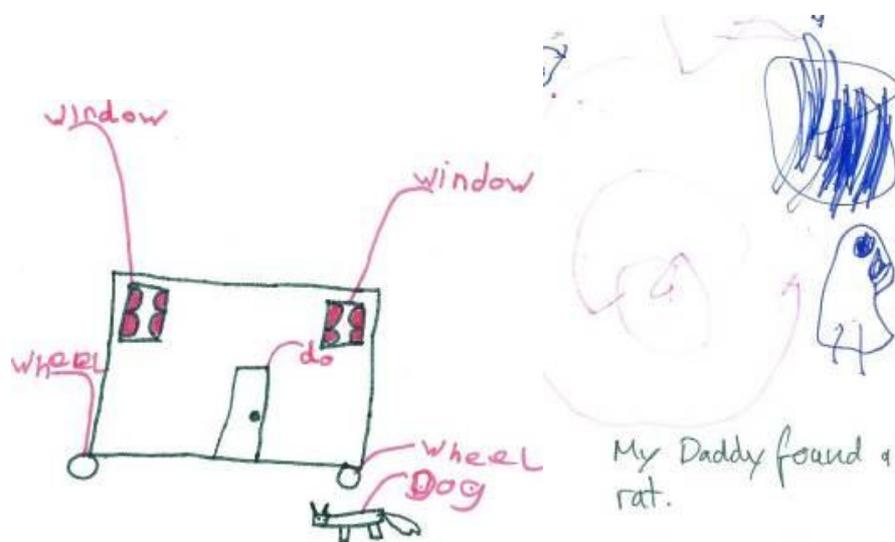
'Worker is nice and kind - she gives us pictures and paper to draw on'

The freedom to keep animals, to live in the country and to be self sufficient also comes through:

'We can have our horses and dogs in *Town L*'

'Lots of nature, horses, loads of animals – chickens, ferrets, we've got a cow, for the milk'





As well as trailers, family, friends, animals and play, the site worker was named as someone important on the site. She was described as kind and nice and the drawing (top right) is of her playing in the snow. One of the children drew a picture of his Daddy finding a rat (bottom right).

### 8Ca. What problems do you have when living on a site?

A number of respondents said they had no problems living on a site, one young person said 'none because everyone is the same'

Problems though were sometimes seen to be caused by Travellers of different origins:

*Other travellers come on and make a mess'*

*'Some bullying on the site from others'*

And a solution suggested by one group:

*'Traveller group meetings are a good way to sort problems on sites'*

The availability of sites (and pitches) was mentioned in the questionnaire and regularly during the consultation discussions

*'There are loads of sites in Cardiff and none in Newport'*

*'It ain't fair that - there should be a site everywhere that you go - it would be great to have a site in Newport'*

Young people from one site said there were insufficient pitches and this meant long waiting times and problems for young people having nowhere to go when they begin their adult lives:

*'We need 190 slabs but we only have 76 slabs in Town X'*

*'More slabs!'*

*'And there's a 5 year waiting list for a plot'*

Problems with facilities, services and conditions on sites were raised by a number of young people, and despite the positives of living as part of their communities the poor and sub-standard nature of many sites was a powerful theme in the consultations:

'Better toilet blocks and kitchen'  
'Better toilets and kitchens'  
'Flooding when it rains heavily'  
'No street lights. No light, no rubbish collection, people, poor roads, rats'  
'Wild dogs, sometimes they bite me'  
'Warden's office opening time'  
'Transport. Conditions'  
'Electricity supply not good'

Some older young people raised issues about the cost of living on a site and affordability. Below, a group of young women talk about the costs of council tax and paying for facilities that are not up to standard or 'fit for purpose'

Other young people mentioned the cost of electricity:

What changes would you make?  
'Cheaper electricity'  
(should be able to) 'Buy electric cards from the shop'

Whilst living on a site provided many children and young people with companions to play with, lack of space and facilities to play and do sports is a recurrent problem identified by young people:

What don't you like about the site?  
'Would like to build 5 a side pitch on some astro-turf'  
'There was a park with some swings and stuff but it started falling apart'  
'There is nowhere safe for the children to play'  
'Space. Nowhere to play. Too close to a busy road'  
'Sometimes it gets a bit boring'

Transport is not specifically mentioned in the Strategy yet it came up as an issue for a number of young people in relation to problems living on a site. Again this is a cross cutting theme that affects education, access to work, health, leisure facilities and participation in community events and daily life:

**What don't you like about the site?**

'No bus to go places'  
'Not enough transport'

'We have to walk to town because there are no bus stops where we live'

'Secluded isolation'

'My dad's red pickup'

### **Case study**

**At one site the main issue for all the young people I spoke to were the site facilities - in particular the sheds that house the washing and toilet facilities for the families. At the time of the consultations the families were waiting for the result of a grant application to improve facilities on site.**

**The young women asked me to take some photos of the state of the sheds and put them in our report:**

#### **What are the problems with the sheds?**

'They're damp, they're write offs. There's spiders in the showers, frozen pipes'

'They should be knocked down and started again!'

'The windows won't close, freezing showers, damp and concreted base'

'We need 2 sinks to keep separate the washing and cooking'

#### **What would you like to change?**

'We need a warm place, a cosy place, a place to live'

'Somewhere we can call home'

'Clean! No wonder people get a bad impression of us'

'We have to pay council tax (**she has her own trailer**) - the rent is £45 and council tax is £35, I can't pay this on incapacity benefit'



## Health

There was a clear difference in access to health services that emerged anecdotally during the consultations; young people living on sites talked about having to wait disproportionately long periods of time in comparison to those living in a house. Of those who completed the questionnaire and said they had to wait 1-2 weeks for an appointment all were living on a site.

The idea of mobile health services coming out to sites was also strongly supported in responses to the questionnaire, those young people who thought mobile clinics were a *bad idea* were all living on a site where there were local problems. Those who thought carrying your health records was a *bad idea* were all living in a house, the idea was mostly supported by those young people living on a site.

<b>8Cb. What do you think would help improve life for Gypsies and Travellers living on sites?</b>		Bad idea	Not important	Don't know	Fairly important	Very important
1	<b>Like in Wrexham, mobile clinics and mobile doctors should come to every site.</b>	7%	12%	7%	14%	<b>60%</b>
2	<b>You should be able to get an appointment to see your doctor the same day</b>	8%	5%	3%	8%	<b>77%</b>
3	<b>You should be able to look after your own health documents, in case you want to pull away.</b>	14%	5%	5%	24%	<b>52%</b>

The young researchers group came up with a list of ideas to improve sites and these ideas were tested out again in the questionnaire with young people being asked for their additional ideas on paper and in the consultation days.

<b>8Cc. What do you think would help improve sites?</b>		Bad idea	Not important	Don't know	Fairly important	Very important
1	A shop or vending machine in the office	29%	7%	2%	17%	45%
2	<b>Play Facilities</b>				28%	<b>72%</b>
3	<b>A visiting Play Bus</b>	7%	9%	9%	12%	<b>63%</b>
4	<b>A Park</b>		2%		32%	<b>66%</b>
5	<b>A youth and community Centre</b>	7%	7%	16%	14%	<b>56%</b>
6	Security Cameras	26%	7%	33%	9%	26%
7	Speed Bumps	18%	5%	8%	28%	43%
8	<b>Pavements</b>		5%	7%	17%	<b>71%</b>
9	<b>Paved roads.</b>	2%		5%	14%	<b>79%</b>
10	Stop signs.	5%	7%	42%	9%	37%
11	Safe Toucan crossings to get on to the site-	3%	3%	21%	15%	58%
12	<b>A bus service to the town/city centre.</b>		2%	12%	14%	<b>71%</b>
13	<b>Speed limits</b>			15%	15%	<b>70%</b>
14	Road Safety Officers who come to the site to check there are stop signs, pavements and crossings, Explain to people what road safety is, Teach bike safety to children	3%	10%	39%	21%	28%

Of all the suggestions put forward by the Young Researchers group, questionnaire respondents thought the most important to have on site were play facilities, a bus service, paved roads and pavements, and speed limits. Facilities such as a play bus, a park and youth and community facilities were next in popularity.

### 8Cc.1 A shop or vending machine on site

The responses to this idea were evenly split between *bad idea* and *very important* if young people were living in a house. Having a shop was much more often *very important* if living on a site. It was thought a *bad idea* or *not important* for 80% in one local authority, regardless of where they were living! Possibly this has to do with the site being well established and linked with local community facilities – a young person from this area said '*It works well if the site is near to shops and schools and the community builds up relationships and jobs*'

'Shop near the sites'

'Shop near the site'

'A shop – yes'

### 8Cc.2 Play Facilities

'Should have a gym - it would keep you out of trouble'

'Could have different activities on different sites – then people would visit and mix more'

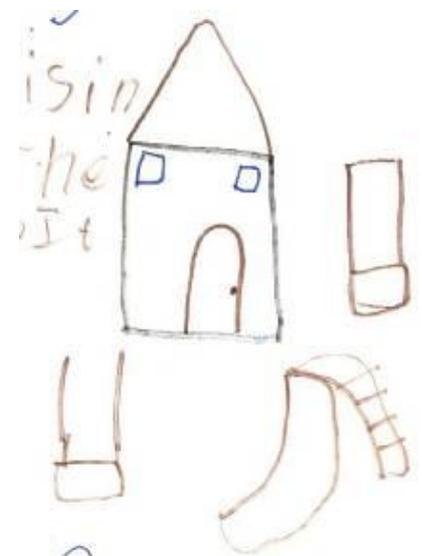
'I'd like to do things like sky diving – never get a chance to do bungee jumping – though I did go to Atlantic college for 18 days to do canoeing, climbing, white water rafting and that'

'Should be bigger and more spaces for everyone, with a play area or somewhere to walk. A few benches'

'Every site should have a gym.....and an entertainer'

'The more activities the better'

'Play area – very important'



### 8Cc.3 A visiting Play Bus

72% of respondents thought this was *very important*; there were young people from 2 local authorities who thought it was a *bad idea*:

'Visiting play bus – its brilliant – it's like a wacky warehouse inside'

'Play bus like Winsford where they teach guitars and stuff'

'Need more the for older ones not just a play bus'

## 8Cc.4 A Park

No-one thought this was a bad idea, 65% of young people thought it was *very important*

'On the new site there should be a park for kids'

'A park - slide swings, roundabout, A pool, a trampoline, new toys'

## 8Cc.5 A youth and community centre

In the questionnaire 55% thought this was *very important*, with around 14% feeling it was a *bad idea* or *not important*. Some young people were unsure or thought a community centre would have its problems:

'No centre cos people will smash it'

'I magine if there was a pub – my mum and dad can't drink my dad has a kidney problem'

'Should there be a social centre? – what's that?'

'Or a community centre – not sure'

As mentioned above there is felt to be a lack of facilities for older young people and for some young people access to a youth club was important. One of the benefits though was getting off the site and being in an environment where you could mix with others:

'We go to youth club – it gets us off the site, there's pool, computers, table tennis, football – it's on from 7-9pm and it's for everyone'

Another young person spoke about the imaginative community facilities on a site he had visited:

'Play areas? – definitely – there's a site on Hereford Way – called the Grafton – the best I've seen. There's a circle to talk to other Travellers, shelter from the rain, a place to talk if you've had a hard day, there's an area for swings.....'

## 8Cc.6 Security Cameras

There was a pretty even split for and against the idea of security cameras on site, one young person had this to say about cameras and the ideas of security generally:

'Security cameras? Well I'm not sure; not on the trailers – maybe on the entrance – has to be on important areas only – it could be disrespectful – would be sly to have them on trailers. It's a 50/50 on a site – you should have 2 entrances – should have electric gates so you can choose who gets let in and who you lets out- who chooses though – the site warden?'

## 8Cc. Road Safety on sites

Speed limits, paved roads and pavements were thought to be *very important* by over 70% of respondents. Over 65% thought having speed bumps and toucan crossings *fairly or very important*. Stop signs on site were also generally supported except for respondents from one site. There was less support for Road Safety Officers coming to sites:

- 'Paved roads? Yes, stop people getting knocked over'
- 'Speed bumps – they're wicked for bikes and they stop speeding on site'
- 'Speed limit for quads'
- 'Toucan crossing? Depends where it is'
- 'Traffic lights to cross the road'
- 'Road safety officers won't come to the site because they are too scared. If the children go to school they learn bike safety'

## 8Cc.12 A Bus Service to the town or city centre

Over 70% of respondents thought this was very important,

- 'Bus service – yes, shouldn't have to walk a long way'

No-one thought that public transport it was a bad idea although one young person had their doubts:

- 'Bus? Mostly people have cars'

Other ideas that came up for improving sites were about improving the living environment, the facilities and making sites safe:

- 'Better lighting. Electricity supply'
- 'More street lights'
- 'More money needs to be spent on sites to make toilet facilities better'
- 'Should have proper toilets and a washroom'
- 'Showers not baths'
- 'Update and paint'
- 'Heating in the sheds'
- 'Clean my site'
- 'The site should be bigger – more space'
- 'I would put trailers, chalets and Mobiles'
- 'More caravans'

(The workers told us there are only 5 on the site at the moment although there is room for 30)

Some of the ideas were about improving safety and rules for people who cause problems:

### What would improve life on the site?

'Safety and Security'

'Safety barriers with card entry'

'Young People need to feel safe'

'If you cause trouble on a site you should have 12 months ban'

'Site Warden'

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One consultation day discussion of the priority issue "Where you live" led to this poster:



Two groups of young people on one site visited by the researchers had strong feelings about what needed improving, where the responsibility lies and possible actions they could take:

### Young Men's Group

'On the new site there should be a park for kids – football pitch – like they've got at *Town Y* - I'd make the site better'

'There's rats because it's by the river. The sheds should be better – they're too cold to even take a shower!'

'What's it like living here? – it's miserable. We don't have room to play football on the site now – they put rocks on the empty pitches to stop transit trailers coming.'

The council don't come and see us –the Liaison Worker comes down and helps but the council they are supposed to come down but they don't'

'I can't see the new sheds and that being built'

### **Young Women's group**

'We should stop paying council tax until we get a proper place – it's not liveable in. The rats and the sewers, the horrible smell – the council came down. It's too dark – there's no lights. The council are not bothered – if something really broke they come out and fix it'

One group had a clear action plan to improve conditions on their site!

1 Stop local teenagers calling us names

2 Get the council to clean up the sites

3 Need proper facilities e.g. toilets, water, bath, concrete

4 Like houses in winter for warmth but in the summer prefer a trailer so you can go where you want to

'Town A is a bad place – we need more to do'

'Improve the road (**on a private site**)'

"Need more toilets

'Improve site – rebuild it'

'Improve drainage to stop floods'

'Have the trees to be cut because it could cause accidents'

'Keep the children's play area at the car park clean'

'More parking spaces'

'Need more signs'

'Need more speed corners'

'Need more slabs for room for people'

'Want to be allowed to use quads'

'The site is too strictly run > can't have chickens, dogs can't be let loose'

'Community centre on site'

'Park /playground'

Despite the huge range of problems with their living environments, young people had no shortage of ideas and energy for improving the sites where they and their families lived. Anecdotally, despite good practice guidelines, very few young people had experienced being included in consultations around new site design or improving existing facilities.

## 8D) When you are living on your own land or in your own house

The Young Researchers said "We didn't talk much about living on our own land or in our own houses so tell us your ideas"

### 8Da. What problems do you have when living in your own house or land?

The earlier Section 8a asks young people about their experiences of living in council accommodation. The responses from young people who had experienced living in their own properties or on their own land were slightly more positive, citing no problems or good neighbours more often than council tenants.

#### Are there any problems?

'None'

'None - I like living there'

'No problems, great neighbours, part of community'

'No problems. Great neighbours'

'None but I prefer living in a trailer'

'None because everyone's the same'

The issues of discrimination though continue to be experienced:

#### Are there any problems?

'Eggs get thrown at the house'

'The children in your street call you names-I fight them'

'In a house we get reported'

'People ride across the land beeping horns and shouting abuse'

'Planning problems'

### 8Db. What would help solve these problems?

'I would put a chalet on my plot of land'

'The council should buy us a plot of land so that we can live there with our family'

'Council'

'Either side can start it - it's not always the Gorgias'

'If the police came out and stopped them'

'Positive attitude towards Travellers'

'There should be a law "you can't call them names"'

Legal problems and Gypsy Travellers having information, support and legal advice was mentioned by a few:

'There's an issue when it's difficult for planning permission, to find suitable solicitors to advise and fight the case for planning permission'

'Should have Traveller champions and lawyers – TES do a lot of this but it shouldn't just be down to them'

'Jimmy Wilson could help for laws and planning permission'

### **Where you live: Goals**

- 54 Council housing policy should reflect needs of Gypsy Traveller families to allow families to travel
- 55 Council housing policy should take family connection needs into account when allocating housing to Gypsy Travellers
- 56 Build/develop more sites in Wales to accommodate numbers of families and young adults wanting accommodation
- 57 Learn from good practice examples in planning and developing new sites
- 58 Consult with Gypsy Traveller communities on planning new sites
- 59 Consult with children and young people on plans and designs for new sites or refurbishing existing sites
- 60 Build more transient sites/ or sites in each LA to lessen instability for families e.g. won't be moved on so much
- 61 Train media on impact of negative reporting on Gypsy Travellers
- 62 Train police
- 63 Develop health records systems for people when they are travelling
- 64 Commissioner/inspector/advisors for families when travelling
- 65 Site wardens/liaison officers who are child friendly/have play training
- 66 Facilities on sites should be fit for purpose, meeting health and safety standards
- 67 Charges for services on sites should be reasonable
- 68 Play and sport facilities should be available and accessible from all sites
- 69 Transport links should be available on all sites
- 70 Community play facilities and schemes should be extended to include sites where Gypsy Traveller children and young people live
- 71 Youth services should ensure they reach out to Gypsy Traveller young people in their areas
- 72 Review arrangements for security i.e. cameras, passes, barriers etc with Gypsy Traveller families for their sites
- 73 Undertake road safety arrangements and inspection of condition of paved roads etc for each Gypsy Traveller site – involve children and young people in these discussions
- 74 Encourage better communication between council officials and Gypsy Traveller communities
- 75 Train council officials in consulting with children and young people in all aspects of site management and development
- 76 Develop network of legal advisors for Gypsy Travellers on rights, benefits, planning issues, discrimination etc

## 9. What name for the new plan for Gypsy Travellers in Wales?

These are the suggestions we have received:

Rainbow for Travellers and Gypsies to Cross

A sunset for Gypsies and Travellers to see

A route to success for Travellers and gypsies

Gypsies and Travellers paradise

Advice for councils on what to do if they encounter Gypsies and Travellers

Hill Side, Gypsy Street

Improving the Life of Gypsy Travellers

Communicating with Gypsies

Gypsy People

The Way We Live

Know the Romany Road

Gypsies United

Travelling to a better future

Gypsy Travellers Bible to Safe Living

Respect

Plan G

Travelling Ahead.

Save the Traveller Community

Equality between Travellers and Gorgias.

Travellers' safety on the road

Fun but safety wherever you go, for Travellers

A happy life for everyone

A happy life for Travellers, gypsies and country people

Communication between Travellers, Gypsies and Country People

Gypsy Traveller Issues

Shorty

Born a Gypsy, Live a Gypsy, Die a Gypsy.

Gypsies for life

The Gypsy Gang

As Good as You

The Road Ahead

Hill Side Gypsy Street

Proud and Present

Gypsy Travellers Chance to Speak

(means that all Gypsy and Travellers should have the chance to speak)

Gypsy Sites?

Gypsy Rights

Gypsy Lives

Travellers United

Pathway to Equality

The Culture of Travellers and Gypsies