

## Highland Multi Agency Gypsy/Traveller Action Plan – 2010 Update

<b>Theme: A</b>	<b>Gypsy/Travellers experience less discrimination and harassment</b>
<b>Actions</b>	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Highland Gypsy/Traveller Multi Agency Partnership accept the position maintained by The Scottish Government and the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) that Scottish Gypsy Travellers are a separate racial group and should be treated as such.</li> <li>2. It is acknowledged that Gypsy/Traveller communities have specific requirements and require the same level of protection from discrimination and abuse in common with all of Scotland's minority ethnic communities.</li> <li>3. Under the Race Relations legislation the Highland Council and its multi agency partners have a General Duty to pay due regard in carrying out all their functions and practices to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Eliminate unlawful discrimination</li> <li>▪ Promote equality of opportunity, and</li> <li>▪ Promote good relations between people of different racial groups</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Multi Agency Partners acknowledge this context for delivery and development of services to Gypsy/Travellers and to inclusion of appropriate legal references in any policies.</li> <li>5. Actions to support awareness of unlawful discrimination and monitor harassment are in progress across partner agencies.</li> <li>6. The postal addresses at the 3 council owned sites have been changed to reflect culturally acceptable language.</li> </ol>
<b>Theme: B</b>	<b>Gypsy/Travellers can more easily access services</b>
<b>Actions</b>	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Development of the Partnership Group structure is being explored. Together with continued investment in the development of site managers, each agency has a named contact to support access to services and coordinate delivery of the action points.</li> <li>2. NHS Guidance on making information and advice services more accessible is currently being adapted by Highland Council, including how to deliver key information from Service Points to sites.</li> <li>3. Awareness raising briefings have been delivered to the Social Work Service Manager's Groups and improved co-ordination arrangements have been implemented across Education and Social Work Services in terms of pre-school, child care and family support under Surestart.</li> <li>4. Outreach services are provided by education, health, housing and skills development services.</li> </ol>

<b>Theme: C</b>	<b>Gypsy/Travellers have improved employment and skills development opportunities</b>
<b>Actions</b>	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Skills Development Scotland, NHS and Highland Council Education Services have jointly planned and delivered awareness training to staff of all agencies. There is a regular Skills Development Scotland presence at the Longman site enabling direct support delivery with new leaflets and posters promoting Skills Development Scotland services. The opportunity to develop a Highland wide outreach element is to be explored.</li> <li>2. A referral system from Education to Skills Development Scotland is supporting one to one direct support and Careers Drop-In sessions are in place. In addition, group work on careers information is facilitated through the 'Career Box' resource which is also used in schools.</li> <li>3. A referral system from Education to Skills Development Scotland is supporting one to one direct support and Careers Drop-In sessions are in place. In addition, group work on careers information is facilitated through the 'Career Box' resource which is also used in schools.</li> <li>4. Marketing and promotion of Skills Development education has been supported by activities such as provision of a bungee run and badge making at the annual barbeque at the Inverness Longman site.</li> <li>5. A college course was developed for adult females in Inverness and further opportunities are being explored both in Inverness and Lochaber by Education and Skills Development Scotland with colleges, work experience co-ordinators and Determined to Succeed teams.</li> </ol>
<b>Theme: D</b>	<b>Gypsy/Travellers have better places to stay and experiences of housing and so have a better quality of life</b>
<b>Actions</b>	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recruitment of site staff for vacant posts in Inverness, Lochaber and Newtonmore will support the opportunity for coordination and delivery of staff training to reflect the Action Plan targets on improved site management and unauthorised encampment service delivery.</li> <li>2. Scottish Government and local investment was secured for the permanent site at Kentallen where site improvement work was completed during 2008/2009.</li> <li>3. A successful Scottish Government funding bid with 25% match funding from Highland Council for the Brackletter site at Spean Bridge enabled site improvements at this location during 2009/2010.</li> <li>4. Scottish Government has announced a final capital funding round for site improvements for 2010/2011 and a bid has been made for refurbishment of the Longman site in Inverness.</li> <li>5. The review of the Unauthorised Encampment Policy &amp; Procedures has resulted in agreement for initial joint visits by officers from TECS and Housing &amp; Property to assist response and improve the management of refuse and waste on unauthorised camps.</li> <li>6. The Planning and Development service are progressing a policy regarding Gypsy /</li> </ol>

Travellers in line with SPP (Scottish Planning Policy) for inclusion in the Highland-wide Local Development Plan 2011.

7. There has been a public consultation on the policy options and the proposed Highland wide Local Development plan including the Gypsy/Traveller policy is scheduled for consultation during Autumn/Winter 2010 with adoption hoped for Autumn 2011. This will include policy on the management of Unauthorised Developments.
8. A Gypsy/Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment was carried out by Housing & Property service as part of the SPP action and as part of the work involved in developing the Highland Housing Strategy.
9. The Gypsy/Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment is available as an appendix to the Housing Need and Demand Assessment  
<http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/planning/developmentplans/localplans/HighlandHousingNeedandDemandAssessment.htm>

<b>Theme: E</b>	<b>Gypsy/Travellers are helped to make their communities safer and have fewer incidents</b>
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<b>Actions</b>	
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1. The Fire Service has delivered educational talks to children at the Longman site and actively participates at the annual barbecue at this site. The Fire Service and Education are currently scoping further opportunities for a Highland wide approach to engagement of this community.
2. Northern Constabulary scheduled delivery of educational driver safety at the Longman site and plan to deliver further initiatives Highland wide through liaison with the newly recruited site staff for the purpose of building improved local relationships.
3. Northern Constabulary is delivering ongoing Diversity training to staff and has a commitment to undertake equality impact assessments on all Northern Constabulary processes.
4. Hatefree Highland has been implemented and any incidents recorded on the sites or on unauthorised encampments are monitored and investigated. In addition Northern Constabulary's ICT system has a specific heading for hate crimes involving Gypsy/Travellers to support monitoring and service improvements.
5. Promotional posters and information and advice leaflets about HateFree Highland have been distributed to the sites and across the Service Point network.

<b>Theme: F</b>	<b>Gypsy/Travellers are able to access more opportunities to learn, have better experiences of education leading to better educational outcomes</b>
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<b>Actions</b>	
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1. There is continued support to develop and maintain engagement and participation in educational opportunities. Monitoring at April 2010 evidences that there are has been 103 children in Highland in session 2009/10 of school age. 73% have been on a school roll attending full or part time education made up of 13% at nursery, 61% at primary and 25% at secondary. The remaining 27% are not on a school roll but are catered for out with

mainstream by means of visits and onsite teaching which includes literacy, numeracy, health, ICT and input from professionals in other agencies.

2. Young people who are aged 14+ are supported to access Vocational Pathway courses at college and/or other available learner opportunities.
3. Adult Basic Education has regular sessions on the Longman site. Education and Workers Education Association have been successful in a bid to the Adult Literacy Partnership to develop a new course on integrated literacy and numeracy through sewing and craft skills.
4. School staff are being supported and provided with in-service training in working with Gypsy/Traveller families based on individual need. Two schools inspected received positive feedback on welcoming and supporting Gypsy/Traveller families.
5. In terms of opportunities through the virtual learning environment Highland is part of national pilot led by Scottish Traveller Education Programme (STEP). The pilot will start in the new school session and includes internet safety, literacy and numeracy at the initial stages.
6. Handheld Learning Records have been launched nationally and all children who have been in Highland have been issued with a hand held record. Monitoring is continuing and the format is presently being piloted with Looked After and Accommodated children and also for those with significant needs. The Record will be updated to reflect Curriculum for Excellence next session.
7. The Race Equality Guidance for Schools has been updated and relevant guidance sent to schools with Gypsy/Travellers on the roll this session. Initial Rapid Assessment Guide (IRAG) has been issued to all schools with Gypsy/Travellers and some positive feedback regarding its use has been forwarded to STEP. Highland is participating in the IRAG national monitoring process.
8. In terms of awareness raising there has been ongoing professional development training for staff with links to Educational Psychologist as required. Joint working with Health to support their internal training and with Social Work managers has also been progressed as noted earlier in this report.

<b>Theme: G</b>	<b>Improve the health of Gypsy/Travellers and their experiences of health services</b>
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<b>Actions</b>	
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1. A network of NHS staff is being promoted & developed to work effectively with Gypsy/Travellers for the purpose of developing intelligence and understanding of the needs of Gypsy/Traveller communities. Equality & diversity staff training was delivered through 2009 to help meet this objective.
2. A conference was held early last year which brought together practitioners from across Highland in identification of good practice and to support establishment of this network of support for staff.
3. A joint Education and Health training workshop was delivered at a Child Protection Committee Conference attended by multi- agency and Third Sector partners. Training has also been delivered to Inverness Social Work teams.

- Recruitment is in progress for a Public Health Nurse post within South East Community Health Partnership with a specific remit for Gypsy/Travellers. There is also a Health Improvement Nurse based in South East Community Health Partnership who works with marginalised groups including gypsy/travellers.

**Theme: H**      **Ensure health services are fully accessible to Gypsy/Travellers**

**Actions**

- The effective use of personal hand-held health records has been patchy across the permanent sites in Highland as well as nationally. Work is underway to revisit the use of this model and to explore a more suitable alternative for sharing medical information among practitioners.

**Theme: I**      **Ensure that Gypsy/Travellers have access to /increased uptake of health promotion and preventative services**

**Actions**

- The availability of health screening, access to smoking cessation, well man services, ante natal care and access to health promotion materials are being promoted at the permanent sites by Health Improvement staff.
- The smoking cessation advisor for the South East Community Health Partnership (covering Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey) is working directly with Gypsy/Travellers to attract referrals to smoking cessation services.
- Through the Childsmile initiative Oral Health practitioners are engaged in work to deliver care and support to access dental services to hard to Gypsy/Travellers.
- Registration of non NHS dental services for Childsmile is promoted and encouraged where available.
- A bowel screening communication plan has been developed which recognises the lower uptake of bowel screening from certain key groups including Gypsy/Travellers. Specific awareness raising has been targeted towards this group including identifying relevant health professionals who work with Gypsy/Travellers to assist in raising awareness and encouraging uptake.
- A health visitor from South East Community Health Partnership and social worker from The Bridge were involved in raising awareness of the HPV programme amongst Gypsy/Travellers to ensure protection of young girls from certain forms of this virus which can lead to cervical cancer.

**Theme: J**      **Gypsy/Travellers are involved in planning and decision making regarding services which affect them**

**Actions**

- Development of a Gypsy/Traveller representative group has been included as an objective in the Tenant Participation Strategy. A recently emerging group at Brackletter evidenced the challenges in sustaining groups when families are transient. A model of group which is highland wide, not tenure specific, supported by all multi-agency partners and linked to a reinstated partnership group will be explored as a new action.
- It is planned to start a Youth Forum on the Longman site in Inverness to allow children and young people to be involved in decision making. Presently children and young

people on all sites are involved in decision making processes when the situation arises.

<b>Theme: K</b>	<b>Increased staff awareness resulting in services being more culturally sensitive, relevant and accessible</b>
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<b>Actions</b>	
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1. All multi agency partners are delivering equality and diversity training to staff and stakeholders.
2. A series of briefing sessions have been delivered to staff and members to promote awareness of Gypsy/Traveller issues and the range of planned actions in the Multi-Agency Action Plan.
3. Joint training is proposed for implementation of the revised Unauthorised Encampment Policy & procedures.

<b>Theme: L</b>	<b>The needs, issues and priorities of Gypsy/Travellers are understood resulting in the delivery of services which meet needs and aspirations</b>
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<b>Actions</b>	
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1. As part of the funding process for site improvements face to face consultative work was undertaken with each site resident. The survey results formed part of the funding applications for each site. This type of consultation will continue notwithstanding progress with the development of a representative group.
2. Methods for carrying out Equality Impact Assessments have been developed in all partner agencies and implementation is in progress.
3. Initial mapping of outreach services indicates provision is limited to education, and health services on the permanent sites, with a level of Careers education and housing information and advice. The focus of outreach work is in Inverness and there is a need to develop outreach provision in Highland to support improved identification of the needs, issues and priorities of Gypsy/Travellers.